# Pathways to a Safer Sitka

**Intimate Partner Violence Prevention Plan** 



# Vision: All Community Members Understand and Demonstrate Safe and Respectful Relationships.

Thank you to members of Pathways to a Safer Sitka (PASS), Sitka's Primary Prevention Coalition, who contributed greatly to the making of this plan.

Special thanks to those who designed, reviewed and finalized this plan: Elise Pepple, Kathleen Elsener, Lisa Hodges, Meg Baier, Nick Campolettano, Sharon McIndoo, and Tristan Guevin.

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Photo Courtesy of Julia Smith

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Title Photo Courtesy of Julia Smith

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Photo Courtesy of Daily Sitka Sentinel

# Sitka

he traditional homeland of the Tlingit people, Southeast Alaska is a stunningly rugged and beautiful landscape. Sitka, often referred to as the "Paris of the Pacific," is located on the west coast of Baranof Island fronting the Pacific Ocean, on Sitka Sound. Approximately 19% of Sitka's 8,747 population<sup>1</sup> is Alaska Native, primarily of Tlingit descent. Coupled with strong Russian influences dating back to Sitka's days as the Russian American Capital, Sitka offers a wonderful fusion of history and culture.

Like much of the state, Sitka suffers from high rates of domestic violence (DV), sexual violence (SV) and bullying. Beyond the immediate impact of the violence, there are long term effects including developmental delays, child abuse, substance abuse, self-harm, poor health, psychological problems, and negative community impacts. Unaddressed violence within our families leaves our young people at greater risk of experiencing or recreating violent patterns within their own relationships. By working together we can create the social change necessary so violence doesn't occur.



Primary
Prevention—
stopping
violence before
it ever occurs.

Nationally, there is a growing movement to work towards preventing violence before it ever occurs—this is called *primary prevention*. Primary prevention efforts are research-based and seek to promote healthy relationships by reducing factors associated with violent behavior (risk factors) and strengthening factors that support positive behaviors (protective factors).



Photo Courtesy of Nick Campolettano

In 2003, the Alaska

Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault entered into a cooperative agreement with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention to build capacity to prevent DV throughout the state. This effort came to Sitka and in 2008 over a dozen social service agencies and their representatives came together to form the primary prevention coalition, Pathways to a Safer Sitka (PASS). After conducting a thorough community needs assessment, a comprehensive local prevention plan was developed to address the underlying causes of DV/SV. By working together on the five goals, or pathways, put forward in this plan, we can achieve our community vision members understanding and demonstrating respectful and safe relationships.

### How big is the problem?

For the past 30 years, Alaska has ranked among the top five states for rates of domestic violence. According to the 2010 Alaska Victimization Survey, 48% of Alaskan women indicated they have been victims of intimate partner violence.<sup>2</sup> Thirty-seven percent of Alaskan women have experienced sexual violence at least once during their lives. <sup>2</sup> The picture is no less dire within Sitka.

According to the 2010 Alaska Victimization Survey, 48% of Alaska women indicated they have been victims of IPV.

The local domestic violence shelter, Sitkans Against Family Violence (SAFV), provided 2,505 bed nights for women and 1,876 bed nights for children in FY 2010.<sup>3</sup> This is an increase of over 1,200 bed nights since 2008 and includes provision of services to over 234 unduplicated women and children from Sitka and the surrounding villages.<sup>3</sup> During FY 2010, the Sitka Police Department received 178 calls for service for domestic problems, assaults and domestic violence orders and made 58 arrests for domestic violence.<sup>4</sup>

Intimate Partner
Violence (IPV)/
Domestic Violence
(DV)- a pattern of
coercive and controlling
behaviors that one person
uses against a partner to
gain or maintain power
in a current or former
marital, cohabitating, or
dating relationship.

