



Evaluation of a JAIBG-Funded Project: Emmonak Elders' Group

Report for the
Bureau of Justice Statistics

by

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Evaluation of a JAIBG Project: Emmonak Elders' Group

The federal Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grant (JAIBG) program provided funds to the states for support of programs which would enhance accountability among juvenile offenders. A portion of the funds was set aside for evaluation research, with distribution of these funds overseen by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS). In 1999, the Alaska Justice Statistical Analysis Center (SAC) applied to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) for funds designated for evaluation of JAIBG-funded programs.

The Justice Center at the University of Alaska Anchorage, which contains Alaska's Statistical Analysis Center (SAC), worked closely with staff from the Alaska Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) to determine which programs funded under JAIBG were most in need of evaluation. Two proposals, addressing two DJJ programs, were submitted to BJS, one of which was to evaluate the Emmonak Elders' Program, a project developed in an Alaska Native village in western Alaska.

The Emmonak Elders' Program was chosen for evaluation because of its cultural relevance, its restorative justice focus, and its potential as a model for other Alaska Native villages concerned with youth accountability and responsibility.

Background

Emmonak is a Yup'ik village located at the mouth of the Yukon River just a few miles from the Bering Sea and nearly 500 miles by air from Anchorage, the state's largest city. (See Figure 1.) The village has a seasonal economy dependent on commercial fishing. There are two fish processing plants in Emmonak and 102 residents hold commercial fishing licenses. Subsistence activities remain an important supplement to income, and many members of the community spend summer months in fishcamp preparing fish for winter use. According to the 1990 census, 34.6 percent of adult residents were unemployed.

In December 2000 Emmonak had a population of 804 people, more than 90 percent of whom were Alaska Native. There were 237 students enrolled in the Emmonak school in grades K through 12. Concern about the activities of this large juvenile population led the Emmonak Tribal Council to apply for funds through the Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grant (JAIBG) program for a program to involve the Elders' Group in holding youth responsible for their deviant behavior.



Introduction

The Emmonak Elders' Group was officially established in 1997 as a response to increasing social problems in the village. Although the elders had always had a voice in the cultural and social fabric of Emmonak, once a formal tribally recognized council was established, the elders began to exert greater influence in the decisions and discussions that took place in the community. The goal of the Elders' Group has been to pass down traditional knowledge and wisdom to a new generation. They have formally addressed such community problems as domestic violence by educating families and providing culturally rich guidelines. Their involvement with traditional family values made involvement with troubled youth a logical next step. The problems of youth became increasingly important to the community after several suicides occurred in the mid-1990s; during the same period delinquent behavior was increasing.

In 1999, the Emmonak Tribal Council received a JAIBG grant from the State of Alaska, Division of Juvenile Justice. The intent of this grant was to form a cooperative arrangement between the juvenile justice system (Bethel office) and the tribal council to establish a program whereby the Elders' Group would hear referred non-felony juvenile cases and administer accountability-based, culturally relevant sanctions to juvenile offenders. The Elders' Group and other community members felt that youthful offenders needed to be more accountable for their behavior and that the community

of Emmonak needed to take greater responsibility for the issues affecting their youth. These beliefs fit solidly into a restorative justice model wherein the youth and his family, the victim, and the community together seek solutions which benefit them all. With the proposal centered around incorporating a more Yup'ik-based value component into the treatment and rehabilitation of Emmonak's young people, the origins of the restorative justice model in traditional small indigenous communities also showed in this project.

Emmonak youth are finding themselves at a crossroads, the youth are being influenced by western society while the Elders are trying to implement traditional values into the community. The youth that commit crimes are not taking responsibility for their actions, after facing state courts, the parents and youth do not communicate after the incident. By utilizing the Elders Council we can be assured that responsible adults in our community will work together to show our children that through local guidance and disciplinary procedures, crimes committed are not without consequence. (JAIBG grant proposal, p. 12)

This project proposed two major goals of equal importance to achieving the long-term outcome of improving the lives of the youth of Emmonak and strengthening their ties to their community. The first was the reduction of juvenile crime and recidivism among youth. This was both an individual youth goal and a community safety and health goal. It included issues such as accountability, sentencing, and local solutions to local problems regarding youth crime. The second, but no less important, goal was increasing the skills, knowledge and control of local Native entities in administering solutions to village issues. This included increasing the collaborative nature of justice administration between state and local/tribal entities as well as restoring cultural relevance to the way in which youth are educated and guided toward positive behavior as a preventative measure. Of primary importance here was incorporating Yup'ik traditional values and beliefs into the systems that serve youth, including the schools and, in this case, the juvenile justice system.

