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## Benefits of Treatment at Raven's Way

Students receive a comprehensive assessment upon entering treatment at Raven's Way (Yéil Jeeeyáx) youth substance abuse treatment program. Each assessment includes an analysis of substance use and readiness to change, mental health issues, school functioning, social and family relationships, and physical health. This provides staff with an understanding of the strengths and individual needs of each student, which then can be addressed in treatment. The assessment is obtained through a collaboration between licensed and certified mental health and substance abuse professionals, medical professionals and a certified secondary school instructor.

Outcome data collected one year after students are discharged demonstrates the effectiveness of treatment at Raven's Way. The Raven's Way program has been cited as a best practice treatment provider at the Alaska Native Best Practices Conference (May 2005 in Anchorage) and International Seminar on Youth Substance Abuse (May 2005 in Whitehorse, Yukon Territory).

In follow-up interviews after their treatment from January 2001 to February 2007, 272 former Raven's Way students reported that at one year after discharge:

- ◆ 42 percent used no alcohol in the last six months, and an additional 47 percent used less alcohol than before treatment;
- ◆ 53 percent used no illegal drugs in the last six months, and an additional 34 percent used fewer drugs than before treatment;
- ◆ 73 percent are involved in productive activity (such as school, work or subsistence) 20 hours per week or more, compared to only 50 percent involved in productive activity prior to admission;
- ◆ 86 percent report no use of emergency medical services, compared to 72 percent at admission;
- ◆ 91 percent report more support for sobriety by the people in their lives; and
- ◆ 71 percent report an improved sense of connectedness, spirituality, relationship with a higher power, or meaningfulness in life.

The State of Alaska recently changed its post-treatment questionnaire, and the 46 students interviewed between October 2006 and July 2007 report that one year after discharge:

- ◆ 67 percent used no alcohol in the previous month, and an additional 25 percent only used alcohol one or two times;
- ◆ 59 percent used no illegal drugs in the previous month, and an additional 8 percent only used illegal drugs one or two times;
- ◆ 67 percent reported that mental or emotional problems almost never kept them from doing normal daily activities over the last three months, compared to 42 percent at admission;
- ◆ The percentage of students thinking of suicide dropped from 24 percent at admission to 8 percent one year after discharge. Of those thinking of suicide at admission, 4 percent had attempted or had a plan, 8 percent were sometimes thinking about it, and 12 percent said they rarely thought about it. After discharge, 8 percent said they rarely thought about suicide while 92 percent never thought about it.