Sitka also faces significant challenges due to high rates of bullying. In 2010, nearly a quarter of Sitka students in grades 3-5 reported being bullied two or more times per month in the last couple of months.<sup>5</sup> Of those, Alaska Native elementary students overall (30%) and Alaska Native girls (44%), in particular, were more often the targets of bullying.<sup>5</sup> The most common forms of bullying at this grade level included verbal, exclusionary behavior, rumors and physical harassment.<sup>5</sup> For middle school students in Sitka, the numbers are similar, though at 22%, twice the national average.<sup>6</sup> Verbal, exclusion, rumors, sexual and racial bullying were the most common forms of perpetration, representing over 80% of all bullying.

Because being bullied and being a bully are linked to domestic violence in adulthood,<sup>7,8</sup> these figures provide a disturbing portrait of our future adults.



This is not the time to be afraid or timid because the challenges are formidable. Now is the time to take both personal and institutional risks.

-Wenda Weekes Moore

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>Alaska Victimization Survey, Justice Center, University of Alaska Anchorage, 2010 <sup>3</sup>Sitkans Against Family Violence, 2010

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup>Sitka Police Department, 2010

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup>Olweus Bullying Questionnaire, Keet Gooshi Heen Elementary School Report, 2010 <sup>6</sup>Olweus Bullying Questionnaire, Blatchely Middle School Report, 2010

 $<sup>^7\</sup>mathrm{O'Donnell}, \mathrm{L., et\,al.}$  (2006) Middle School Aggression and Subsequent Intimate Partner Physical Violence. Journal of Youth & Adolescence, 35:693–703

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup>Basile, K.C., et al. (2009) The theoretical and empirical links between bullying behavior and male sexual violence perpetration. Aggression and Violent Behavior, 14, 336-347.

### What puts us at risk? What protects us?

### **Risk Factors**

Low academic achievement

Child maltreatment

Male dominated family or community

History of family violence

Substance use

Cultural dislocation/Lack of cultural identity

Policies/settings that support violence

**Protective Factors** 

**Cultural identity** 

Safe and caring adults

**Communication skills** 

**Academic and social success** 

Peers that support healthy & safe relationships

**Opportunities to give back** 

Parental role models

### **Protective Factors-**

conditions or characteristics that decrease the likelihood of DV/SV perpetration while also facilitating a broad range of related positive outcomes. There are multiple protective factors that may preclude a person from becoming abusive. Usually, we think of risk and protective factors on individual level, but to effectively reduce risk for violent behavior and build protective factors for nonviolence in relationships, we must look at policy and societal factors, diverse contexts, influencers and consider the individual risks facing Sitkans. The exact combination of risk factors that lead to perpetration

vary, so our solution to violence is varied and addresses significant risk and protective factors in multiple ways. The five pathways in this plan reflect this comprehensive approach to prevention.



Photo Courtesy of Julia Smith

### Healthy Relationship-

Consists of a connection between people that increases well-being, is mutually enjoyable, and enhances or maintains each individual's positive self-concept. Healthy relationships are often characterized

by:

Mutual Support
Compromise
Trust
Respect
Mutual Fairness
Self-Confidence
Honesty
Equality
Understanding
Good Communication

# A Comprehensive Approach

**Pathways to a Safer Sitka** is dedicated to creating an environment that discourages intimate partner violence from occurring by using a multi-faceted and comprehensive approach. By creating five pathways, we have outlined a roadmap for primary prevention within Sitka. This will allow us to better support educators, parents, leaders, and youth in our community to work together to prevent violence and promote healthy relationships. The pathways in this plan build upon each other to strengthen and reinforce norms of respect and relationships free from violence. The approaches are built on research and the existing evidence- base.

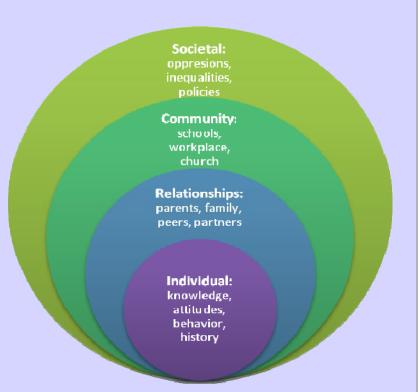


Photo Courtesy of Julia Smith

Socio-ecological model: a framework used to explain the complex interplay between individual, relationship, community, and societal factors.