Methodology

A primary objective of the evaluation was to conduct it in a culturally sensitive way. To that end, we relied more heavily on observation and interviews than on collection of hard data. In this report we present preliminary findings based on observation, discussions and interviews with local stakeholders and on preliminary data collection. Our primary focus was on project implementation and on the working relationships between the Elders' Group and the state juvenile justice system. It was important to the project staff and to the elders, as well as to the Division of Juvenile Justice, that this evaluation be a resource for other villages who want to start or are starting similar programs. For this reason, particular emphasis was placed on describing the process of establishing and maintaining a local elders' court.

The Emmonak Elders' Group project is still in its infancy—essentially in an implementation stage. Solid quantitative outcome data on the youth participants were difficult to obtain. The efficacy of the this type of intervention in comparison to the traditional juvenile justice process was difficult to quantify at this point in the program, in part because of a reluctance to maintain data on the part of project staff and in part because of an expansion of referral origination (school, local magistrate, and parents), which effectively bypassed the Juvenile Justice office in Bethel. We include summaries about specific youth who went before the elders, with dates of appearance and information about pre- and post-Elders' Group intervention. Summaries of interviews conducted with five youth and their parents, with two community leaders, and with the elders as a group are provided. We also include results from a written questionnaire given to several youth and their parents. With a careful record of the evolution of this project and the establishment of a data collection system, a solid analysis of long-term youth outcomes could be completed in the future.

The Elements of the Evaluation

- **Direct Observation.** Four on-site visits to Emmonak took place beginning in February 2000. The evaluator spent time observing and interacting with the program coordinator (Elder-Youth Specialist) both in his office and in the community. Formal and informal meetings took place with teachers, elders, local law officials, and tribal government members. The evaluator attended a public Elders' Group meeting where youth issues were discussed with community members.
- **Reports/File Review.** Full access to case files was provided, and a review of sixteen files was conducted. These reviews are summarized in this report.
- **The Elder-Youth Specialist** arranged a presentation by elders which covered youth issues and their work in the Elders' Group. Several one-on-one discussions were held with elders subsequent to this presentation session.
- **A semi-structured interview** was conducted with the Elder-Youth Specialist based on implementation objectives in the original proposal. Additional discussions were held with him both in person and on the telephone.
- **Discussions with community leaders, the tribal chairman, and others** took place in Emmonak and at the annual conference of the Alaska Federation of Natives in Anchorage.
- **Discussions with a staff member of the Division of Juvenile Justice** were held when one of the Centers' Emmonak site visits overlapped with his. This provided useful insight into those longer-term objectives of the Division related to greater local/tribal control over justice issues in communities.
- **Telephone and fax communication** with the Elder-Youth Specialist was ongoing.
- **Structured interviews** were conducted with some of the youth who had been referred to the Elders' Group and with their parents.

Overview of Program

Juveniles in Emmonak who violate the law are referred to the Juvenile Justice office in Bethel (Appendix B). Each case is assigned to a Juvenile Probation Officer who decides whether the charged youth should have the option of appearing before the Elders' Group in Emmonak or continue through formal processing in the juvenile system. Consideration is given to such factors as: number of prior offenses, nature of the charge (only non-felony cases are heard by the Elders' Group), and age of the offender. If the decision is to send the youth to the Elders' Group, a referral letter is sent by the Bethel probation officer with pertinent information related to the charge. The Elder-Youth Specialist sends a letter to the parents and youth, informing them of the option of appearing before the Elders' Group or having the case handled by the state juvenile system. (See Appendix C.) Both parents and youth must authorize the Elders' Group to take on the case and administer a disposition (Appendix D). Once this authorization is received, copies of the original referral letter and the authorization letter are sent to all of the elders for review. The Elder-Youth Specialist then schedules an Elders' Group hearing for the case. Referrals from the official juvenile justice process are referred to as "state referrals." Local referrals, an increasing number of which are being received, are referrals of youth by family members, community members or school personnel. These, too, require the agreement of both parents and youth.

The Elders' Group hearing takes place in the community hall in the Tribal Offices Building. Elders sit at a conference table facing the youth and his or her parent or family member. Also present is the Elder-Youth Specialist and sometimes a translator (at times the Elder-Youth Specialist serves as the translator). Some of the elders are Yup'ik-speaking and have limited skill in English.

