The Sitka Youth Leadership Committee (SYLC) is thrilled to have launched its “Healthy Me, Healthy We” Campaign. This campaign - comprised of posters, stickers, and movie theater ads - grew out of a goal set by SYLC members at the 2017 LeadOn Conference: to create healthier relationships by challenging norms around gender, relationships and differences.

With the aid of a graphic designer, these materials were developed and designed in the spring of 2018 by students in SYLC. The campaign encourages teens to define not only the “rights”, but also the “responsibilities” that they plan to establish in any relationship - intimate and platonic alike. For instance, SYLC promotes the notion that teens have the right to their individuality and independence in a relationship, as well as the responsibility to respect the same in their partner.

This campaign was launched during the month of February to coincide with Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month. We know that teen dating violence is as pervasive as it is serious: 1.5 million high schoolers report having experienced either abusive or controlling behaviors in a dating relationship and one third of all teens will experience some sort of unhealthy relationship. Therefore, one of SYLC’s major focuses each year is spreading awareness of teen dating violence during the month of February and beyond.

SYLC is particularly proud to announce that their efforts have been recognized and picked up by the state Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (CDVSA). CDVSA distributed their materials in February as part of their statewide campaign! Not only did SYLC’s resources appear around town and in movie theaters in Southeast, they also appeared in every high school in Alaska, as well as on social media platforms Youtube, Instagram, and Snapchat.

We are so proud of these teens and their tireless efforts and unwavering dedication to promote healthy relationships in Sitka and beyond. Though February has come to a close, we remain committed to combating teen dating violence year-round and hope that you will do your part in helping us create a culture that supports healthy teen relationships.

SYLC’s current members are Terrance John-son, Aaní Perkins, Makayla Meyers, Esther Burdick, Jordan David, Laura Fields, Erik Toshavik, Delainey Steffes, Cora Dow, and Darby Osborne.

SYLC is a prevention program offered by SAFV.
New Sexual Assault Response Team

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Alaska's rates for sexual violence are three times the national average.

Sitka has recently launched a Sexual Assault Response Team (SART). Through a grant, Sitka Tribe of Alaska funded a position to coordinate a SART in our community in collaboration with the Sitka Police Department, SEARHC, and SAFV. What this means is that when a sexual assault occurs in Sitka, there is now a team of trained nurses, advocates, and police officers to respond and arrange a sexual assault exam.

The group meets on a monthly basis to create policies and work on any systematic issues that arise as more reports come in. In the recent past when there was not an active SART, individuals were flown to other communities to receive this evidence collecting exam. Having the option of this exam being performed right here in Sitka lessens the re-traumatization of receiving the exam and heightens the likelihood that an individual will go through with reporting or at least with receiving the exam.

There is an option of the exam being anonymous when collected by the police. This gives an individual time to decide if they would like to go through with reporting. If you would like to know more what reporting could look like, please call an advocate at 907-747-3370.

SAFV would like to thank Sitka Tribe of Alaska for coordinating this team to provide an invaluable resource in our community, and our partners at SEARHC and SPD for making the response happen.

Please look out for flyers about a community mandala art event that will take place in April in honor of Sexual Assault Awareness Month and to highlight the newly formed SART.

New Girls on the Run Coordinator

Shadeed A. Miller is the newest member of SAFV's Prevention Department. He has been in Sitka for two years. He is a Texas native who was raised outside of Atlanta, Georgia.

After completing a thru-hike of the Appalachian Trail for his 30th birthday, which happens to be Alaska Day, he found himself wanting to explore the West Coast. His journey lead him to Sitka, and he couldn’t be happier with how this path has turned out.

A big part of his life is movement with a purpose and speaking with clear compassionate intention. He has seen how a person can change not only their lives but those around them by firmly putting one foot in front of the other. The idea of purpose filled movement, and compassionate intention is what drew him to SAFV’s prevention department. He started as a volunteer with the Boys Run I toowú klatseen Strengthen Your Spirit program, and by the time the season was over he found himself wanting to continue to help facilitate an atmosphere where diversity, equality, respect, compassion, non-violence, and empowerment based advocacy were a part of the community.

Now he is coordinating the 11th season of Girls on the Run. These programs not only equip the youth with lifelong tools to help navigate confidently and safely throughout life but also impact all who volunteer, donate, and help these programs come to fruition. You cannot spell community without unity, and Shadeed is honored to spread that unity here in Sitka.
Earlier this month, SYLC members Esther Burdick and Aaní Perkins traveled to Anchorage to participate in the ANDVSA Primary Prevention Summit.

