

Pathways to a Safer Sitka

Community members understand and demonstrate respectful and safe relationships.

WHEREAS, Intimate partner violence(IPV) and teen dating violence is a serious problem that can have lasting harmful health, education, and economic impacts on individuals, families, and communities;

WHEREAS, In Sitka alone, 164 adults and 50 children requested and received services from Sitkans Against Family Violence because of domestic violence in 2008;

WHEREAS, Intimate partner violence can and should be prevented. Studies show that violence is learned and therefore can be unlearned or not taught in the first place;

WHEREAS, IPV primary prevention efforts should work to create the environmental conditions that reduce risk factors and promote protective factors;

WHEREAS, Behaviors are complex and influenced by multiple factors, comprehensive IPV prevention efforts that work across the socio-ecological model will also work tangentially to reduce risk factors inextricably linked to other social ills;

WHEREAS, IPV prevention efforts are most effective if they abide by the nine principles of prevention: efforts are comprehensive addressing a wide range of risk and protective factors, use a variety of teaching methods, the dosage is sufficient(once will not change behavior), are theory driven, foster positive relationships between youth and adults, introduced at an appropriate time in life, have social and cultural relevance, are taught by well trained staff, and are evaluated to ensure success.

THEREFORE, in 2008, more than 20 individuals representing a diverse cross section of social services, schools, and healthcare organizations in Sitka came together to develop a comprehensive prevention plan to address the underlying causes of (IPV) and create the social change necessary so that IPV does not occur. This newly formed community coalition, *Pathways to a Safer Sitka*, worked to conduct a needs and resources assessment and identified five goals:

- **Goal 1:** Sitka schools are actively working to promote safe and respectful relationships and build protective factors against IPV.
- **Goal 2:** Youth are active and engaged within the community promoting respect and non-violence.
- **Goal 3:** Boys and men are proactive within the community in building mutual respect and equality between men and women.
- **Goal 4:** Key agencies will work together to strengthen and support opportunities for family growth and connectedness
- **Goal 5:** Healthcare organizations actively work to address Intimate Partner Violence.

Prevention efforts can no longer be solely the responsibility of one individual or organization.

A collaboration of SAFV, SEARHC, Sitka Public Health, Planned Parenthood, YAS, Mt. Edgecumbe high school, SCAPS, Center for Community, Kettleston Memorial library, YABAH, and UAS.