

Rural Alaska-Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Response Utilizing a Cultural Perspective

Paula Ciniero, State of Alaska Public Health Nurse, RN BSN SANE
Shirley Moses, M. Ed., Director of Alaska Native Women's Coalition

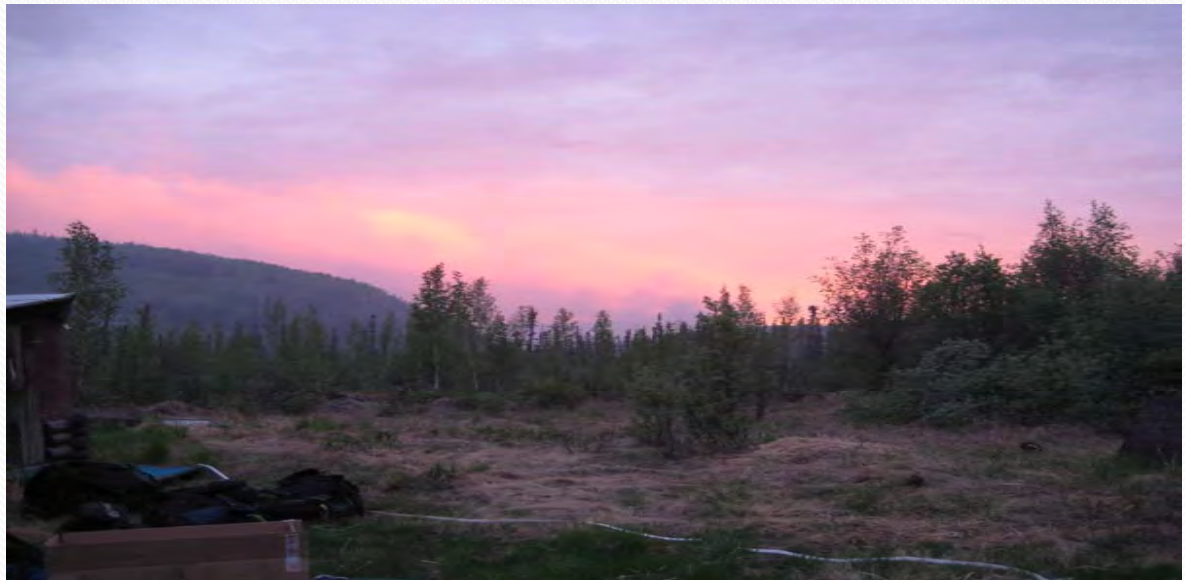


House Keeping

- Please be sure to sign in and out on the Sign In Sheets located near the entrance to this room.
- Please complete the evaluation at the end of this presentation.
- For more information on Continuing Education Units (CEUs), please visit the Registration Desk

Comfort Room

- To promote wellness and self-care, a Comfort Room is available in Room XXX for your use.
- If you need further assistance, please visit the Indian Health Service Division of Behavioral Health booth.





Partnerships

We are a part of a multi-disciplinary training team that travels to various regions/communities in Alaska to provide Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault/Stalking to Tribal Villages, Tribal Health Consortium Behavioral Health Clinicians and Aides, Tribal Councils, and Natural Supports in the community setting. Our current training partners include:

- Alaska Native Women's Coalition
- Alaska Native Justice Center
- State of Alaska Public Health Nursing
- Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium
- State of Alaska State Council on Domestic Violence



Sustainability

Our commitment to address Sexual Assault has been collaborative. We have coordinated trainings region wide, and for specific villages. We have made a commitment not to duplicate services, and try to support our partner agencies whenever possible if there is a training need identified. We have solicited tribal organization support, and agencies have offered in kind support by offering training space, technical assistance, team training, amongst other things.

Alaska spans a large area....



Our State has diverse cultures...and unique needs

Alaska has over 200 recognized Tribes that have unique customs, languages and traditions.

We need to be cognizant and respectful of the

- Culture/Customs
- Native Leadership/Tribe/Non-Profit providing services
- Local resources (or lack of services)
- Impact of our agency(ies) services-especially in DV/SA response and other health care
- Alaska is number one in the Nation for Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault

We deal with remoteness, weather, lack of responders....., or people afraid to report for many reasons.



Our Rural SA/DV Approach to Providing Support and Services

- **Multi-Agency**-Due to the need to get culturally respectful help for our SA/DV survivors, we have initiated an informal group that will provide outreach and support for women and children in our remote villages. It is estimated that only 3-5% of Domestic Violence is reported.



Rural Approaches to SA/DV

- Some have reported that low prosecution of cases is one reason, fear of retaliation, loss of hunter/provider support if they turn their partner in, many don't want to leave partner-only want the violence to stop..., lack of long term shelter if they flee villages, don't want to leave their jobs/kids schools, extended family and support.

TANANA



FIRE DEPT.

