



For Immediate Release

For More Information call Peggy Brown, Executive Director of the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault at 907-586-3650, Sandy Samaniego, Executive Director of the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault at 907-465-5015, or for media assistance with other contacts, call Susan Stark Christianson at 907-209-7231.

Statewide Youth Campaign Launched to End Violence and Promote Respect

Stand Up, Speak Up, a groundbreaking campaign aimed at helping Alaska's youth prevent violence and promote respect, was launched today as part of statewide efforts to end domestic violence and sexual assault in Alaska.

The campaign, which includes television commercials slated to air statewide on GCI Cable, ABC Alaska Superstation and the CW, and NBC affiliate KTUU, as well as posters for schools, domestic violence and sexual assault service providers, and public health centers statewide, signs on buses in Anchorage, and an interactive web site, www.StandUpSpeakUpAlaska.org, was developed as a collaborative effort between the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, and the Women's, Children's and Family Health Section of the State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services Division of Public Health.

"We are extremely pleased to launch the second part of our collaboration with the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault during Sexual Assault Awareness Month," said Peggy Brown, ANDVSA Executive Director. The Network and the Council launched the Real Alaska Men Choose Respect public information campaign, aimed at engaging men in preventing violence, last fall. "The Stand Up, Speak Up campaign, which also included a partnership with the Women's Children's and Family Health Section of the Division of Public Health, is a comprehensive effort aimed at Alaska's youth in order to help prevent violence and develop the leadership skills needed to change attitudes and actions in our state," Brown said.

-More-

“Family and interpersonal violence are public health issues that need to be addressed from a prevention perspective,” said Stephanie Birch, Section Chief for the Section of Women’s, Children’s and Family Health, DHSS. “This includes working with youth in schools and their communities to teach them to respect themselves and others.”

“The Council is both proud of the quality of the campaign and thankful for the support Gov. Sean Parnell has put behind our longtime efforts to address this issue throughout Alaska,” said Sandy Samaniego, Executive Director of the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. “Supporting prevention efforts is a critical part of the work we must do to end the scourge of violence in our state.”

The campaign, which grew out of the statewide primary prevention plan “Pathways to Preventing Domestic Violence” – a plan developed by ANDVSA and more than 20 partners – also includes mini-grants to community youth groups and other efforts aimed at prevention.

“Stand Up, Speak Up gives youth a space to discuss respect and truly prevent violence before it ever starts in their own relationships,” said Lori Grassgreen, Director of Prevention Projects for the Network.

“We are really excited that we had Alaskan youth involved in the design of the campaign materials and engaged in changing social norms around respect and relationships in their own communities,” said Sophie Wenzel, Adolescent Health Manager with DHSS. Both Grassgreen and Wenzel, along with ANDVSA Communications Manager Susan Stark Christianson and Council Program Coordinator Ann Rausch, were involved in developing the campaign materials, in response to focus group input from youth across the state.

“Engaging Alaska’s youth is a critically important step in addressing the issues of violence and abuse we face statewide,” Brown said, “and Stand Up, Speak Up is an innovative and effective tool for ending violence and promoting respect.”

-End-