### Socio-Ecological Model

- ✓ **Individual factors** relate to a person's knowledge, attitudes, behavior, or history.
- ✓ Relationships factors include the influence of parents, siblings, peers, and intimate partners.
- ✓ Community factors include norms, customs, or people's experiences with local institutions such as schools, workplaces, churches/ religious institutions, police, or city.
- ✓ **Societal factors** address broad social forces such as inequalities, oppressions, organized belief systems and relevant public policies.



Factors at one level are influenced by connected factors at other levels. Thus, primary prevention must address multiple levels of the social ecology simultaneously.

# Sitka's Primary Prevention Plan



Through a consensus building process, these five goals were put forth to help us reach our ultimate destination:

 $\Pi$ 

All community members understand and demonstrate safe and respectful relationships.

Coming together is a beginning. **Keeping together** is progress. Working together is success.

-Henry Ford

IV

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

## Goal One

Sitka schools are working to promote safe and respectful relationships and build protective factors against IPV.

### **Expected Outcomes**

- ✓ By 2013, there is an increase in policies that actively promote healthy relationships on school grounds and at any event associated with the schools
- y By 2011 there is an increase in programming that actively promotes the core components of healthy relationships on school grounds and at any event associated with the schools.



### **Strategy: GIRLS ON THE RUN**



to Courtesy of Meg Baier

Girls Run (GOTR) the empowerment program for girls in third through fifth grade that strives to promote healthy lifestyles and self-respect through running. The 12 -week program combines self -esteem enhancing life-lessons, discussions, and running games in a fun and encouraging, girl-positive environment. Throughout the program, the girls develop a greater sense of self, connect with their peers and adult coaches, and begin to understand the role that community plays in their lives. This spring will mark the fourth Girls on the Run season at Keet Gooshi Heen Elementary School with hopeful expansion to Blatchley Middle School.

\*Protective Factors addressed: positive peer adult role models, empowerment, communication skills, safe and healthy environment

# Strategy: The Fourth R— Alaska Perspectives Healthy Relationships Curriculum

The evidence-based and Canadian-developed **Fourth R Program** was adapted for implementation in communities

across Alaska. The Fourth R is a comprehensive curriculum that seeks to reduce violence and promote related protective factors to prevent perpetration and victimization. It is one of the few curriculums that has been proven to reduce violence and improve decision-making and communication skills among students. With support from the Department of Education, teachers across the state have received adequate training and materials to successfully implement this program. The curriculum has been implemented at both Sitka High School and Pacific High School and we are working towards implementation at Blatchley Middle School and Mt. Edgecumbe High School.

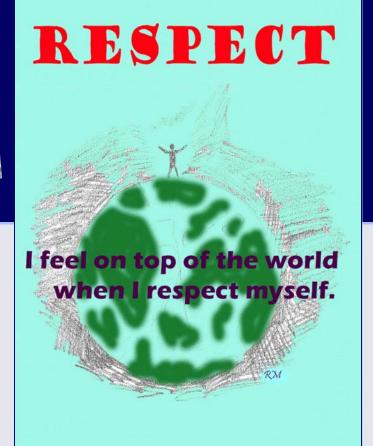
\*Protective Factors addressed: positive decision making, communication skills, education, positive peer and adult role modeling

### Goal Two

Youth are active and engaged within the community promoting respect and non-violence.

### **Expected Outcomes**

- ✓ By 2013, youth leaders from all three high schools collaborate to build bridges across schools and across cliques.
- ✓ Youth are encouraged and trained to take leadership roles in facilitating and promoting non-violence, respect, and equality in relationships by 2011.

