



# Seldovia Gazette

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Seldovia, AK

12 °F / -11 °C

Light Snow

at 2:53 PM



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Thursday, Jan. 18, 2007

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## Letters to the Editor

### *- Cherish the Children Project*

Dear Editor:

In the past year, some of you Seldovians may have spoken with me, the SVT Village Based Evaluator for the Cherish the Children Project, and/or completed written surveys related to this project. Cherish the Children is a three year planning grant through SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration, part of the Dept. of Health and Human Services. The purpose of the project is to explore the current behavioral health systems serving the local Alaska Native adolescent (ages 0-22 years) community. What works for Seldovia, what doesn't work, and what would community members suggest as a better method of providing behavioral health care that is culturally sensitive, accessible, and more effective.

In two years, a System of Care will be designed based on input from the community, tribal leaders, elders, youth, service agency care providers and behavioral health professionals. The data collection is being used to assess perceptions, establish feasibility, assess service system needs and gaps, potential resources, and develop infrastructure strategies that meet the needs of local Alaska Native youth.


The next phase of this planning grant requires a focus group to be conducted in Seldovia, asking for input from members of the community who have a contribution to make. The focus group ideally would consist of parents and/or grand-parents and/or guardians of Alaska Native youth, or youth (minors require written permission from parents). All information

collected will remain confidential, and no names will be used in any written material related to this project. The results of the focus group might provide a better understanding of reasons why the behavioral health system functions as it does, and help plan better programs and services.

The focus group will be conducted on February 1, at 4-6 PM, location to be announced. The size of the group is limited to 8 members, so it will be on a first come-first serve selection basis. Fat Olives Pizza, and other refreshments will be available for the participants in the focus group. A \$15 gift certificate will also be given to each participant.

If you are interested in participating, please call Suse Cushing and leave a message at 235-6745, and Susan will return your call.

Thank you,  
Suse Cushing

(Click on button below)	<b>Special Interest Forum: From time to time, topics of discussion will come up that are not a good fit for the Letters to the Editor section . . . usually due to things like the length of the letters or the need to post responses sooner than once a week on Thursday. Click the "Forum" button to enter this section. If you have a topic that you would like started, please let us know.</b>
	<b>No Forum Currently Running</b>

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