

# CATG BEHAVIORAL HEALTH NEWSLETTER

## BEHAVIORAL HEALTH STAFF

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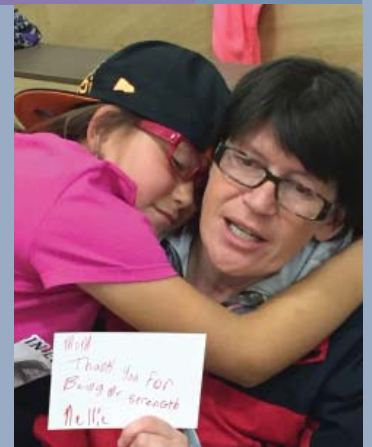
Myra Thumma – 662-7563  
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Kids Don't Float Program

## LATE SUMMER PROGRAMS

In August, the Behavioral Health department sponsored two days of the “Kids Don’t Float” program in Fort Yukon. Roughly 35 children and community members attended presentations regarding boating and water safety. Participants learned about a range of topics including; throw bags and other rescue devices, hypothermia (with emphasis on treatment), fire building, using signals (SOS and other means), ice rescue, and how to build a survival kit. Special thanks go to the Alaska Commercial Company and to the City of Fort Yukon for their donations. Donations were used to provide a luncheon for all participants and door prizes.



For Suicide Prevention Awareness Month in September, BH Program Coordinator Janis Carroll and Stephanie Hinz, BH Clinician, worked with the 8th grade art class to create “selfie frames” to encourage people to “Connect, Communicate Care.”

The Behavioral Health program also hosted both a Youth Night (at the Addie Shewfelt building) and a Family Fun Night at the gym. Roughly 20 kids and parents participated. Thank you to both the City of Fort Yukon and to the Alaska Commercial Company for their donations! Donations were used to provide drinks, snacks and door prizes.

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month and Bullying Prevention Month. October 23-31 is Red Ribbon Week.

# OCTOBER IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

## WHAT DOES ABUSE LOOK LIKE?

### Forms of Abuse

#### **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse is a powerful way that an abusive person gets and keeps their partner under control and it instills an environment of constant fear. While physical abuse is the form of abuse that is most commonly known, it may or may not be a part of an abusive relationship. If physical abuse is present early in the relationship, it commonly gets worse over time. If there is no physical abuse in the relationship, it may begin to occur when the victim is pregnant or when the victim is considering leaving the relationship.

Physical violence may include: hitting, punching, kicking, slapping, strangling, smothering, using or threatening to use weapons, shoving, interrupting your sleep, throwing things, destroying property, hurting or killing pets, and denying medical treatment.

#### **Sexual Abuse**

Some form of sexual abuse is common in abusive relationships but it is often the least discussed. It can be subtle or overt. The impact on the victim is commonly feelings of shame and humiliation.

Sexual abuse may include: physically forcing sex, making you feel fearful about saying no to sex, forcing sex with other partners, forcing you to participate in demeaning or degrading sexual acts, violence or name calling during sex, and denying contraception or protection from sexually transmitted diseases.

#### **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse occurs in some form in all abusive relationships. It is a very effective tactic used by abusive partners to obtain power and control and it can cause extreme damage to the victim's self esteem. Commonly, emotional abuse makes the victim feel like they are responsible for the abuse and to feel crazy, worthless and hopeless. It is so damaging that many survivors of domestic violence report that they would have rather "be hit" than endure the ongoing psychic damage of emotional abuse.

Emotional abuse can include: constant put

downs or criticisms, name calling, "crazy making", acting superior, minimizing the abuse or blaming you for their behavior, threatening and making you feel fearful, isolating you from family and friends, excessive jealousy, accusing you of having affairs, and watching where you go and who you talk to.

#### **Financial Abuse**

This form of abuse is one of the least commonly known but one of the most powerful tactic of entrapping a victims in the relationship. It is so powerful that many victims of abuse describe it as the main reason that they stayed in an abusive relationship or went back to one.

Some forms of financial abuse include: giving you an allowance, not letting you have your own money, hiding family assets, running up debt, interfering with your job, and ruining your credit.

## RED FLAGS OF ABUSE

### GET HELP FOR YOURSELF OR A FRIEND

Domestic violence encompasses a spectrum of behaviors that abusers use to control victims. The following list includes warning signs that someone may be abusive. If you or a friend experience these behaviors from a partner, remember: it is not your fault and there are advocates waiting to help.

