

Network News

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Governor's Initiative Focuses on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

The Governor's initiative to combat and end the epidemic of sexual and domestic violence in Alaska in the next decade is comprised of three key components. The first key is to get more abusers behind bars by increasing law enforcement, enhancing investigation tools, and tougher prosecution. The second key identified is to protect survivors and help them heal by providing them with a safe place to go and increasing pro bono legal services. The final key is prevention through public education and awareness.

Perpetrator Accountability: Perpetrator accountability is a multi-faceted approach involving both law enforcement and prosecution. First, the initiative calls for 15 new VPSO positions, annually, for the next ten years. The Governor has also submitted a request for funding to build VPSO housing. In addition, the Alaska State Troopers will be adding 11 new investigator positions: 8 of which will be federally funded with federal economic stimulus money, and 3 will be state funded with general funds. One of these new positions will focus on cold case file investigations.

Prosecution: Perpetrators will also be held accountable through enhanced prosecution in the form of new Department of Law guidelines, legislation enhancing penalties for certain crimes, and additional tools to assist prosecution. First, the Governor is seeking state funding to continue the rural prosecution unit that currently handles a large caseload of sexual and domestic assault cases in rural Alaska. This position is currently funded with an expiring federal earmark and funding needs to be replaced with state funds to continue the unit. Second, the lead attorneys in the DOL will provide enhanced training to all prosecutors statewide and will emphasize the new guidelines to be implemented prohibiting plea agreements without a resultant sex charge and sex offender registration. Further, legislation will be introduced to provide for enhanced penalties for sexual assaults of unconscious victims,

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Fall/Winter Program Activities Update

The past three months have provided exciting opportunities for the Network and for our member programs. To follow are some of the fall and winter program highlights.

Communications Program Update: The Network and the Council completed four ads for our public information campaign “Real Alaska Men Choose Respect” that are airing statewide on GCI Cable and KTUU News. The campaign includes: a personal message from Gov. Sean Parnell; a joint message by Attorney General Dan Sullivan and Public Safety Commissioner Joseph Masters; a message reminding men of their role in modeling respect; and a message focused on the role of respect within Alaska Native cultures. The website www.AlaskaMenChooseRespect.org went live in December and has been receiving consistent visits; garnering more than 2000 page visits in the week following the launch.

Legal Advocacy and Pro-Bono Project: In addition to co-sponsoring the successful LAP/Training Conference in Fairbanks, the Legal Advocacy Project has been exceptionally busy this Fall. Christine Pate and Kari Robinson provided training on family law, protective orders, role of the advocate, and confidentiality for advocates attending the Conference, as well as a general overview of the ANDVSA Pro Bono program. Christine also took time out to provide special thanks to three Fairbanks law firms who have given extraordinary help to the Network; Cook Schuhmann and Groseclose, Foster and Rogers, and Borgeson and Burns. The program also contacted all of the members of the Alaska Bar Association in December, asking for both volunteers and for support. Check out upcoming events on Page 4 for more on the Twelfth Annual CLE!

ANDVSA Policy Program: The Policy Program continues to work on policy issues surrounding people with disabilities. The Policy Director is preparing for the upcoming Legislative session by reviewing federal and state legislation, including Gov. Parnell’s domestic violence and sexual assault initiative. The program’s web pages will soon have new information on how to access the public policy process, track legislation, and how to testify to have your voice heard. Check out the site for updates as the session begins.

Prevention Project: The Prevention Project has been working strengthen prevention efforts across the state. The Project, which offers monthly web-conferences for member program staff interested in intimate partner violence, sexual violence or teen dating violence prevention, has a webinar scheduled for 1 p.m. January 21. Ginger Baim and Samara Baker will present on the Green Dot Campaign. In addition, the planning is moving forward on the Prevention Project social norms campaign, with the goal of launching the campaign in late March.

Training Project: The Training Project provided Fall training and technical assistance to Network programs in Bethel and Kenai, as well as a three-hour, in-state Alaska Court Clerk Training with the Interior Alaska Center for Non-Violent Living and the Alaska Native Women’s Coalition. Additional court and SART training is scheduled in 2010. The Project also provided a substance abuse seminar for the National Network to End Domestic Violence Transitional Housing providers in Portland and participated on a keynote panel at the National Conference in New Orleans, addressing the link between domestic violence and sexual assault, substance abuse and mental health issues.