In two cases, the arresting Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) or Village Police Officer (VPO) has also been present, but for the majority of cases the police have been invited but have not attended. Each meeting has a set agenda which includes opportunities for all parties to speak, a break for elders to confer in private, and finally the sentencing of the youth. (See Appendix E.) During this part of the agenda, all of the elders present have an opportunity to speak to the youth and to family members. The elders' presentation is the core of the hearing and consists of stories of their youth, values and guidance handed down from their parents and grandparents, Yup'ik myths, and stern warnings directed toward the behavior in question. Emphasis is placed on the welfare of the community and the culture and the role the youth will some day play as leaders in their community. The sessions last from two to four hours. They can be very emotional and powerful statements about both the historical and personal repercussions of drinking and other destructive youth behaviors. Lastly, the elders prescribe a "sentence"—usually community service (Appendix F)—and the youth is given a chance to speak.

Staffing and Training

This project was funded to support one full-time position, the Elder-Youth Specialist. Besides school staff, this is the only position in Emmonak that works specifically with youth. Consequently,

the position has evolved into “the person who you talk to when there is any issue involving the behavior and or needs of a 10-18 year old in Emmonak.” All activities described in this evaluation are either organized, facilitated or accomplished directly by the Elder-Youth Specialist. This is a precarious situation for the sustainability and growth of this project. There are many others in the community who support the project, but most administrative duties—counseling, advocating, organizing, and communication among stakeholders—are carried out by the Elder-Youth Specialist, with very little day-to-day coordination with other youth-related staff or support staff.

The Elder-Youth Specialist, Herman Hootch, has attempted to maintain the major function of the project, which is to process referrals from the state juvenile system through Elders' Group hearings and to monitor sentence completion. This function requires organizing, coordinating, and communicating with families, law enforcement, youth, and elders, as well as the Division of Juvenile Justice. The program has expanded to address issues that surround this primary function, such as prevention (local referrals) and follow-up, even addressing the lack of youth activities in Emmonak. The possibility of using community volunteers and youth volunteers to support some of these functions has been discussed. There are some issues of confidentiality that may make the use of volunteers problematic. When the SAC proposed hiring a part-time staff person from evaluation funds and training him/her in data collection and file maintenance, privacy and confidentiality issues were of such concern that no one was recommended for hire.

The position of Elder-Youth Specialist is very critical to the success of any program where elders are the main resource for the intervention. The Elder-Youth Specialist is primarily a facilitator. He may have more information and/or training regarding the workings of the justice system and the coordination of a project than others involved; many of the day-to-day issues that arise in a collaboration between the formal justice system and the elders' court traverse new territory, For this reason it very important for the Elder-Youth Specialist to work as a facilitator and not as a director. This was emphasized many times by the current Emmonak Elder-Youth Specialist, Herman Hootch, who stated repeatedly, “I work *for* the elders.” At times it can be very difficult for an individual to balance the criteria of the grant and the wishes of the collaborators with the beliefs and wisdom of the elders. There are characteristics of this relationship that cannot be described in words but are critical to the success of a project that is attempting to use traditional power structures as its main resource.

The present Elder-Youth Specialist had no formal training for his multifaceted position. Although he has carried out his numerous tasks very well, he and the program would have been better served if he had received some prior training in establishing and maintaining records.

Elders

The village elders *are* the project in Emmonak, with the working relationship between them and the Elder-Youth Specialist critical to the project's success. Prior to receipt of this grant there was a respected Elders' Group in Emmonak. As in many Alaska Native villages, Emmonak's group has functioned as a formally recognized source of wisdom and community guidance. Youth and

families received counseling from the elders, but they were usually self-referred. The JAIBG project stretched the role of the Elders' Group since individuals were, in effect, required to appear before them. (Their other option of formal system processing was often seen by youth and their parents as the greater of two negatives.) This raised new dynamics within the community. People who were less connected to Yup'ik traditions were now exposed to traditional ideas; they were being spoken to in Yup'ik; and they were interacting with a generation that they previously might have avoided.

Working to develop cooperative relationships among elders, school personnel, church groups, etc. consumed much time in the first year of operation. One issue raised by the project was the extent of the elders' authority, particularly if that authority seemed to conflict with Western-style rules and regulations. On one occasion, for example, an elder decided to go into the school to check on a youth who had come before the Elders' Group, but the school district has regulations for non-family school visitors, which the elder did not follow. This upset the principal, who complained to the Elder-Youth Specialist.