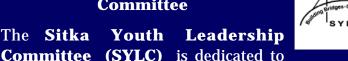


Sponsored by the Sitka Youth Leadership Committee: Dedicated to promoting respect and building bridges amongst youth in Sitka and across Alaska.



Photo Courtesy of Julia Smith

### Strategy: Sitka Youth Leadership Committee





promoting respect and building bridges amongst youth in Sitka and across Alaska. Born out of the 2009 youth leadership conference, LeadOn!, SYLC is an innovative strategy that allows youth to develop and expand their leadership skills, use media and art to promote positive messages, and provide education and outreach to peers on healthy relationships. Since 2009, youth leaders in

SYLC have facilitated *Teen Talks* at Mt. Edgecumbe High School on topics of respect, communication, cliques, and developing support systems. They've created posters and media pieces about respect and participated in a life changing outdoor leadership trip to Glacier Bay National Park with 22 teens from around Alaska. SYLC leaders have also presented at youth conferences around the state on how to start your own youth leadership group. This group is open to any youth between the ages of 13 and 18 who live in Sitka.

\*Protective Factors addressed: education, positive peer and adult role models, communication and positive decision making skills, opportunities to give back, and empowerment

# Boys and men are proactive within the community in building mutual respect and equality between men and women.

### **Expected Outcomes**

- ✓ By 2012, men and boys have the knowledge and skills for building protective factors and reducing risk factors for IPV.
- ✓ By 2013, Coaching Boys to Men, Men of Strength and/or other promising practice curriculum is integrated within existing teams, sports, clubs (sports, Reading Buddies, BBBS, DDF, et al).
- ✓ By 2012, there is an increase in male representation and participation on task forces and collaborations which work toward promoting healthy relationships.



### **Strategy: Let Me Run**

Given the success of Girls on the Run and its high interest in the community, a running program for boys, called **Let**Me Run, is being piloted this fall at Keet Gooshi Heen Elementary School. This 6
-week program strives to strengthen boys' physical, emotional, and social well -being by using the power of running and lively group activities to equip boys with tools to lead a more balanced and fulfilling life.

\*Protective Factors addressed: education, positive peer and adult role models, healthy masculinity, communication and positive decision making skills



### Strategy: Alaska Men Choose Respect

Since October 2010, partners from across the state have been working on creating a set of strengths-based lessons and activities for boys and men to participate in. The intent is to empower men to help create safer and healthier communities for all and to play a more active role in the prevention of intimate partner and sexual violence and the development of more just and equal communities for men and women. Thirty partners gathered in mid-June to lay the foundation for these lessons and the curriculum developers are close to sharing their first draft with these partners for revision. The hope is that these lessons are able to be seamlessly integrated into programming presently being offered in Sitka and other communities across the state.

\*Protective Factors addressed: healthy masculinity, positive youth and adult role models, positive decision making skills

# Goal Four

Key agencies will work together to strengthen and support opportunities for family growth and connectedness.



Photo Courtesy of Karren Upcraft

### **Expected Outcomes**

- ✓ By 2012, key agencies, will work together to incorporate policies and practices that promote core components of healthy relations.
- ✓ By 2011, there are programs and physical spaces that are accessible for family bonding and strengthening.
- ✓ By 2012, early education and childcare have family building centers integrated into components their regular programming.
- ✓ By 2011, there are classes, workshops, programs parents/ and/or for guardians positive develop parenting skills.



Sitka Counseling and Prevention Services presents:

Strategy:



Love and Logic is a six- session skill building curriculum intended to provide parents with the tools necessary to raise happy, healthy children. Rooted in self-confidence empathy, parents learn how to provide loving guidance and firm boundaries so that their children will grow into respectful and responsible individuals. Offered three to four times a year, parents enrolled in this course are encouraged to bring their children along to participate in structured play building communication and critical thinking skills. Family meals and childcare are provided.

