



# Anchorage Collaborative Coalitions



## The Problem

1 out of 4 Anchorage youth report having been the target of bullying.

**Bullying** is unwanted, aggressive behavior among peers that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time.



## The Solutions

- **Mattering:** Youth's perceptions they are respected, trusted, supported, valued by others, and able to make a difference in their community.
- **Connection and Engagement:** Community connection is correlated with decreases in youth risk behaviors that negatively impact learning and wellness.
- **Youth/Adult Connection:** Youth-adult connectedness is foundational for adolescent health and wellbeing and an active ingredient of effective interventions serving vulnerable people.

Our Vision: "Together creating communities where youth and young adults thrive and are resilient."

## Improving Mental Health in Anchorage

The Anchorage Collaborative Coalitions (ACC) formed in 2014 to improve mental health for Anchorage youth and young adults. In Anchorage, the ACC found high rates and upward trends in people aged 12-24 reporting feelings of sadness, alone in life, and hopelessness. The ACC also found that experiencing bullying could lead to long-term mental health challenges. Together, our coalitions are working to support youth and young adults to thrive and be resilient.

Bullying poses serious consequences for young people, but bullying and its consequences are preventable. The ACC is working to promote health and wellbeing in the following programs:



### Building Local Capacity

We work with youth-serving organizations and community members to improve our ability to improve safe space, supportive environments, and meaningful engagement through our Second Order Change, Youth Program Quality, and Start the Conversation initiatives.



### Increase Youth Mattering

Through our Youth Matter Grants, we provide youth the chance to improve safety, work with supportive adults, and make a difference in the community on their own terms.



### Awareness Campaigns

We raise awareness in youth and young adults of concrete ideas about bullying and share information to empower them to prevent and intervene in bullying situations.



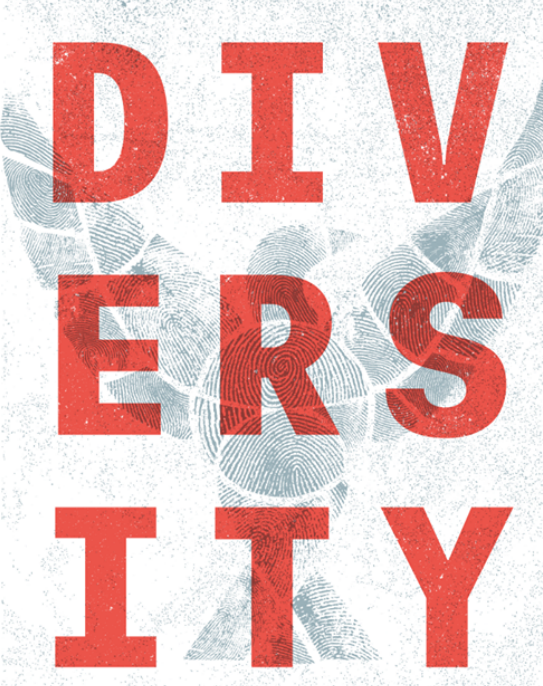
### Policy Change

We educate and advocate for improved policies to address bullying behavior in schools, youth organizations, and in workplaces throughout the community.



### Bystander Intervention

We provide training for young adults to gain skills to empower and equip bystanders to safely intervene in power-based personal violence incidents, such as bullying, domestic violence, and sexual assault.



2 Years **Youth Awareness**

8 Organizations Spirit of Youth supported 8 youth groups to be trained to develop bullying prevention messages including: PSA's, a podcast series, school wide issued t-shirts, and a poster series issued to all Anchorage middle and high schools.

**Growth** After training youth in bullying prevention and awareness there was a statistically significant and long-term increase in understanding the consequences of bullying and why it is important to address them.

**96%** After receiving training 96% of participants could name at least one bullying intervention strategy.

**+50%** All Anchorage adults reported hearing and seeing bullying prevention messages increased from 44% to 55% to 50%.



What I liked most about this project was making and creating ideas that will help make a difference in our community.



*-Youth Awareness Campaign Participant*



## Spirit of Youth Coalition

### Mission

To support youth voices.

Helping youth develop skills, resilience, and engagement as they explore and share their own stories.

### Story Works Alaska

Story Works Alaska supports youths voices through the art of storytelling. Its high school storytelling workshops bring volunteer storytellers and story coaches into schools to encourage and support student storytellers. The stories that emerge offer opportunities for learning and connection: for peers, for community members, and for the individuals who tell them.

### Mission

to provide a non-partisan venue for empowering youth to vote and be involved in the democratic process.

### Anchorage Youth Vote

Youth Vote is dedicated to promoting youth voice and youth-led civic engagement. The group works to provide young people, educators, and the community with relevant tools to achieve their mission.



