



Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium

Administration | 4000 Ambassador Drive | Anchorage, Alaska 99508 | Phone (907) 729-1900 | Fax (907) 729-1907 | www.anthc.org

MEDIA ADVISORY

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Media Contact:

Fiona Brosnan, Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium

907-729-1967 (work); 907-350-8495 (cell); fmbrosnan@anthc.org

ANTHC hosts one-day camp to help Alaska Native children cope with the loss of a loved one

Second Camp Coho to host 19 children

Anchorage — When cancer strikes a family, it touches everyone. When a family member dies, few resources exist to help children understand and process their feelings of loss and grief. Alaska Native children in small, remote villages do not have access to cancer support resources generally available in large urban settings. In addition, few cancer support programs for children incorporate cultural values.

Recognizing this need, the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium modeled the format of an existing grief camp for children and made culturally appropriate adaptations to meet the needs of Alaska Native children and families. The ANTHC Comprehensive Cancer Program developed and implemented Camp Coho, a one-day camp to help Alaska Native children better understand and share their feelings of loss and grief. The Camp provided activities based on nationally accepted standards adapted to honor Alaska Native cultures and values.

What: Camp Coho is a one-day camp for children who have lost a loved one to cancer or other chronic disease. Camp Coho is sponsored by ANTHC's Lu Young Fund for Children of Families Fighting Cancer, in partnership with Alaska Tribal Health System regional health organizations. The first camp was held in 2007.

Who: 19 Alaska Native children, ages 8-12, from Akiachak, Anchorage, Brevig, Mission, Copper Center, Dillingham, Galena, Fairbanks and Kotzebue will attend this year's camp in Anchorage.

When: 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday, May 8, 2010

Where: ANTHC, 4000 Ambassador Drive, Anchorage, AK 99504

Why: Camp Coho was designed to address the lack of grief resources for Alaska Native children living in remote communities. The goal of Camp Coho is to provide a safe, supportive environment for grieving children to share their feelings about losing a loved one to cancer or another chronic disease. The camp format uses talking circles, art activities and play to help children express their reactions to loss and grief. Children attending are given the opportunity to meet other children who have experienced a similar loss and learn that they are not alone in their grief journey.

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About the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium

The Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium is a non-profit health organization owned and managed by Alaska Native tribal governments and their regional health organizations. For more information, please visit www.anthc.org.