The two spoke on a panel with other youth from around the state. They shared about SYLC’s primary mission, current projects, and challenges they’ve worked to overcome as youth leaders. The pair also got the opportunity to facilitate their own workshop, entitled “Nuts, Bolts, and Benefits of Youth Led Programs.”

Presenting to a group of about 20 adults, they shared all the secrets behind SYLC’s successes, including the consensus building processes vital to their projects and the ways SYLC keeps members coming back.

Esther and Aaní had a great time at the summit and are excited to continue their work this spring with the upcoming release of the Power & Privilege campaign! Stay tuned!

SYLC is currently launching the “Share More” campaign. The group is inviting members of the community to share vulnerable stories that give a glimpse of their stories or experiences. Anyone who feels compelled can submit a postcard with any combination of words, collages, or art that conveys the story they want to tell.

Submissions can be as serious or light-hearted as you want. SYLC will be posting submissions on their social media under #MakeItPersonal. Submissions will remain completely anonymous and can be submitted in drop boxes found around Sitka. By sharing these vulnerable stories on Instagram and Facebook, SYLC will be highlighting the diversity of Sitka and encouraging more diverse storytelling on social media and in our world.

Boxes will be places all over town to receive cards with individual’s life stories.
Girls on the Run 11th Season Off and Running

The 11th annual season of Girls on the Run is off to a terrific start. As the girls make new friends we have been focusing on self-care, how to promote positive self-talk, and how to identify and challenge negative self-talk.

The girls are setting personal lap goals every lesson and running, walking (crabwalks and bear walks included), skipping, and hopping towards our collective goal of completing our 5k Fun Run on May 18th, 2019 @ 10am Harrigan Centennial Hall!

Each week we will continue working together and learning tools to help us reach our vision of a world where every girl knows and activates her limitless potential, and is free to boldly pursue her dreams!
Visit to Angoon

Children Program Coordinator Tina Bachmeier visited Angoon last week. It was her fourth trip to the Admiralty Island community in the last two years. She feels gratitude to be welcomed onto this Tinglit land and into this community.

During her time in Angoon, she enjoyed spending time with the students throughout the school day, talking about personal safety, doing art together, and playing on the playground.

SAVF has also helped to establish a safe home in Angoon, and continues to support community members in providing advocacy for children and adults.

In collaboration with SEARHC, SAFV hosts family engagement nights, where participants watched movies, did a color run and had a dance night! SAFV has also helped support SEARHC in establishing a food pantry in the local SEARHC Clinic for families in need. She is excited to be gearing up for her next trip!

Crucial Conversation on Foster Parenting

SAVF will continue the series Crucial Conversation by offering a panel discussion on foster parenting. This originated at the last Crucial Conversation where panelists and attendants discovered how little is known about the possibility of impacting children by providing a temporary safe and structured home.

Representatives of Sitka Tribe Social Services, Youth Advocates, and Office of Children’s Services will attend.

In order to reach a large audience, this discussion will be hosted by Raven Radio, KCAW 104.7 FM on

May 6 from 10 to 11 am

SAVF will post links to this broadcast on its website and Facebook so that those who cannot listen at this specific time will have a chance to do so later.

Thank you to Raven Radio for making this possible.
Attend SAFV Fundraiser Honoring Women on April 20

YOU ARE INVITED
21st Annual Honoring Women Gala
April 20, 6 pm at Harrigan Centennial Hall

CELEBRATE
Emily Davis         Lynne Brandon
Michelle Putz       Renée Trafton

Tickets for $65 at Old Harbor Books and online at safv.org.

Please support SAFV by attending the 21st Annual Honoring Women Gala. Join us for dinner catered by Chef Edith Johnson, live music by Summerfall, no host bar, entertainment, slide shows of the honorees, award ceremony, and silent auction.

Tickets cost $65 and will be available at Old Harbor Books on April 6. You can also buy online by going to safv.org.

If you can’t make it on this day, please consider
• Buying a ticket for someone who would like to attend but can’t afford it
• Donating an item or service to our silent auction
• Contributing with your cash donation, or
• Buying an ad in the event program

For more information, call Martina at 907-747-3370.

Thank you and Gunal’cheesh.

April is Sexual Assault Awareness & Child Abuse Prevention Month — Events

SAFV is thrilled to announce that several organizations are coordinating events to acknowledge April as Sexual Assault and Child Abuse Prevention Months. Please attend and connect to your community. Thanks to all who are involved in organizing. It’s a movement!

Helping Hands, Healing Hands: A community mandala art event sponsored by SAFV and STA. Details are not available yet and will be posted on SAFV’s Facebook and other media as soon as possible. Stay tuned or call Natalie at 907-747-3491 for an update.