\*Protective Factors addressed: positive parental and family role models, education, communication, safe and healthy environment

### **Community Seminars**

Recognizing that not all members of the community, including service and support agencies, are fluent in the language, tools or techniques of the prevention of domestic violence and sexual assault, we are providing quarterly training seminars on such topics as Effective Facilitation, Prevention 101, Resiliency & Protective Factors, and How to Build Effective Programs.

### **Goal Five**

Healthcare organizations actively work to address intimate partner violence.



Photo Courtesy of Daily Sitka Sentinel

### **Expected Outcomes**

- ✓ By 2012, healthcare organizations have IPV screening policies in place.
- ✓ By 2013, healthcare organizations are actively using an IPV screening tool in all patient care settings.
- ✓ By 2013, healthcare organizations have an IPV referral process in place for all patients identified as at risk for IPV.
- ✓ By 2014, healthcare providers are actively using assets-based tools such as anticipatory guidance, to help families raise healthy, happy, and resilient children.

Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.

-BARACK OBAMA

# Strategy: Connected Kids: Safe, Strong, Secure

This strategy is a clinical guide and tool for healthcare providers which offers a comprehensive, logical approach to integrating violence prevention within the healthcare setting. This program uses assets-based anticipatory guidance to help parents and families raise healthy, happy and resilient children. Anticipatory guidance helps families understand what to expect during their child's current and approaching stages of development and offers practical suggestions to encourage healthy social, emotional and physical growth.

\*Protective Factors addressed: education, communication, safe and healthy environment, positive parental and family role models

# What is Evidence or Research-Based Prevention?

Evidence-based refers to strategies, programs, or approaches that have been

rigorously evaluated and shown to have at least one positive outcome within the population or context in which they were developed. Similar terms that are often used are research-based, model, or science-based strategies. Most of these refer to programs or strategies that are grounded in some research, but may have adaptations that are significant or appropriate for the community, audience, or issue being addressed. There are very few evidence-based domestic violence or teen dating violence prevention programs nationally from which to draw upon and adapt for Alaskan populations.

# **Additional Strategies**

Photo Courtesy of Hannah Guggenheim

### Strategy: Haa at Galtsaagú Yís: For Our Harvesting Culture Camp

In the summer of 2011, the Sitka Native Education Program (SNEP), in partnership with the Sitka School District and Sitka Tribe of Alaska, held the first annual Haa at Galtsaagú Yís: For Our Harvesting Culture Camp. The two-week camp provided Sitka youth with the opportunity to learn about traditional harvesting and gathering through field-work, conversations with elders, and hands-on activities that included traditional cedar and spruce root projects with Teri Rofkar and devil's club harvesting and processing with elder consultant, Ray Nielsen. In addition to Sitka youth, the camp hosted a group of youth and adults from Angoon in the second week of camp who contributed greatly to the success of the camp. The camp included a one-day service component at the Boys and Girls Club where youth and adults facilitated a cedar bark canoe bailer building project with Club members.

Even from long ago we cherish our grandchildren; no matter what we value, we offer it up to them.

-Charlie Joseph Sr.

SNEP is currently working with the Sitka School District, local and regional partners, and the community as a whole, in an effort to develop an integrated Tlingit language and culture curriculum for preschool through 12<sup>th</sup> grades, and to provide Sitkans of all ages with increased access to Tlingit language and cultural programming.

\*Protective Factors addressed: cultural identity, community connectedness, positive peer and adult role models, education, experiential learning, opportunities to give back, empowerment

### **LeadOn! For Peace and Equality**

LeadOn! is an innovative statewide strategy bringing youth and adults from around Alaska together to take a leadership role in preventing violence. This annual youth leadership conference provides the space for youth to strengthen their leadership skills in promoting nonviolence in relationships and equality in communities. Youth both lead and attend workshops that use film, theater, art, and role-plays to think about ways to promote healthy relationships, share their messages, and ultimately work on projects that create



positive change in their home communities. After the conference, youth attendees and adult partners have the opportunity to apply for mini-grants to help carry out the prevention projects begun at LeadOn!.