Real issues arose during the first year of the project. They were addressed, compromises were made, and roles were redefined, but all were worked through with respect toward the elders and without compromising the project's goals.

Processing Time

The referral process appears to work well. To examine efficiency we assessed the turnaround time between arrest and referral to the Elders' Group and between referral and Elders' Group proceeding. All state referrals were sent to the Elders' Group within six weeks of arrest, and hearings before the elders were scheduled two weeks to a month after receipt of the referral. The turnaround time was important to the community, because one of the problems with the juvenile justice system often mentioned by community members was the length of time between the behavior and any repercussions. This community concern mirrored the intent of JAIBG legislation and reflected the belief that if too much time elapsed between the behavior and its consequence the sense of responsibility was diminished.

Post-Disposition Follow-up

The procedures concerning referral, Elder Group hearings and community-based sentencing described in the original proposal are in place, but the follow-up and monitoring procedures are less clear. Failure to maintain careful records of hours of community service completed and/or restitution paid is a primary weakness of the program. Time and effort are required to develop new areas of community service and ways of supervising the work assigned. At present the youth seem to view their community service as busywork. There is little supervision of youth when they are at their work assignments, unless the work takes place in an office or classroom. Since work assignments often involve walking around the village and picking up trash, this is rarely the case. One important reason for this lack of supervision is staffing; there is only one staff member. Another is the absence of a plan for youth volunteer opportunities in Emmonak. Related to this issue is the lack of follow-

up monitoring of the youth's behavior in school and at home after sentencing. As a part of this evaluation, we have suggested the use of follow-up forms and questionnaires that can be filled out by parents and teachers at predetermined intervals. (Models provided are in Appendix G, H, and I.)

It should be noted that the original proposal contained a very cursory description of what would happen after the Elders' Group Meeting. The referral process and Elders' Group hearings seem to be working as described in the proposal, but as the number of youth who flow into the program increases, more attention to follow-up and monitoring will be necessary. This should be addressed in future projects in Emmonak. It is not possible for one staff member to attend to all phases of prevention, intervention and monitoring, but all components are necessary in order to affect sustainable change in youth crime and recidivism.

Collaborative Relationships with Key Entities

The Emmonak Elders' Project required ongoing collaborative relationships with a number of agencies and groups as well as continuous efforts to form new relationships with other entities. A number of agencies and organizations were involved in assisting in the development of the Emmonak Elders' Group project and/or in providing assistance as the project was implemented. These included state agencies, local agencies, and nonprofit groups. Included among the collaborative relationships were:

- **Juvenile Justice Office.** The Bethel office of the Alaska Division of Juvenile Justice has cooperated in both the development and implementation phases of this project. The probation officer who handles Emmonak youth has routinely referred misdemeanor cases to the Elders' Group for disposition. This relationship continues to be a strong one.
- **Tribal Council.** The Tribal Council was the initiator of the program and received the JAIBG grant. Their belief in and support of the program have not diminished. The council formally recognized the Elder-Youth Specialist, Herman Hootch, with a community service award for his work on the project. Many council members have expressed their support for the concepts underlying the project: they recognize the contribution of the elders to maintaining Yup'ik traditions and passing these on to the youth.
- **Magistrate.** In rural Alaska the magistrate represents the court in small villages and is empowered to deal with minor (misdemeanor) juvenile cases under the authority of a District Court Judge. The relationship with the magistrate's office has been strong since the inception of the program. The magistrate is now directly referring youth offenders handled by her office to the Elder-Youth Specialist for assignment to community service. Although this has added to the workload of the single staff member, it has also increased the visibility and credibility of the project.

- **RuralCAP Youth Empowerment Project.** The Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc., was originally established through federal legislation to “protect and improve” life for rural Alaskans. Their Youth Empowerment project in Emmonak has provided volunteer activities for youth and some community service opportunities for referred youth who appear before the elders. Several referred youth are working in this program.
- **School District.** As of this point in the project there is not a strong connection between the school and the program. This is a general community issue, as there appears to be a strong social division between community and school personnel. Most school personnel are not permanent residents of the community; many are from outside Alaska and are unprepared for rural village life. The school/program linkage was not developed at the outset of the project but in the second year several meetings were held with the principal; as a direct result of these meetings four school referrals to the Elders' Group were initiated. This is, at present, an under-utilized relationship but one that has potential for growth.

