Profile

NAME: Family Wellness Warriors Initiative

PRIMARY CONTACT: Bobbi Outten, MA, LPC, Clinical Director

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ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT: 501(c)(3) private non-profit organization
Faith-based, health care program of Southcentral Foundation, an Alaska Native non-profit health care corporation.

SERVICE FOCUS: Mental & Behavioral Health care

SERVICE AREA: State of Alaska

POPULATION: Alaska Native and American Indian people

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: 22

ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET: $1,500,000

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Private foundations, third party billing, and donations.

TYPES OF SERVICES: Primary health care

SPECIFIC:
- Education and training conferences
- domestic violence prevention
- traditional healing
- child maltreatment prevention
- substance abuse support
- mental health and spiritual healing
- trauma related healing

GOAL: To end domestic violence, child sexual abuse, and child neglect, in the State of Alaska, in this generation.
ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY, BACKGROUND, AND ADMINISTRATION
Family Wellness Warriors Initiative (FWWI), developed in 1999, is Southcentral Foundation’s state-wide program that addresses domestic violence, child sexual abuse, and child neglect in the Alaskan Communities. While the Alaska Native community is FWWI’s targeted population, all individuals, regardless of race, are encouraged to attend. The FWWI Model equips individuals and communities with education, tools and skills to reverse the escalating levels of domestic violence and child maltreatment using culturally appropriate strategies.

Today, over 3,000 people in Alaska stand strong, utilizing long traditions of Native people’s strength, ready to counter all types of abuse within this population. Of the 3,000+ participants who have participated, 63% are Alaska Native/American Indian people and 47% are male. FWWI is calling out our men to use their strength to be the protectors of the family. And our men are responding. Those who have used their strength to harm are beginning to use their strength toward wellness.

FWWI provides a three-year, comprehensive development model that includes intensive education and training, leadership development, parent education, and family and community support. The program works with Tribal and community leaders and begins with a dialog that establishes a partnership for determining the next steps to be taken in creating the attitudes and structures for preventing domestic violence, child sex abuse and child neglect in that community. FWWI has gained acceptance and trust in rural areas because it provides training only by invitation from the community. The FWWI training model can be a template for creating similar community change throughout Alaska since it was created for replication and adaptation. The FWWI training campus has a conference center and lodging available onsite. However, trainings also occur in participating rural communities.

Designed for Native people, by Native people, FWWI’s techniques have proven to have universal appeal and effectiveness. FWWI’s training and education program is not only having a major impact on the lives of Alaska Native people and others in our state, but is currently receiving international recognition. Twenty-four lower-48 states have participated in FWWI’s trainings. Members of the Navajo Nations, State of Alaska leaders, and multiple Alaska Native associations have also participated in trainings. After a search throughout the nation for programs most impacting Inuit men’s health, the National Aboriginal Health Organization in Ottawa ON Canada, has selected to highlight FWWI as a national model on a three-day television series in May 2009. Also in 2009 FWWI received The Regional/Area Award from the National Indian Health Board. FWWI is moving toward becoming a national prevention model for family violence among indigenous populations.