\*Protective Factors addressed: positive peer and adult role models, opportunities to give back, safe and healthy environment, tools for positive decision making

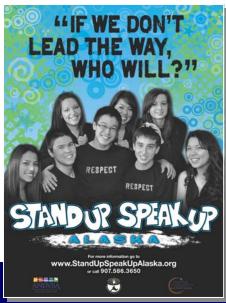
hoto Courtesy of ANDVSA

Successful strategies are comprehensive and complex, creating change at more than one level of the socio-ecological model and serving more than one goal across any prevention plan. To effectively measure change, strategies should be linked to specific protective factors and rigorously evaluated.

### Stand Up! Speak Up!

Stand Up! Speak Up! is a statewide media campaign that incorporates youth ideas about how to promote healthy relationships, respect, and nonviolence. This campaign provides messages of respect through posters, youth television and radio ads, and a website that provides tools for youth to stand up and speak up, to learn more about respect and relationship basics, and how to get involved in creating a peer culture of respect.

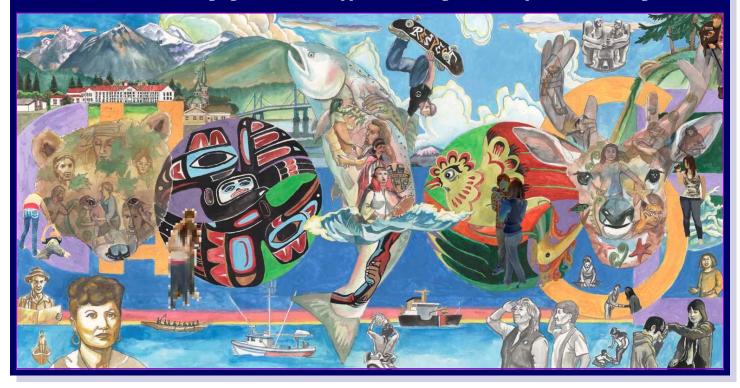
\*Protective Factors addressed: community connectedness, peer education, positive peer and adult role modeling, challenging social norms



### **Strategy: Choose Respect Mural**

The Choose Respect Mural project used a community arts process to engage Sitkans in a dialogue about respect. Using photography, collage, writing prompts, theatre and film, we elicited *invisible stories* from both community members and Blatchley Middle School students to help inform the overall mural design. Through this innovative strategy, we explored the seriousness of, and sought creative solutions to, the issues of bullying, domestic violence and sexual assault within Sitka.

\*Protective Factors addressed: community connectedness, positive peer and adult role models, education, challenging social norms, opportunities to give back, experiential learning



### **Evaluation**

### How will Pathways be evaluated?

Evaluation is a key component to creating a sustainable and effective domestic violence prevention plan. The Pathways Coalition sought to develop outcomes that are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely. The coalition works with an evaluator to develop both process and outcome measures to tell the story of how this plan is implemented and whether we meet our outcomes. We recognize that change takes time and are using tools that will assess both short and intermediate/long-term impact.



Photo Courtesy of Ati Nasiah

### **Effective Prevention:**

- ✓ Is **Comprehensive**: strategies should include multiple components and affect multiple settings to address a wide range of risk and protective factors of the target problem.
- ✓ Incorporates **Varied Teaching Methods:** strategies should include multiple teaching methods, including some type of active, skills-based component.
- Comes in **Sufficient Dosage**: participants need to be exposed to enough of the activity for it to have an effect.
- ✓ Is **Theory-driven**: preventive strategies should have a scientific justification or logical rationale.
- ✓ Focuses on **Positive Relationships**: programs should foster strong, stable, positive relationships between children and adults.
- ✓ Is **Appropriately Timed**: program activities should happen at a time (developmentally) that can have maximal impact in a participant's life.
- ✓ Is **Socio-culturally Relevant:** programs should be tailored to fit within cultural beliefs and practices of specific groups as well as local community norms.
- ✓ Includes **Outcome Evaluation**: a systematic outcome evaluation is necessary to determine whether a program or strategy worked.
- Requires Well-Trained Staff: programs need to be implemented by staff members who are sensitive, competent, and have received sufficient training, support, and supervision. Follow-up (booster) training and technical assistance to staff are critical.