In addition to these ongoing relationships, efforts are under way to establish collaborations with other groups. Some of these are tenuous at present, but the Elder-Youth Specialist intends to improve and strengthen them. Relationships with others are still in the planning stage.

- **The Sunshine Group/Youth Council.** This youth-led group featured prominently in the original proposal. It was intended to be a resource for the elders and to provide activities for referred youth who would then become part of the group which would, through its activities, contribute to the community in a variety of ways. It has not worked as envisioned: there are few active members; there is no consistent leadership; there are no consistently involved adult advisors. Events such as dances and fundraisers have been sponsored and run by the Sunshine group, but their activities are sporadic. The promise that this group had as a partner in the project has not been realized.
- **Social Services.** While some social services, especially mental health and substance abuse counseling, are available in Emmonak, the Elders' Group does not appear to have strong connections with social service personnel. Referrals to these groups are not typically made during the proceedings. The Elder-Youth Specialist does occasionally suggest these services to parents of referred youth, but they could become a more integral part of some referral outcomes if connections were made between the elders and the service providers..
- **Village of Alakanuk.** A proposal is being jointly submitted by the villages of Emmonak and Alakanuk to develop a project in Alakanuk based on the Elders' Group model. This proposal would include increased staffing and follow-up and prevention activities. The

two villages are close enough for snowmobile or boat visiting and joint activities are a strong possibility.

- **Boys and Girls Club.** Discussions are in process with Anchorage Boys and Girls Clubs to seek funding for an after-school youth program in Emmonak.

During the first year, much energy was spent implementing the program as outlined in the original proposal. The greatest challenge was the development and implementation of a system that blends traditional Yup'ik values and teachings regarding the raising and training of youth with the official juvenile justice system requirements. Some unanticipated challenges arose due to the diverse mixture of participants. Symptomatic of this was the fact that the majority of the youth who came before the Elders' Group spoke only English and the majority of the elders spoke only Yup'ik.

Results

Referred Youth—State Referrals

A total of seventeen youth were referred by the Bethel Office of the Division of Juvenile Justice to the Elders' Group during the eighteen month period of this evaluation (July 1999 through January 2001). Nearly two-thirds of these youth (64%) were under fourteen (N=11); five of these were less than ten years old. Only two of the state-referred youth were female. Details about state-referred youth are listed in Table 1.

The state-referred youth had a variety of crimes including burglary, criminal trespass, vandalism, theft, domestic violence, minor consuming and resisting arrest, and in one case threatening another youth with an unloaded firearm. All cases referred by the state juvenile justice system met the terms outlined in the original agreement. All cases involved misdemeanor charges that did not include sex crimes.

The first referral was received on May 5, 1999 and the first Elders' Group proceeding was held on July 18, 1999. Since January 1, 2001 only one case has been referred to the Elders' Group from the Bethel Juvenile Justice Office. The Bethel Probation Officer stated that there had only been one Emmonak youth case referred to the Division of Juvenile Justice during the last six months of 2000.

Sixteen of the seventeen referred youth appeared before the Elders' Group for counseling and sentencing; one moved to Anchorage after referral but prior to his scheduled Elders' Group appearance date. All of the remaining sixteen youth appeared before the Elders' Group and received counseling from the elders. Three of them were ultimately referred back to the Bethel office, because additional charges were filed—two were referred on felony charges and one was waived to adult court. The elders do not process felony cases at this time, although this is a future goal of the Group.

Table 1. State-Referred Youth (May 1999 through January 2001)