YUKON RIVER *Championship* SLED DOG RACE



Need for Outreach/Proactive Education of our Youth and Tribal Members



Tribes/Tribal Organizations need to have input



Some innovative ways we have helped..

- **Basic DV/SA Training** with input in planning by Tribal Leaders, Tribal and other Health Organizations, Natural Supports from the village (Region), Elders, Law Enforcement that are responders to the village, Behavioral Health Aides and Clinicians that work in the village/Region,
- **Additional support/Training as identified by the Tribe and/or Participants of the trainings-**
-i.e.. Bullying, Teen Dating Violence, Lateral Violence in the Community and/or workplace, Elder Abuse, Adult Protective Services Reporting, Disability Awareness and Support for those with disabilities, Healthy relationships, Child Safety and Reporting, Child abuse, Parenting, Suicide Prevention, Working with Elders, Starting and Supporting Safe Homes, resources in the region for DV/SA, Sexual Assault Response

We are all in it together-to stop the violence!



And if we are going to make a difference...

- Our mindset of owning our little portion of the work needs to be expanded!

True multi-agency partnership would mean that our people don't have to tell their stories over and over.

Brainstorm

Building trust – essential to healing

Services- available and accessible

Where do we start?

As a partner agency, we had to make a commitment to collaborate with not only the tribes, but people and agencies that support the communities.

- Commitment
- Establishing a rapport with Tribal Entity
- Planning trainings/establishing protocol for agendas-hopefully local tribal needs would be identified and training centered around the need
- Follow protocol for honoring the land we are training on-and respectful of the community
- Engage the community in the training-build upon the STRENGTHS of the village
- Bring along partner agencies that will enhance the training.
- Be aware of your audience-and be willing to shift gears if needed

Holistic approach to working to end violence in our communities is essential...don't leave out our men and boys when discussing safety. The Elders are our source of wisdom and cultural knowledge, and the infants are our future!!



Empowering Tribal Councils to Establish Tribal Courts and Training to deal with DV/SA-and a Whole Community to Raise a Child. If we are going to raise healthy families it starts in the home.



Breaking the silence about abuse...is it possible?? What role do we play?

Get to know people who work in the villages your agency responds to: Public Health Nurses, Local Health Aides, the Itinerant Behavioral Health Clinician, Village Public Safety Officer or State Trooper, local or regional Magistrate, Safe Home providers, IHS Contract Clinic/Hospital Personnel, local airline agents, etc. These could be crucial contacts in the event of an emergency.



Villages and Supports

Develop Proactive education about Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse starting with Infants is critical.

- **Healthy Drug and Alcohol Free Activities** in the Community where respect for self and others, teamwork, respect for Elders, Early Childhood Activities/Programs, Parenting, and zero tolerance for violence needs to be the norm.
- **Develop Tribal Codes and Courts** that address Violence.

How is this Applicable in your area?

Many tribes have Tribal Courts and have begun to address Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. In Alaska, we have found that those Tribal Councils, Health Corporations, and Village grassroots efforts that approach healing in a holistic way, and honor traditional values and traditions have begun to see a difference. We cannot “fix” our people with canned, westernized practices. We need to find ways to help individuals and the tribes openly address Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. Our women that are sexually assaulted are SURVIVORS, not victims. Given the support and tools to cope and move on, most will go on to deal with the assault, and lead healthy lives.



Parting words...

Just like our Elders say it takes a whole village to raise a child, the same is true when working with our survivors of sexual abuse. There is no one program, medication, counseling regimen, support that has been successfully identified that works anywhere...including in our villages or reservations. Partnering, learning to honor our people we serve, and being proactive in addressing the issue goes a long way.



We have come a long way!

Look forward, and remember that in the 10+ short years since the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) was passed to protect Alaska Native and American Indian Women against Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence, we have made great strides to develop tribal codes, treatment programs, safe homes, and shelters, amongst other services. Women today have options to help ensure their safety and wellbeing thanks to the ongoing movement for empowering women and their right to safety, Proactive Education against SA/DV, and Respect. Thank you to all of you who have made a commitment to partner with others to make this possible.



Self Care

One of the most important things that we would like to stress today is the importance of self care. Please make sure that you take time for yourself, and don't take on more than you can handle. If you are stressed, or overtired, or burnt out you will not be able to provide the high quality of support for the people you are trying to help.

Thank you for all you do 😊 !!





Crisis Hotline Numbers

Suicide Prevention Lifeline Number:

- 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

National Domestic Violence Hotline:

- 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or TTY 1-800-787-3224

National Child Abuse Hotline:

- 1-800-4-A-CHILD

Sexual Assault Hotline:

- 1-800-262-9800



Contact Information

Shirley Moses

907-978-1852

1606 Central Ave. Fairbanks, AK 99709

shirleymmose@yahoo.com

Paula Ciniero

907-451-1653

1025 W. Barnette St.

Fairbanks, AK 99701

paula.ciniero@alaska.gov



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