"Red flags" include someone who:

- Wants to move too quickly into the relationship.
- Early in the relationship flatters you constantly, and seems "too good to be true."
- Wants you all to him- or herself; insists that you stop spending time with your friends or family.
- Insists that you stop participating in hobbies or activities, quit school, or quit your job.
- Does not honor your boundaries.
- Is excessively jealous and accuses you of being unfaithful.
- Wants to know where you are all of the time and frequently calls, emails, and texts you throughout the day.
- Criticizes or puts you down; says you are crazy, stupid, and/or fat/unattractive, or that no one else would ever want or love you.
- Takes no responsibility for his or her behavior and



blames others.

- Has a history of abusing others.
- Blames the entire failure of previous relationships on his or her former partner; for example, “My ex was totally crazy.”
- Takes your money or runs up your credit card debt.
- Rages out of control with you but can maintain composure around others.

**Abuse is never the fault of the victim and it can be hard for many reasons, including safety, to end the relationship.** If you experience these “red flags,” you can confide in a friend or reach out for support from a domestic violence advocate. If you believe a friend or relative is being abused, offer your nonjudgmental support and help.

If you are in an abusive relationship, it is important to get support. Someone who batters is usually very good at getting their partner isolated away from their family and friends. As a result, victims often begin to feel ashamed and alone and believe that no one would understand. Many survivors have even described feeling as if they didn't even know who they were anymore. This makes it even more difficult to survive the abuse, to sort through the feelings and to make decisions that will be best for you and your children.

**If you find that you don't have anyone to talk to, consider calling the National Domestic Violence Hotline.** Hotline operators are specially trained in domestic violence and are available 24 hours a day to provide resources, help with options to stay safe or just to listen. For help and information:

**National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or TTY 1-800-787-3224**

Source: National Network to End Domestic Violence - <http://nnedv.org/resources/stats/gethelp/redflagsofabuse.html>

# Domestic Violence

## Understand The Cycle of Violence

**IF YOU NEED HELP**

National Domestic Violence Hotline  
1-800-799-7233  
National Sexual Assault Hotline  
1-800-656-4673  
National Teen Dating Abuse Hotline  
1-866-331-9474

An abusive partner lashes out with aggressive, belittling, or violent behavior. The abuse is a power play designed to show you “who is boss.”

**GUILT**

An abusive partner feels guilt, but not over what he's done. He's more worried about the possibility of being caught and facing consequences for his abusive behavior.

**EXCUSES**

An abuser rationalizes what he or she has done. The person may come up with a string of excuses or blame the victim for the abusive behavior—anything to avoid taking responsibility.

**NORMAL BEHAVIOR**

The abuser does everything he can to regain control and keep the victim in the relationship. He may act as if nothing has happened, or he may turn on the charm. This peaceful honeymoon phase may give the victim hope that the abuser has really changed this time.

**FANTASY & PLANNING**

The abuser begins to fantasize about abusing again. He spends a lot of time thinking about what the victim has done wrong and how he'll make her pay. Then he makes a plan for turning the fantasy of abuse into reality.

**SET UP**

The abuser sets the victim up and puts his plan in motion, creating a situation where he can justify abusing again.

Abusers enter the “**GUILT**” phase of the cycle and it keeps repeating over and over again.

**One in every four women will experience domestic violence in her lifetime.**  
—National Coalition Against Domestic Violence

**STOP DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**  
Get Involved. Save a life.

LOVE SHOULDN'T HURT

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## NATIONAL BULLYING PREVENTION MONTH

**In spite of the significant impact that bullying can have on a target, our society often views it as acceptable behavior. There are many misconceptions that characterize bullying, all of which can lead to minimizing the behavior. Here are a few of these common misconceptions, followed by the facts.**

### **“Bullying is a natural part of childhood.”**

FACT: There is nothing natural about being bullied. Bullying is often considered a normal part of childhood because it is such a common experience. Physical or emotional aggression toward others should not be tolerated as a normal part of childhood.

### **“Words will never hurt you.”**

FACT: Even though words don't leave bruises or broken bones, studies have shown they may leave deep emotional scars that can have lifelong implications. Children learn at a very early age that words can hurt other children.