Case	Age	Offense(s) ¹	Elder Group proceeding			Outcome ³
			Date	Participants	Disposition ²	
1	99-01	13 Burglary, vandalism	07/18/1999	Parent, youth, victim	Restitution, restoring damaged property	After Elders' Group proceeding, additional felony charges were filed. Youth transferred to Juvenile Correctional Facility. Elders' Group disposition requirements were not completed due to institutionalization.
2	99-02	13 Vandalism, criminal trespass	09/03/1999	Parent, youth, victim	Restitution, restoring damaged property	Disposition requirements completed. One additional local citation since Elders' Group proceeding for curfew violation.
3	99-03	17 Burglary, vandalism, criminal trespass	09/15/1999	Parent, youth, victim	Restitution, restoring damaged property	Disposition requirements partially completed (restitution). Case transferred to Adult Court -- charged as adult.
4	99-08	15 Minor consuming, resisting arrest	11/12/1999	Parent, youth	Verbal warning, written apology, family guidance	Disposition requirements completed. No community service was mandated. Three city violations and one state charge since Elders' Group proceeding. Youth has not been referred since.
5	99-09	11 Burglary	11/12/1999	Parent, youth	Verbal warning, written apology, family guidance	Unknown if disposition requirements were completed. Additional charges filed by state. Transferred out of Emmonak.
6	00-03	13 Theft, property destruction, vandalism	05/30/2000	Parent, youth	Verbal warning, written apology, restitution, restoring damaged property, community service (40 hours)	Disposition requirements completed. 2 curfew violations since Elders' Group proceeding.
7	00-04	13 Theft, property destruction, vandalism	05/30/2000	Parent, youth	Verbal warning, written apology, restitution, restoring damaged property, community service (40 hours)	Disposition requirements completed. 2 curfew violations since Elders' Group proceeding.
8	00-05	13 Domestic violence	06/25/2000 08/25/2000	Parent, youth, victim	Verbal warning, written and oral apology, community service (10 hours)	Disposition requirements completed. No further violations or referrals since Elders' Group proceeding.
9	00-06	10 Burglary	07/01/2000	Parent, youth	Verbal warning, restitution, community service (100 hours)	Disposition requirements completed. No further violations or referrals since Elders' Group proceeding.
10	00-07	10 Burglary	07/01/2000	Parent, youth	Verbal warning, restitution, community service (100 hours)	Disposition requirements completed. No further violations or referrals since Elders' Group proceeding.
11	00-09	11 Pointed unloaded firearm at a youth	06/25/2000	Parent, youth	Verbal warning, guidance	No further referrals. Referred for psychiatric services. It was noted that youth experienced a disability.
12	00-10	13 Theft	06/12/2000	No meeting	----	Moved to Anchorage before scheduled date of proceeding.
13	00-11	13 Unknown	08/22/2000	Parent, youth	Verbal warning, guidance, community service (hours unknown)	Disposition requirements completed.
14	00-12	14 Domestic violence	08/22/2000	Family member (aunt)/victim, youth	Verbal warning, guidance, written apology, community service (20 hours)	Disposition requirements completed.
15	00-08	11 Property destruction	08/25/2000	Parent, youth	Restitution, community service (20 hours)	Disposition requirements completed. No further violations or referrals since Elders' Group proceeding.
16	00-13	15 Minor consuming, resisting arrest	08/25/2000	Family member (aunt)/victim, youth	Verbal warning, guidance, community service (20 hours)	Disposition requirements completed.
17	01-01	14 Unknown	01/11/2001	Pending as of last site visit	----	

¹ Offense as described in referral notes to elders.

² *Verbal warning* means the elders specified that one more offense or negative report by parents or other community members would result in the youth receiving additional sentencing. *Guidance* means the elders told stories or offered other verbal counseling directed at parents and youth regarding cultural mores, rules, and community expectations.

³ The only quantitative follow-up data with which to track post-Elders' Group behavior or youth were data from the local magistrate on all youth cases opened in Emmonak from January 1999 through January 2001. This may not include feloneis committed that were immediately referred to the Bethel Probation Office. However, the Bethel Probation Office states that all non-felony juvenile offenses referred to Bethel P.O. in the second year of the project were referred to the Elders' Group. There were no repeat referrals to Elders' Group from the Bethel P.O. of youth that were referred to Elders' Group in the project's first year.

Disposition Outcomes

The first five cases that were heard by the Elders' Group were sentenced to restitution and/or restoring property damage if the crime involved theft or destruction; a verbal warning was given and an apology for other crimes was required. It had been the belief and original intention of the elders to give first-time offenders (those appearing for the first time in front of the elders) a warning along with guidance regarding their behavior. This was considered a "first-time warning." After several parents and one crime victim (who happened to be the local magistrate at the time) came before the elders and requested that the youth should all be assigned community service hours in addition to restitution for their first offense, the policy was changed. It was noted that although this was a first time for these youth to be referred to the Elders' Group, many had accumulated multiple violations of city ordinances prior to this charge. After the fifth case, all state-referred youth were given 10 to 100 hours of community service in addition to restitution and/or restoration of property. This policy continued into the second year of the project.

Community service assignments tended to focus on community cleanup tasks—e.g., picking up trash. A few youth worked at the school or maintained the community hall. There did not seem to be very many occurrences of the culture-specific types of community service that were emphasized in the proposal, e.g., chopping wood, drying fish, etc. This seemed to be due to the lack of supervision/training that would be needed.