Run for Child Abuse Prevention Month — April 6: 5K run or 2 mile walk, registration 9 am, race starts 9:30 at O’Connell Bridge Lightening Dock. $10 suggested donation to benefit SAFV for running programs like Girls on the Run and Boys Run—I towúu Klatseen.

Coast Guard 5K run — April 12th: Crew members of the USCG Cutter Kukui and Air Station Sitka are coordinating a 5K run. Registration will start at 9:00 am and the run will begin at 10:30 am at Crescent Harbor Shelter. Runners will receive teal ribbons and are encouraged to wear teal. SAFV and STA will be present with an info table for the new Sexual Assault Response Team.
Thank you, Volunteers!

The following volunteers served through 2018 and until February 2019, for a total of 1,066 hours.

We very much appreciate this support. It shows us and our funders how much the community values our services, and how passionate Sitkans are.

Abigail Bliss
Alice Johnstone
Alivia Crowl
Alliyah Merculief
Alliyah Nay
Ana Karmun
Bobby from Northrim Bank
Brayden Bahneke
Brittany Richardson
Caitlin Way
Cheri Hample
Cheryl Vastola
Chris Blackmon
Chris Kowalczewski
Cisco Mahoney
Coral Pendell
Debby LeVeck
Eedan Ross
Elena Rosenthal
Emily Pound
Frances Simpon
Gerald Watson
Grace Garner
Hannah Whitson
J Stone
Jack Davis
Jacob Pegoda
Jasmine Wood
Jean Arnold
Jim Bleil
Joann Torgeson
Joel Hansen
Johanna Galovska
Jose Rivera
Karen Boyer
Ken Fate
Kennedy Langlie
Kenny Meyers
Kent Wells
Kevan O’Hanlon
Kristina Tirman
KT Wiley
Larry Edwards
Lisa Manske
Maleah Wenzel
Mary Levesque
Matt Foruria
Matthew Breckel
Michael Mahoney
Mike Litman
Nancy Jo Bleier
Nya Schaffer
Paulla Hardy
Ritch Philippis
Samantha Wade
Sarah Newhouse
Shadeed Miller
Sharon McIndoo
Shauna Thornton
Siraj Sindhu
Stan Lopata
Steven Morales
Sue Conrad
Sydney Carter
Tia Patkotak
Tyler Holt
Tyra Brown
Vernae Ramoth
Zane Mahoney

We apologize to anyone who volunteered but is not included on this list. We do our best to record all volunteer hours, but sometimes we miss a name.

SAFV Board
Chair: Maite Lorente
Vice Chair: Dave Levesque
Treasurer: Dave Levesque
Secretary: Dayna Arnold
Brian McNitt
Eleyna Rosenthal

SAFV Staff
Executive Director:
Michelle Mahoney
Prevention Director:
Julia Smith
Prevention Staff:
Sam O’Brien
Rebecca Foster
Shadeed Miller
Community Coordinator:
Martina Kurzer
Direct Services Supervisor:
Natalie Wojcik
Children’s Program:
Tina Bachmeier
Emily Pound
Advocates:
Deanna Moore
Heather Chandler
Heather Riggs
Megan Copley
Peg Blumer
Wendy Leverett
Relief Advocates:
Cayrn Coleman
Karim Mullins

IMMINENT MOVE
As this newsletter is being edited, SAFV board vice chair and treasurer Dave Levesque and Kenny Meyers and disassembling the second floor deck.

This is the first real indicator that change lies ahead for staff and residents of SAFV. By May 1 we will be in two locations, 601 Alice Loop for offices and undisclosed for the shelter.

Thanks, Dave and Kenny, for driving this ahead.
After 5 years of planning — SAFV WILL MOVE!!

Our building expansion and renovation project is set to begin in May.

We will be moving our service offices to

601 Alice Loop on April 29th

- Advocates will be available in Room 107
- Our Prevention Team will be in Room 108
- Administrative Offices will be in 109
- The shelter will move to an undisclosed location.

WE WILL NOT HAVE ANY INTERRUPTION IN EMERGENCY SERVICES!

PLEASE NOTE:
SAFV WILL NOT ACCEPT ANY DONATIONS OF FOOD OR HOUSEHOLD ITEMS BETWEEN NOW AND MAY 15.

We appreciate all of you who have supported this project.

THANK YOU AND GUNAL’CHEESH!

United Way Member Agency
Member of the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

Crisis Line: 1-800-478-6511
Phone: 907-747-3370
Sitka, AK 99833
P.O. Box 6136
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