

# Student Health and Safety

## RATIONALE FOR ACTION

Creating healthy, safe schools requires healthy families and communities. Children who have a strong connection to family values, customs, and beliefs develop the confidence to reach for a star and the talent to grab one.

If children cannot rely on positive connections at home, they will settle for any substitute that satisfies this longing, including gang affiliation, harmful relationships, violence, and drug and alcohol abuse.

Schools must be proactive, focusing on the prevention of unsafe and unhealthy practices. Several ingredients are necessary to create a safe



and healthy school environment. Schools will form partnerships with community entities to achieve these goals.

Schools must take rigorous action to ensure that schools are free from violence, drugs, disruptive behavior, and harassment. Schools must provide support and intervention services for

parents and students, a broad range of activities, rigorous academic and vocational programs, and learning alternatives that meet the interests and learning needs of every child and family.

School staff must receive training and support to enforce school expectations. Students, parents, educators, and community members must teach and model a consistent set of values as the basis for every activity, program, lesson or expectation.

Schools should be models of healthy nutrition and physical activity, teaching students good habits. Approximately one in 10 Alaska children is obese. At least half of Alaska's children do not meet recommended levels of physical activity.

**GOAL**

**Students will have access to safe schools, where they develop healthy and safe practices for life.**

**ACTIONS**

1. Develop a comprehensive health and safety plan that uses the expertise of parents, communities, tribal organizations, social and civic organizations, state agencies, and school districts.
2. Implement health and wellness programs that improve students' sense of well-being and address substance abuse, suicide, sex education, bullying, Internet safety, mental and physical health, and personal safety.
3. Implement nutrition and physical education programs to ensure that students develop patterns of lifelong healthy behaviors.
4. Ensure that students, staff and community members are provided safe and secure schools.