Draft 2010-2011 Strategic Plan Being Reviewed

The 2010-2011 ANDVSA Strategic Plan draft is currently out for review by program directors. Directors met in Kenai this fall to identify strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities for the Network and to develop strategic goals for the next two years. The plan was sent out to all directors for review, and finalizing it will be a subject of the ANDVSA Winter Meeting in Juneau.

Real Tools 3

Training Project Director Patti Bland and co-author Debi Edmund attended the LAP Conference in Fairbanks and interviewed advocates who were interested in discussing multi-abuse issues. If anyone else is interested in being interviewed for Real Tools 3, please contact Wilma Bennett at the Network office, 586-3650. This publication will be an excellent addition to the Real Tools series, which have received national and international recognition and use. The Real Tools 2 Manuals are currently available on disc in both English and Spanish, as well as on the ANDVSA web site.

Youth Mini-Grant Proposals Still Being Sought

ANDVSA, through support of CDVSA and the Department of Health and Social Services - Women’s Children’s Family Health, funded four mini-grants ranging from \$2000 to \$500 for Juneau, Sitka, Homer and Glennallen. The projects funded include youth-led, adult-supported projects that promote respect, prevent violence, prevent teen pregnancy, or promote healthy lifestyles. A second round of awards will be released on Jan. 15. These youth-led mini-grants will support youth to share their messages for safe and respectful relationships. For additional information and application instructions please contact kmoore@andvsa.org.



ANDVSA Information and Referral Hotline Winter Dates

The ANDVSA Information and Referral Hotline is open on Tuesdays between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. on January 19, February 9 and February 23. Call toll-free at 1-888-988-3725. Victims of domestic violence and sexual assault who want basic information about their legal rights and options and who need referral information from an attorney can call the hotline for free information. The hotline attorney can answer general questions about many areas of the law, including family and criminal law. One of ANDVSA's Pro Bono Program volunteer attorneys will be available. Check the web site for updated information on Spring hotline dates.

Social Norms Campaign

Focus groups for youth and men were conducted to provide direction for the development of the Social Norms Campaign slated to begin in April. The campaign's aim is to increase the number of youth and male leaders that are promoting respect, healthy relationships, equality and non-violence. The campaign will include a web site, ads for web, television and social network sites, bus signs and posters to be distributed throughout the state. This exciting effort is the focus of the Communications and Prevention Directors.

LAP Conference Brings National Trainers to Alaska

The ANDVSA Legal Advocacy Project and Training Project, collaborating with the Alaska State Troopers, successfully held the first multidisciplinary advocate-law enforcement conference, ***Weaving the Safety Net: Coordinating Alaska's Response to Violence Against Women***, in Fairbanks at the Westmark Hotel on November 16, 17 and 18. More than 150 participants attended over the course of the three-day event despite the frigid, interior-Alaska weather, including 21 locally and nationally recognized speakers, 47 ANDVSA Member Program advocates, 59 Law Enforcement personnel, three CDVSA Board Members, two CDVSA Staff, and 11 ANDVSA staff. Special guests from ANWC, Chugachmiut, the Alaska Court System, and LEAP also attended.

In addition to providing excellent training, the conference also garnered significant attention from the media, including a three-part series on domestic violence and sexual assault on Fairbanks television. Be sure to check out the Network web site www.andvsa.org to see the coverage. The conference received excellent feedback from staff, presenters, and attendees.

"The conference was exceptional and provided wonderful information and training. Thank you to all the organizers."

—A LAP Conference Participant

The conference featured sessions on Living Forensics: Recognizing and Documenting Domestic Violence Injuries; Strangulation Injuries; Understanding Batterer Behavior and the Role of Alcohol; Beyond the Obvious—Understanding of Probable Cause, Self-Defense, Interpretation of Injuries and Principal Physical Aggressor; Stalking and Counter-Stalking; Acquaintance and Familial Child Molesters; Trauma Response and Dynamics of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault; Human Trafficking; Barriers to Accessing Services Panel; Effective Use of Interpreters; Department of Law Charging Decisions and Self Defense Evaluations; and three break-out sessions on Legal Advocacy, Law Enforcement, and Survivors experiencing multiple layers of trauma.