### **“Boys will be boys.”**

FACT: The implication here is that bullying is acceptable, and that it is normal for boys to be physically or verbally aggressive. However, research indicates aggression is a learned behavior, not a natural response.

### **“Girls don't bully.”**

Fact: Research shows that girls can and do bully. While they do not physically bully targets as often as boys, they will often use verbal and emotional bullying. Bullying for girls escalates during the middle school years.

### **“Children and youth who are bullied will almost always tell an adult.”**

FACT: Adults are often unaware of bullying, in part because many children and youth don't report it. Most studies find that only 25 to 50 percent of bullied children talk to an adult about the situation. Boys and older children are less likely than girls and younger children to tell adults about bullying. Children may be reluctant to report bullying because they fear retaliation

by the children doing the bullying. They also may fear that adults won't take their concerns seriously or will deal inappropriately with the situation.

### **“Bullying is easy to recognize.”**

FACT: Physical bullying, such as hitting, kicking, and fighting, is easy to recognize since this type of behavior is overt. It is the covert bullying—such as shunning, alienating, and leaving children out on purpose—that is much harder to detect.

### **“Children and youth who bully are mostly loners with few social skills.”**

FACT: Children who bully usually do not lack friends. In fact, some research finds that these children have larger friendship networks than other children. Children who bully also generally have more leadership skills than targets of bullying or children not involved in bullying.

### **“Bullied kids need to learn how to deal with bullying on their own.”**

FACT: Some children have the confidence and skills to stop bullying when it happens, but many do not. Moreover, children shouldn't be expected to deal with bullying on their own. Bullying is a form of victimization and peer abuse. Just as society does not expect victims of other types of abuse (e.g., child maltreatment or domestic abuse) to “deal with the situation on their own,” we should not expect this from targets of bullying. Adults have critical roles to play in helping to stop bullying, as do other children who witness or observe bullying.

### **“Most children and youth who observe bullying don't want to get involved.”**

FACT: The good news is that most children and youth think that bullying is “not cool” and feel that they should do something if they see it happen. In a recent study of tweens (children ages 9 to 12), 56 percent said that they usually either say or do something to try to stop bullying or tell someone who can help (Brown, Birch, & Kancherla, 2005). These children and youth play a critical role in helping to stop bullying.

<http://www.pacer.org/publications/bullypdf/BP-1.pdf>



Behavioral Health Aide Myra Thumma and Behavioral Health Aide Program Manager Virginia Peter attended the Gwich'in Gathering in Arctic Village. The Gathering takes place every two years in a Gwich'in community. The next Gathering will be in 2018 in Tsiigehtchik, Northwest Territories.

## Notifying the School About a Bullying Incident—Using a Template Letter

Parents should contact school staff each time their child informs them that he or she has been bullied. PACER Center has created template letters that parents may use as a guide for writing a letter to their child's school. These letters contain standard language and "fill in the blank" spaces so the letter can be customized for your child.

PACER Center's sample letter(s) can serve two purposes. First, the letter will alert school administration of the bullying and your desire for interventions against the bullying.

Second, the letter can serve as your written record when referring to events. The record (letter) should be factual and absent of opinions or emotional statements.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
RE: \_\_\_\_\_ (first and last name of child)

Dear \_\_\_\_\_, (name of Principal)

My child, \_\_\_\_\_, (first name of child) is in the \_\_\_\_\_ (grade level) at \_\_\_\_\_ (name of school). At school \_\_\_\_\_ (she/he) has been bullied and harassed by \_\_\_\_\_ (name of harasser(s)). This has occurred on \_\_\_\_\_ (date or approximate period of time) when \_\_\_\_\_ (describe as many details of the incident(s) as can be recalled). When this happened \_\_\_\_\_ (name of witness(es)) heard or saw it and \_\_\_\_\_ (their response(s)). We became aware of this incident when \_\_\_\_\_ (describe how you were notified).

My \_\_\_\_\_ (daughter/son) was hurt by this bullying and harassment. \_\_\_\_\_ (She/He) had \_\_\_\_\_ (describe physical injuries, emotional suffering and any medical or psychological treatment required). \_\_\_\_\_ (Our/My) child has the right to be in a safe environment at school so \_\_\_\_\_ (she/he) can learn.