# Bystander Intervention

Healthy Voices Healthy Choices has hosted trainings to become certified and grow skills to intervene in situations of bullying. HVHC has hosted training of trainers and are working with businesses to undergo the training and improve business bullying prevention policies.

17 certified trainers

72 community members trained

Participants reported a 35% increase in their confidence that they could do something to prevent bullying behavior.

35%



Participants reported a 37% increase in their confidence that they could do something to prevent power-based personal violence.

37%



Participants reported a 117% increase in knowledge of safe intervention strategies

117%



I am so happy that I took this training. I have been able to step in and offer support to others when I see someone being bullied. This training makes me feel like I can make a difference in my community.

- Katie W.

Never thought about bullying in the workplace. Going through this training makes me more aware of how I treat others at work and how my co-workers treat our younger employees. This training has raised my awareness about how my behaviors impact others and how this impacts their mental health.

- Michael E.



# Let's TALK About BULLYING

Spending at least 15 MINUTES a day talking with your kids can help REASSURE them that they can come to their parents when they need a problem.

## WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among individuals that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

## How to Talk About Bullying

- Listen and focus on the child. Learn what's been going on and show you want to help.
- Assure the child that being bullied is not their fault.
- Work together to resolve the situation. The child's school and local organizations may have valuable input.

## Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying happens when individuals bully each other through electronic technology. Examples of cyberbullying include sending mean text messages, posting hurtful comments on social media, and spreading rumors online.

## HOW TO HELP

- Encourage kids to do what they love. This will help protect them from bullying behavior. Special activities, interests, and hobbies can boost confidence, and help kids



# Start the Conversation

3 out of 4 kids say their parents are the number one influence on their decision about drinking and drug use. Start the conversation is a toolkit designed to increase the amount of quality time parents and children spend together and are designed to increase the quality of conversations they have. Healthy Voices Healthy Choices toolkit has information on helping parents navigate the teen years. Toolkits are distributed in Anchorage and are used in parenting classes in the Correctional Facilities in Anchorage and Seward. There are specific cards that address Bullying, questions for parents, questions for kids and general question to share hopes, dreams and ideas.

2 Years

144 toolkits distributed

767 Conversation Cards distributed

66% of parents who responded to the survey reported an increase in both quality and quantity of time talking to their children.

66%



91.3% of those people who report receiving cards use the cards in having conversations with their children.

91.3%



93.6% of those parents who responded to the survey would recommend this tool to other families.

93.6%



The cards really helped me and my kids. I'm an inmate at Spring Creek but I'm still a parent. The cards helped me connect with my kids when we talk on the phone. Our conversations are full of more information vs. just "How was your day or What's happening at school." I can really learn about my kids by using these cards. I'm in prison but I'm still their dad.



- Spring Creek Inmate



## Second Order Change

3 Years

120 Adults

19 Youth Organizations  
(9 continuing)

1000's of Youth

AYDC Second Order Change is a leadership development series and a professional learning community designed to support staff in delivering high quality youth development programs. We support dozens of organizations each year to build social emotional competencies for their programs.

We also host an Executive Impact Series with senior leaders who have completed the series to continue to support their growth as leaders and impact on organizational culture and youth program quality.



### Growth

Participants experienced an increase in Social Emotional (SEL) Competencies over the course of the series, and experienced balanced growth across all competencies.



[Second Order Change] has made me more aware of my actions and the words I use when speaking to others. It also opened me up more to becoming the best me I know how to be. Also, knowing the I matter.

- Second Order Change participant

I appreciate the friendly and safe atmosphere and the wealth of knowledge from everyone. I feel stronger after meeting with these professionals.

- Second Order Change Executive Impact participant



## Testimonial

I was teaching a group of children and had gone outside and made smore's, talked about wildlife. They were getting pretty rowdy. I wanted to do a check-in and see how they were feeling. I used a "how is your weather today?" and gave an example myself. As each student stated, "I'm having a sunny day because I had marshmallows... one student stated, "I'm having a hurricane today because being at home is frustrating and nobody listens to me, but you are all listening to me." At that point I realized that this poor child had been ignored all day and it wasn't until 6:00pm at night that he finally felt like someone had listened to him. It was then that I knew this idea of SEL was an integral part of how we should interact with our youth.

## Youth Program Quality

2 Years

54 adults

7 youth orgs.

AYDC's continuous quality improvement initiative follows national best practices to improve youth relationships, experiences, and the environment in programs known to improve healthy youth outcomes. We teach best practices for youth-serving organizations to promote protective factors that promote health and wellbeing for youth with a focus on developing social and emotional learning.



