

# PROCLAMATION

**S**exual assault, affecting people of all ages, is one of the most horrific and widespread crimes in our society. For young people, these criminal acts can traumatize forever, and force children to forego the special time of life which is their childhood.

Estimates of sexual abuse indicate 25 percent of girls and 16 percent of boys will be molested by an adult by age sixteen. Often children who are victimized continue to be abused in adult relationships or become abusers themselves.

With only an estimated 5 to 25 percent of actual sexual assaults reported, it is the most under reported violent crime. Even with the known level of under reporting, based on police statistics, a sexual assault occurs every five minutes in our nation. In 1994, there were over 102,000 reported rapes in the United States. In Alaska, the report rate of sexual assault against women in 1994 was 67 percent per 100,000, almost twice the national average and one of the highest rates in our country.

Given the level of occurrence of these crimes, we must work together to educate our entire population as to the causes and what can be done to prevent them. Perpetrators must be held accountable for their actions. We, as a society, must not only make the statement, but follow up with actions that demonstrate sexual assault will not be tolerated. Many of our Alaskan communities have programs which deal with sexual assault, striving to increase public awareness of the devastating pain and suffering caused by these crimes. Their dedicated staff and volunteers provide victims the support and advocacy needed to deal with their trauma.

NOW, Therefore, I, Ruth Richardson, Mayor of the City of Bethel, do hereby proclaim April 1996 as:

## Sexual Assault Awareness Month

in Bethel, and encourage all Alaskans and institutions, private and public, to work in partnership supporting local activities and programs which assist victims, and to learn more about the pervasiveness of sexual assault in Alaska, so we may eliminate this heinous crime.



Ruth M. Richardson, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
L.J. Tanner, City Clerk

# STATE OF ALASKA



## *Executive Proclamation by Tony Knowles, Governor*

Sexual assault, affecting people of all ages, is one of the most horrific and widespread crimes in our society. For young people, these criminal acts can traumatize forever, and force children to forego the special time of life which is their childhood. Estimates of sexual abuse indicate 25 percent of girls and 16 percent of boys will be molested by an adult by age sixteen. Often children who are victimized continue to be abused in adult relationships or become abusers themselves.

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NOW, THEREFORE, I, Tony Knowles, Governor of the State of Alaska, do hereby proclaim April 1996, as:

### *Sexual Assault Awareness Month*

in Alaska, and encourage all Alaskans and institutions, private and public, to work in partnership supporting local activities and programs which assist victims, and to learn more about the pervasiveness of sexual assault in Alaska, so we may eliminate this heinous crime.

DATED: March 21, 1996

Done by \_\_\_\_\_



*Tony Knowles*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Tony Knowles, Governor  
who has also authorized the seal  
of the State of Alaska  
to be affixed to this proclamation.

# TUNDRA WOMEN'S COALITION

P O Box 1537, Bethel, AK 99559  
(907) 543-3455

Dear Mayor Richardson and Council Members:

Across the nation, the month of April is recognized as Sexual Assault Awareness Month. The staff of Tundra Women's Coalition has planned various activities to promote awareness and to honor the strength of sexual assault survivors. We ask that you join us in our recognition by proclaiming April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month in Bethel. Enclosed is a copy of Governor Knowles' Executive Proclamation for your review.

The following are important points to consider:

- It is estimated that 25 percent of girls and 16 percent of boys will be sexually abused by an adult before the age of 16.
- Sexual Assault is the most under reported violent crime, only 5 to 25 percent of all sexual assaults are ever reported.
- Alaska has one of the highest rates of sexual assault in the country, almost twice the national average.
- We as a community must help survivors access the services available to them so that they, adults and children alike, will have support throughout their healing process.
- Perpetrators of sexual assault must be held accountable for their actions. It is known that most perpetrators will have multiple victims.

Thank you for considering this and helping to promote awareness about the crime of sexual assault.

In peace,



Meghan Sullivan  
Community Educator