Of the seventeen state-referred youth, eleven satisfactorily completed the disposition requirements, one partially completed them, three did not complete them, and for two the outcomes were not known. Five had had no additional violations of the law after their referrals and for five it was not known if additional violations occurred. Seven of the youth had at least one violation; some had several, and two committed felonies.

Referred Youth—Local Youth Referrals

As of December 30, 1999, nine youth had been locally referred to the Elders' Group. (See Table 2.) Youth referred locally were referred by the school or by their families; four of the nine were school referrals. Local referrals ranged in age from 10 to 14 years. Two of the nine were female. Even prior to the project start, community members had requested that the Elders' Group become involved with children in the community especially regarding negative behavior. This traditional role of the elders in Yup'ik communities, to advise parents on child rearing and address children's behavior, has been incorporated into the project through these local referrals. Requests for information have increased as the project has become better known. Several requests for Elders' Group consulting have been made by families from surrounding villages.

This component of the Elder Group's work is becoming substantial. While local referrals were not part of the original proposal, they appear to take as much time as state referrals do. The local referrals also consume as much of the Elder-Youth Specialist's time as do state referrals. The locally referrals were processed much like the state-referred youth. The meetings were identical in form as those for the state-referred youth, although for the most part these youth received guidance

Table 2. Locally-Referred Youth (May 1999 through January 2001)

Case	Age	Date of Elders' Group proceeding	Referred by	Elder Group proceeding			Notes	
				January 1999 to December 2000	6 months prior to EG proceeding	6 months after EG proceeding		
1	99-06	14	09/22/1999	Family member	6	0	2	
2	99-10	14	11/14/1999	Family member	9	1	1	
	99-13		12/01/1999					
3	99-11	14	11/30/1999	Family member, project staff	11	2	0	Referred twice to Elders' Group. Two meetings were held with youth to discuss behavior and family problems.
	99-12							
4	99-14	12	12/15/1999	Family	6	0	2	Referred twice. Second referral resulted in informal one-on-one Elder-Youth discussion. Continued city violations into 2001.
	00-02							
5	00-01	10	01/??/2000	Family	1	1	0	
6	00-14	10	12/13/2000	School	0	0	0	Elders' Group meeting held; no further referral.
7	00-15	11	12/13/2000	School	0	0	0	Elders' Group meeting held; no further referral.
8	00-16	13	12/06/2000	School	4 (prior criminal charge/prior incarceration)	1	?	Elders' Group meeting held; youth remanded to juvenile facility for additional charges. This youth had previously been state-referred to Elders' Group (see Table 1, case 99-09).
9	00-18	13	12/30/2000	School	0	0	0	Elders' Group meeting held; no further referral.

and warnings and were not required to perform formal community service. Local referrals can be viewed as a positive change in the program because they reflect an effort on the part of the community to intervene early in a youth's problem behavior. There were as many Elder Group meetings held addressing locally referred youth as state-referred youth. Additionally, there appear to be more positive outcomes among these youth than among the state-referred youth. Appended to this report is a front page story highlighting the work of the Elders' Group which focuses on one local referral. (See Appendix J.)

The extent to which early intervention reduces recidivism is open to debate. All of the locally referred youth were referred for one or more violations of such city ordinances as minor consuming alcohol, violation of curfew, or underage smoking—all status offenses. As a group, the locally referred youth had higher numbers of city ordinance violations in the past two years than the state-referred group, both before and after the Elders' Group intervention. Locally referred youth had a mean of 4.1 violations per person between January 1, 1999 and February 22, 2001, compared with .88 violations per person for the state-referred group¹. Parents who requested help from the Elders'

¹ Figures were derived from a list of juvenile cases processed in Emmonak District Court and handled by the local magistrate.

Group cited these violations as reasons for the referral, along with school issues, not doing chores, and parental disrespect. To date, youth have not been directly referred to the Elders' Group by the local magistrate or by local police, but during the second year of the project the Elder-Youth Specialist began supervising the community service component of juvenile dispositions handed down by the local magistrate. None of these youth was referred to the Elders' Group. In some months, the Elder-Youth Specialist has received as many as 10 community service cases. Although this adds to his workload, these dispositions are perceived as positive in that they reflect a stronger relationship between the local magistrate and the Elders' Group project.

Community Support

In both formal and informal conversations held during visits to Emmonak, parents, community members, and tribal staff commented on the contributions the program had made to increasing community cohesiveness. One parent stated that she had never before interacted with elders, but after her daughter appeared before the elders, the elders stop and talk to her on the street and ask her about her family. "This feels good," she stated. "It feels like there are people looking out for you." Pride in the fact that they were addressing their own problems with their youth was very evident. Several parents emphasized that the community was new at this and would only get better with practice.