### Growth

In responding to the questions about how youth program quality had changed from pre- to post- initiative, there were statistically significant increases in areas such as:

- "I provide youth high quality supports such as skill building opportunities and encouragement,"
- "I provide youth with high quality engagement opportunities to practice skills such a problem solving and reflection," and
- "staff in my organization/ program work collaboratively (e.g. plan together, or observe each other and provide supportive feedback.)"



## Policy Change

Together, the Anchorage Collaborative Coalitions is reaching out to and working with the Anchorage School District, community members, youth-serving organizations, and local businesses to address the many factors that put youth at risk, or protect them, from the harmful effects of bullying. Best practices in policies are being recommended to create a systems change for the community.

Community  
Work Group

Stakeholder  
presentations

Advocacy  
training



Public education and policy change requires a multi-pronged campaign to increase community and institutional readiness. Over two years, the ACC continues to build partnerships and include more stakeholders to move toward systems-level policy change in Anchorage.

Support 



I saw such a change in [my son] these past months. The series gave him insight to strengths and skills I could always see, but he never could... He did not have that level of confidence at the beginning of this year. As a single, sole-earner parent I could not have given him this opportunity without the scholarship... We are truly and deeply grateful.



- Youth Matter participant's parent



## Youth Matter Grants

AYDC has granted over \$53,000 to youth-led community projects to promote youth health and wellbeing. Projects are youth-led and focus on supporting youth ages 12-16.

Youth mattering and grant goals include:

**Safety:** Both physical safety and also to be empowered to be themselves.

**Support, Respect & Fairness** from adults.

**Making a difference:** This may be through providing meaningful opportunities and service-based activities.

2 Years

114 youth

11 Organizations

13 projects



Youth participants reported an increase of mattering to the community of 15.1%: when they are respected, trusted, supported, valued by others, & able to make a difference.

15.1% 

Youth reported an increase of 4.56% in adult support. Adults are positive role models during interactions.

4.56% 

Youth reported an increase of 2.01% in civic self-efficacy, ones confidence to make positive change in a community.

2.01% 



## Thank you to our ACC Partners

- Alaska Humanities Forum
- Alaska Geographic
- Alaska Theatre of Youth
- Anchorage Youth Court
- Anchorage Youth Vote
- ASD Title VII Indian Education
- ASD 21st Century Community Learning Centers
- AWAIC
- Benny Benson High School
- Big Brothers Big Sisters
- BLM Campbell Creek Science Center
- Boys & Girls Clubs
- Catholic Social Services
- Congregation Beth Shalom
- Camp Fire Alaska
- Cook Inlet Tribal Council
- Covenant House
- Denali Family Services
- Dimond High School Ignition Mentorship
- First CME Church
- Hope Community Resources
- Identity
- Junior Achievement
- KNBA - Koahnic Broadcasting
- Nine Star Edu & Employment
- Parachutes Ministries
- Planned Parenthood
- Recover Alaska
- Romig Middle School NJHS
- Shiloh Community Housing
- Stone Soup Group
- Story Works Alaska
- The Alaska Center
- West High School You Are Not Alone Club

## About the Anchorage Collaborative Coalitions

Since 2014, the Anchorage Collaborative Coalitions (ACC) has been working together in a collective impact approach to improve mental health for youth and young adults in Anchorage.

Through an Anchorage Community Assessment, the ACC found high rates and upward trends in people aged 12-24 reporting feelings of sadness, alone in life, and hopelessness. The ACC also found that experiencing bullying could lead to long-term mental health challenges. Together, our coalitions are working to support youth and young adults to thrive and be resilient.

The Anchorage Collaborative Coalitions includes three coalitions:



### **Healthy Voices Healthy Choices - Volunteers of America Alaska**

Healthy Voices, Healthy Choices Coalition is a grassroots coalition made up of various stakeholders in the Anchorage Community working to promote healthy choices through public education, outreach, advocacy, and youth-led activities.

[www.hvhcak.org](http://www.hvhcak.org)



### **Spirit of Youth**

Spirit of Youth is dedicated to creating, promoting and recognizing youth involvement in communities across Alaska. Spirit of Youth and its coalition of partners include Story Works Alaska and Anchorage Youth Vote. The coalition's vision is all Alaska's youth are included, heard, and empowered.

[www.spiritofyouth.org](http://www.spiritofyouth.org)



### **Anchorage Youth Development Coalition - Center for Safe Alaskans**

The Center for Safe Alaskans works to prevent injuries, promote wellbeing, and improve safety for all Alaskans. The Anchorage Youth Development Coalition is a program of Safe Alaskans, committed to advancing positive youth development so all youth thrive.

[www.safealaskans.org/AYDC](http://www.safealaskans.org AYDC)



For more information, visit [www.anchoragecollaborative.org](http://www.anchoragecollaborative.org)