Please send \_\_\_\_\_ (me/us) a copy of the District policies on bullying and harassment, investigate this problem and correct it as soon as possible. Please let \_\_\_\_\_ (me/us) know, in writing, of the actions you have taken to rectify the situation and to ensure it does not happen again. I expect a response within 5 business days.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this serious problem.  
Sincerely,  
(Sign in this area)

\_\_\_\_\_ (your name)

CC: \_\_\_\_\_ (name of Superintendent of schools), Superintendent

(Sign and keep a copy for your records)



Pip, the hamster mascot of the Club Crew, loves to visit new places and meet new kids. Help Pip answer a few questions about bullying!

### PIP'S QUIZ - TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. What is bullying?
  - a) When you and a friend get in a fight about who is a better basketball player.
  - b) When someone accidentally bumps into you on the playground while playing tag.
  - c) When someone is being hurt either by words or actions, feels bad because of it, and has a hard time stopping what's happening to them.
  - d) When your brother eats the last bowl of your favorite cereal.
2. What should you do if you're being bullied?
  - a) Speak up.
  - b) Tell an adult.
  - c) Know that you have the right to be safe.
  - d) All of the above.
3. How can you recognize when someone is bullying?
  - a) Size. The person bullying is bigger than the person being bullied.
  - b) Gender. Girls never bully, only boys do.
  - c) Behavior. They do something that hurts or harms another person.
  - d) Age. It's always older kids picking on younger kids.
4. What can you do if you see bullying happen?
  - a) Not join in.
  - b) Tell an adult.
  - c) Help the student being bullied get away from the situation.
  - d) Let them know they don't deserve to be bullied.
  - a) All of the above.

Answers: 1. c) 2. d) 3. c) 4. e)

<http://www.pacer.org/bullying/classroom/elementary/activities/pdf/kab-newsletter-Sept2016.pdf>

**Courage is fire, and bullying is smoke.**  
*Benjamin Disraeli*



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Wednesday, October 19 - Fort Yukon Preparedness & Response Work Group

12:00-1:00 pm

Addie Shewfelt Building

### Wednesday, October 19 Unity Day

Wear orange in support of bullying prevention!

### October 21 - Fort Yukon Domestic Violence Awareness Lunch

12:00-2:00 pm

Addie Shewfelt Building

### October 24-28 - Fort Yukon Red Ribbon Week "YOLO. Be Drug Free."

*Monday, 10/24*

**Wear Red** in support of drug prevention activities

*Tuesday, 10/25*

**Wear Fort Yukon Eagles** T-shirt/ sweaters or team jersey "Team up against drugs"

*Wednesday, 10/26*

**Crazy hair day** - "Hairs' to a drug free life"

*Thursday, 10/27 (Fort Yukon School)*

**Classroom door decoration contest**

Winning class will receive a pizza party

*Friday, 10/28 (Addie Shewfelt Bldg)*

**Games, Arts & Crafts, Snacks**

3:00-5:00 pm

Come get a Halloween give-away bag!

**DOOR PRIZES!**

## BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

The CATG Behavioral Health Program provides professional, confidential, and culturally appropriate mental health and substance abuse services. Through a variety of services the program promotes healing, personal growth, and healthy living for the individual, family, and community.

CATG Behavioral Health Program services include: alcohol assessments, prevention education, individual counseling, and referrals.

All services start with a basic screening and information gathering session. If you would like to make an appointment, please contact our office at 662-7545.

**If you feel that you are experiencing a crisis, please call the Yukon Flats Health Center: (907) 662-2460. After hours crises may be directed to the on-call number (907) 662-2462.**

### Other Crisis Contacts:

CareLine (suicide hotline):  
877-266-HELP (4357)

National Child Abuse Hotline:  
800-25-ABUSE (22873)

National Domestic Violence Hotline:  
800-799-SAFE (7233)

In August, Virginia Peter retired from her position as the Behavioral Health Aide for Fort Yukon. Virginia worked for the people of the Flats for 20+ years and has decided to relax and spend time with her family.

Virginia spent a lot of time out in the community helping anyone who needed it, anytime of the day or night. If someone called she was there. She also travelled to the villages to help when things happened as well as to do outreach. Even though she no longer works for CATG we are certain she will still help anyone who calls.

Thank you for your service Virginia!

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