

<u>Program Name</u>	<b>Family Wellness Warriors Initiative (FWWI)</b>
<u>Sponsoring Agency</u>	Southcentral Foundation
<u>Director Name</u>	Bobbi Outten, MA, LPC
<u>Geographic Area</u>	Cook Inlet Region and statewide by invitation
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#### Program Description

The Family Wellness Warriors Initiative offers many types of adult trainings, from one to ten days in length, as well as trainings designed for specific groups. Trainings provide skills and tools focused on ending domestic violence and child maltreatment. They employ culturally appropriate practices, recognize trauma therapies and have a strong spiritual component. There are two major basic trainings and one advanced training, *Beauty for Ashes* and *Arrigah House*. Both programs are intense trainings, mixing large and small group sessions and covering difficult topics. Participants are screened carefully and required to live on-site during the training. FWWI has a staff of 27, including clinicians, trainers, event organizers, and administrators.

*Beauty for Ashes* is a five-day training for up to 150 people held at a conference center in Anchorage. It is available to individuals and is designed to educate and train Natural Helpers to use culturally appropriate means to work with individuals and communities impacted by violence.

*Arrigah House* is a five day training for up to 50 people in rural communities as part of the FWWI's 3-Year Model for Alaska Native Areas. In that model FWWI becomes involved with a region by invitation from the health corporation and the tribal authority. It works with a local steering committee to develop a plan to engage the entire community in addressing issues of family violence and child abuse and to give local leaders the tools to do so. The expectation is that at the end of 3 years the project will be self-sustaining.

An *Advanced Leadership Education and Training* (ALET) provides additional intensive workshops for those who have completed at least one of the earlier trainings. ALET provides skills and knowledge that enables participants to become group leaders of FWWI workshops and trainings.

#### Brief History

FWWI has its earliest roots in the 1980's when a group of women, including the chief executive officer of Southcentral Foundation (SCF), decided to address issues of harm to children through a faith-based (Christian) curriculum. By the early 1990's SCF developed a prevention program using a culturally centered resiliency model out of which the current Family Wellness Warriors Initiative evolved.

#### Project Goals

The goal of the Family Wellness Warriors Initiative is "to end domestic violence, child sexual abuse, and child neglect, in the State of Alaska, in this generation."

#### Training Goals

The various FWWI trainings seek to build effective skills to increase a participant's ability to deal with issues of domestic violence, child abuse and neglect, and to support personal growth that leads to

healthier relationships at home, work and in communities. The five day trainings have specific goals and objectives related to: 1) creating the safety to talk openly about the past and the present; 2) acquiring the tools to recover and lead better lives; 3) to be a better parent; 4) to heal and feel hopeful about the future. The *Advanced Leadership and Education Training* prepares participants to lead small groups in their home communities and to become presenters and leaders of FWWI trainings.

CEUs and academic credits for the trainings are available through Alaska Pacific University.

#### Who is trained?

FWWI is designed for Alaska Natives, but all individuals regardless of race or culture are invited to attend. *Beauty for Ashes* and *Arrigah House* participants must be over 21 years of age and complete an application packet that includes a pre-screening questionnaire. Participants cannot be pregnant and must be free of substance abuse, inpatient treatment and suicide attempts for the prior 6 months. ALET participants must have completed either of the two 5-day trainings. These three trainings require on-site lodging. FWWI also offers one-day workshops, training tailored to specific groups, and follow-up training for regions that have completed the 3-Year Model for Alaska Native Areas.

#### Who are the trainers?

Presenters and group leaders are volunteers who have completed ALET. They are supported by clinicians who oversee groups during the training and by therapists with advanced degrees who provide one-on-one support when needed.

#### Where does training take place?

*Beauty for Ashes* takes place twice a year at a dedicated conference site in Anchorage. *Arrigah House* takes place in rural communities, additionally it is held annually in two prisons.

#### How long is the training?

*Beauty for Ashes*, *Arrigah House* and ALET are 5 day/4 night events. In the 3-Year Model a steering committee is selected and trained, and a community readiness survey is completed in the first year. In year 2 an *Arrigah House* is held for natural helpers from the region. In year 3 trained local leaders and helpers lead an *Arrigah House* for community members.

#### What does the training include?

*Arrigah House* and *Beauty for Ashes* typically involve large group sessions with teachings from a faith-based curriculum and personal stories, music, singing and Native dance, and small group sessions where personal stories are shared and it is learned how to respond to others. Topics include: Breaking the Silence; Living Without Safety; The Cost of Shame; A New Beginning; My Action Plan. The small groups consist of six participants and two group leaders.

#### What follow-up is available after the training?

Participants in either of the two 5-day trainings may be recommended for Advanced Leadership and Education Training. At end of the 3-Year Model leaders in the region continue to provide programs and events supported by FWWI as needed.

#### What does the training cost?

*Beauty for Ashes* and *Arrigah House* cost \$1,500 per participant. Discounts and scholarships are available.

#### Has the program been evaluated?

FWWI has been extensively evaluated by several independent evaluators. Findings suggest positive change in participants with reductions in depression, substance abuse, anxiety, and the risk of harm to 2 FWWI

self or others. Participants report improvements in family cohesion, cultural connectedness, self-esteem and spiritual well-being. Focus groups in rural areas have also explored impacts of attending *Arrigah House*. Evaluations and focus groups are ongoing.

#### Program Funding Source

Current funding for the Family Wellness Warriors Initiative's Three Year Model is received from the State of Alaska, Division of Behavioral Health and the Paul G. Allen Foundation. The supporters for the program have been vast and a complete list of funders can be found at <http://www.fwwi.org/about.cfm>.

#### Trainer Qualifications

Group leaders have completed one 5-day training, the 5-day Advanced Leadership and Education Training, and have been screened and recommended by FWWI clinical staff. FWWI clinicians are licensed, degreed professionals.