



Alaska Summit Enterprise, Inc.
Justice for Native Children Project



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Dear Tribal Leaders -

This letter is an invitation for you to gather with other Tribal Council members in the Copper River region to learn about and discuss issues relating to the safety and protection of your Tribal children. The Tribal Leader's Gathering will be held on April 30 from 10 to 3:30, hosted by the Tazlina Village Council at their Community Center.

Over the past year, I have been working under a special contract with the Alaska Children's Alliance (see enclosed brochure) on a community-based initiative – "Honoring, Nurturing and Protecting Our Children" - to improve awareness about child victimization and strengthen community response to child abuse. Initially I contacted each Tribe through either the ICWA worker or the Tribal Administrator and met with several Tribal Councils to seek direction and input on this project. In some of your communities, a community information session was held to discuss the rights of parents and children and learn how abuse affects children. This month, which is National Child Abuse Awareness Month, we have worked with your Tribal staff to complete KCAM "awareness" reports, Copper River Record articles and a youth poster contest.

We know it takes "a whole community to raise a child" and each of us has a role in helping children to grow up safe and abuse-free so they can be responsible Tribal leaders some day. This project has been devoted to raising awareness toward preventing abuse – realizing that it is important for all Tribal citizens to recognize the spiritual, emotional, and physical harm child abuse can cause.

The Tribal Leader's Gathering will include sharing some resources with you, discussing the rights and responsibilities of parents and looking at ideas for regional strategies to strengthen child abuse prevention. We will also announce the winners of the Student Poster Contest (see flyer enclosed) at this meeting, and ask you to congratulate the winners!

It has been an honor to visit your communities, work with your Tribal staff and to work in the Copper River region once again. I hope to see you on April 30th!

In Peace,

Diane Payne, Director Justice for Native Children Project

P.S. Please let me know if you are attending so we will be sure to have enough food for lunch!