### Who Can Get Involved?

- CommunityMembers
- ✓ Parents
- ✓ Educators
- ✓ Men
- ✓ Women
- ✓ Youth
- ✓ Elders



Photo Courtesy of Martina Kurzer

- ✓ Youth Group and Community Leaders
- Health Workers and Service Providers
- ✓ Faith Leaders
- ✓ Law Enforcement Officers
- ✓ Policy Makers

### By coordinating our efforts we CAN stop violence before it occurs!



Photo Courtesy of Nick Campolettano

Being part of community means helping others, trusting and listening.

-GOTR participant

**Build relationships based on respect and equality.** 

Promote values that are consistent with strong traditions and strong families.

Respect diversity and the rights of those around you.

Role model healthy relationships and encourage open communication.

Advocate for and prioritize resources for the primary prevention of teen dating violence and domestic violence.

Respect Women. Respect Youth. Respect Elders. Embrace Diversity!

# **Partners**

### Members of Pathways to a Safer Sitka:

Center for Community
Kettleson Memorial Library
Mt. Edgecumbe High School
Planned Parenthood
Sitkans Against Family Violence
Sitka Community Hospital
Sitka Counseling and Prevention
Services
Sitka Native Education Program
Sitka Public Health
Southeast Alaska Regional Health
Consortium
University of Alaska Southeast
Youth Advocates of Sitka, Inc.

Dear Girls on the Run, Thank you for making me believe in myself.

-GOTR participant



Photo Courtesy of Daily Sitka Sentinel

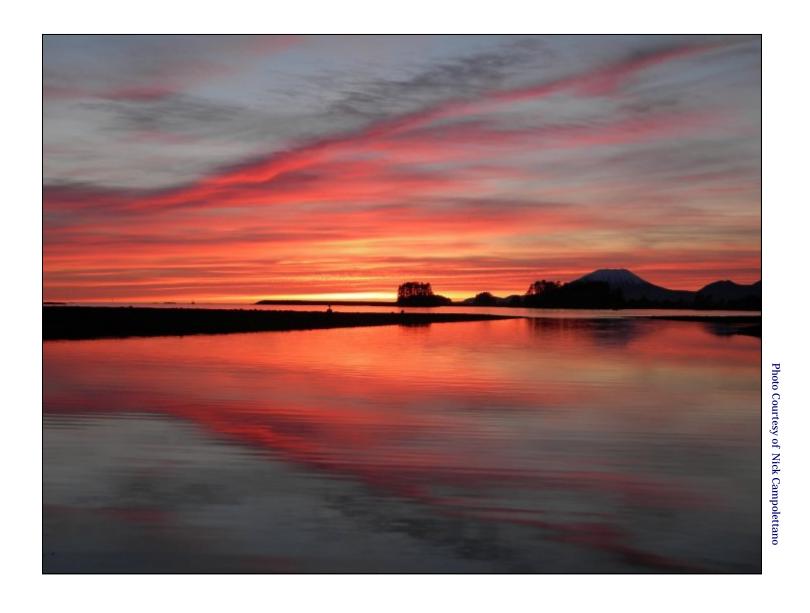


Photo Courtesy of Meg Baier

# Implementation Partners:

To achieve the goals and carry out our strategies described in our plan, we are working closely with PASS members and other partners, including:

artchange, inc.
Blatchley Middle School
Keet Gooshi Heen
Elementary School
Pacific High School
Sitka High School
Sitka Choose Respect
Mural Committee



Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

- Margaret Mead



Sitkans Against Family Violence P.O. Box 6136 Sitka, AK 99835 (907) 747-3370 www.safv.org