4th R: Alaska Perspectives Curriculum

Nine teachers from Barrow, Dillingham, Kodiak, Mid-Valley, Mat-Au Valley, Juneau, Sitka, and Fairbanks attended a two-day 4th R: Alaska Perspectives Curriculum training. The Canadian developed aboriginal perspectives curricula is a comprehensive curriculum seeking to reduce violence and promote related protective factors for perpetration and victimization. This is one of the few curriculums that incorporates a broad range of health topics and has been proven to reduce violence, increase condom use, and improve decision-making among students. *The teachers who attended the training were funded by the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, Department of Health and Social Services- Women's Children and Family Health, Chronic Disease and Health Promotion (Rape Prevention Education Funds- CDC), and Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. Teachers received training and practice in-the classroom skills for promoting healthy relationships, healthy growth and sexuality, substance use and abuse; and improve decision-making skills. There is an opportunity to participate in the Fourth R evaluation, which also fund teacher training, curriculum purchase, and prevention funds for classroom projects. Letters of participation are due by January 15th. Contact kmoore@andvsa.org for more information.*

Governor's Initiative Continued

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allowing a judge to lengthen sentences for defendants convicted of sex offenses when the defendant knew that the victim was unconscious through the use of alcohol or drugs; mandatory lifetime sex offender registration for human trafficking and child sexual assault; restricted internet use for perpetrators convicted of child pornography; and requirements for out-of-state sex offenders relocating to Alaska to register as sex offenders with the state. Finally, to assist the state in obtaining and processing the evidence to aid in securing convictions, the Governor has requested state funding for pediatric sexual assault kits and an additional \$75 million to build a new crime lab in Anchorage.

Survivor Services: This portion of the Governor's initiative is intended to protect survivors and help them heal by ensuring that survivors have a safe place to go and increasing pro bono legal services so survivors will not have to face the legal system alone.

To implement this part of the initiative, the Governor requested a \$381,900 increment to victim services in the CDVSA budget. This amount represents the difference between the increment for victim services and prevention requested last year and the amount actually appropriated by the legislature.

The Governor and the Attorney General have also been working with the various agencies throughout the state that provide legal services to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, including the Network's Pro Bono Program. Both men are committed to seeing that there are enough resources available to insure that survivors of these crimes have adequate, pro bono legal representation to assist them with their civil legal needs.

Prevention: Several elements are included in the Governor's initiative regarding preventing abuse in communities. First, the initiative calls for engaging community leaders, religious organizations and private businesses to raise awareness within their communities. Further, the Governor has called for a public education campaign, ostensibly continuing the one ANDVSA launched during his press conference announcing this initiative. Further, the Governor has pledged to develop youth leaders through community partnerships and work with youth in developing primary prevention strategies – this is one of ANDVSA's annual primary prevention activities (LeadOn minisummit). Finally, the Governor has committed to placing a position within the Department of Law that will focus on coordinating prevention efforts throughout the state with relevant stakeholders.



Upcoming Events

ANDVSA Information and Referral Hotline Winter Dates

Our information and referral hotline is open on Tuesdays between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. on the following winter dates: January 5 and January 19, February 9 and February 23. Call toll-free 1-888-988-3725. Check the web site at www.andvsa.org for more information.

Building a Legacy of Healthy Communities, January 27 – January 29, 2010

Save the date for the Men's Institute Building a Legacy of Healthy Communities Conference in Tallahassee, Florida. This training is designed for men and women working in domestic and sexual violence prevention and others who would like to become allies in ending violence against women. For more information call Brandon Raley at 917-922-6738 or email acalltomen@gmail.com.

Twelfth Annual CLE: "Litigating Family Law Cases Involving Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault"

Presented in cooperation with the Alaska Bar Association.

This CLE will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday and Tuesday, Feb. 15 and 16, 2010 at the Hotel Captain Cook in Anchorage. Featured speakers will be Dr. Anna Salter, Ph.D., and the Judicial Training Staff from the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges. There is free registration, travel, lodging and per diem for attorneys who donate 20 hours to the ANDVSA Pro Bono Program. To register or for more information call 907-747-7545 or 1-888-520-2666 or email

cpate@andvsa.org A PDF registration form can be found on the ANDVSA web site.