



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Improving Access to Safety Equipment in Rural Alaskan Communities

(Anchorage, Alaska) - JANUARY 19, 2015 -

When Jaylene Wheeler, Injury Prevention Program Coordinator for the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) thinks about safety, part of her goal is to help make the equipment accessible and affordable for rural residents.

[“Our community is impacted by a number of injury hospitalizations and fatalities. In an effort to prevent injuries for Alaska Native people, we encourage the proper use of safety gear \(ex. floatation coats, helmets, SOS kits\). Much of the work is done collaboratively”.](#) Wheeler said.

(click hyperlink for Soundcloud soundbyte)

ANTHC's Injury Prevention Program partners with regional Injury Prevention Programs, many of whom operate safety shops for the benefit of area residents. Shipping costs to remote locations can be high. By increasing access to affordable safety equipment, it is hoped that there will be an upward shift in use, of helmets, floatation coats, life vests, ice cleats, gun safes and car seats.

To boost the success of this project, ANTHC partnered with four regional Tribal Injury Prevention Programs to purchase safety equipment. ConocoPhillips supported the efforts by awarding ANTHC with \$10,000. ANTHC's Injury Prevention Program contributed \$20,000, and an additional \$16,409 was committed via local support. This included:

NORTHWEST ARCTIC - [Maniilaq Association](#) • Drowning prevention items: white floatation jackets and white floatation bibs • Transportation safety items: SOS kits

BERING STRAIT - [Norton Sound Health Corporation](#) • Fall prevention items: wall mount grab bar, rubber anti-slip mat bathtub, rug gripper and over shoes • Drowning prevention items: FXR floatation jackets and FXR bibs • Traumatic brain injury (TBI) prevention items: Vega ATV helmets

BRISTOL BAY - [Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation](#) • Drowning prevention items: material for personal flotation device (PFD) kiosks

YUKON KUSKOKWIM – [Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation](#) • Drowning prevention items: FXR floatation jackets and FXR floatation bibs • Traumatic brain injury (TBI) prevention items: FXR helmets

This grant and the partnership between ANTHC, ConocoPhillips, Maniilaq Association, Norton Sound Health Corporation, Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation and the Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation supports the ANTHC vision of Alaska Natives as the healthiest population in the world by providing affordable safety equipment for daily use in rural Alaska.

To learn more about injury data and other success stories, please see the newly revised [Alaska Native Injury Atlas](#).

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IMAGES



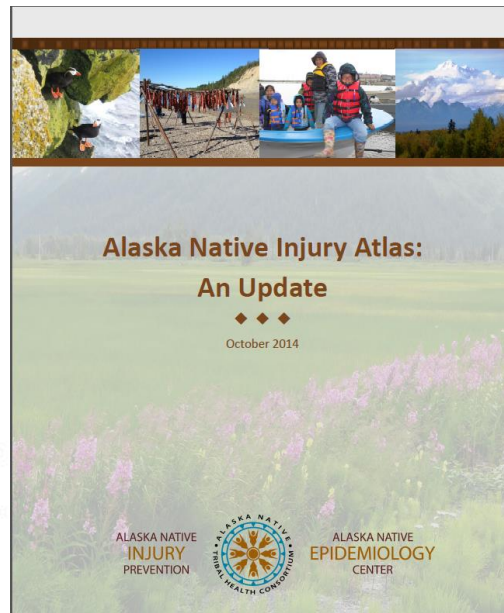
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About the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium

The Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium is a not-for-profit Tribal health organization managed by Alaska Native Tribal governments and their regional health organizations. ANTHC provides statewide services in specialty medical care; construction of water, sanitation and health facilities; community health and research; telehealth and information technology. For more information, please visit www.anthc.org.