At a public meeting where elders, parents, and community leaders discussed the merits and challenges of the program there was a generally positive view of the project, although a few criticisms were raised. The following were statements taken down during this public meeting.

There are few elders left in the village. We are grateful to have people in the community whom we can ask for advice and help.

We've seen change in the community; there is more interaction between the generations.

[The project] is helping to bring back a new generation. Our dances are coming back and we are taping the elders' proceedings, saving the wisdom and the language.

Kids shouldn't go to jail, we need our kids here. We can solve these things with the help of the elders.

Our kids need to be more accountable at home. This can only happen if they are taught here in the village.

This project is a good start. We need more of it.

Interviews

Efforts were made to interview as many people as possible about the program. The perceptions of those directly influenced by it were of special interest. Privacy concerns made interviews with the processed youth and their parents somewhat problematic, but three parents and five youth did talk about the program. Their comments are presented below.

Parent Interviews

(State Referral)

What are some of the differences you noticed between the regular justice system and the elders' court?

This is better for minors. To stay in community. The elders are good at transmitting the ideas of caring and love but they needed to be more strict. They (elders) are not good at setting rules. Kids need to do community work. [Her son was referred prior to the new policy that all referred youth be assigned some community work.] Youth need more follow-up after the elders' meeting.

How did it affect him?

I did not see a difference in his behavior after Elders' Group. I would still rather him go before the Elders' Group than through regular court system. Because they (court system) do more harm than good.

This parent spoke to me on my next trip to Emmonak two months later.

I took my son to the Elders' Group again. And it seems to have made a difference. His grades are better, he has a better attitude. He is taking more responsibility.

(Local Referral)

Why was your daughter referred?

She had been in trouble with the law, had been sent to Bethel, and had spent time in juvenile custody. When she started to get in trouble again, staying out late, drinking, etc., I referred her to the elders' court.

What are some of the differences you noticed between the regular justice system and the Elders' Group?

When she was incarcerated in Bethel she was very angry. They had someone talk to her there—a counselor, but she didn't understand anything about her as a person. She was just a piece of paper. She was angry the whole time and just wanted to come home. When she went before the elders she didn't seem angry. The elders opened her eyes. It doesn't make sense for the young people to sit in jail and not do anything. They should be here in the community at home, doing something productive. In court the kids are just pieces of paper and with elders' court the kids are people with families and histories.

How did it affect her?

She really changed, changed her attitude. The whole community gets involved when the general elders' meetings occur. After going to Elders' Group she changed her group of friends and started doing things with the Sunshine Group. She later, decided by herself to go to Lifegivers Project (Rehab) for three months. The Elders' Group didn't force her to do these things—they just sort of opened her eyes to what she was doing to herself. They encouraged traditional ideas and explained to her how they are useful to her and her life.

Suggestions for the project?

Elders should work with Headstart. Need to get the elders' message to kids at an earlier age. Need to start working with young adults, training them to be future elders.

(Local referral)

General Comments:

The elders provided very good advice. My daughter changed as a result of the elders' meeting. Within a week I noticed that her face was glowing.

The elders talked a lot about hanging around the wrong people. They told her their own stories about their troubles, and those of their kids. I think that a lot of what they told her might not sink in right away but it will make sense to her as she confronts different problems.

We were able to talk more openly about things after the group. We talk about things now that we never did before. Going to the elders for help with your kids takes a load off of you.

By referring my daughter to the Elders' Group it made my daughter feel more cared about, both from me, and also by people in the community—the elders.

She mentioned that she is now closer to elders. When they see me out in the street or at the store they stop and ask my how my family is and how I am. In the past I never before talked to elders except those in my own family.

Youth Survey Results

Five youth agreed to be interviewed. Questions were somewhat open-ended to accommodate differences in the kinds of behaviors for which they were referred and the extent of their experience in the formal system.

Q2. Whose decision was it for you to go to the Elders' Group?

Local-referred youth all stated that it was a family member's decision (2)

State-referred youth all seemed to understand their choice and stated it was their choice (3)

Q3. Would you have rather gone through the juvenile court system or Elders' Group?

All stated that they were glad that they had gone through the Elders' Group

Most responses related to staying in the community, staying out of jail, and the fact that the elders know what it's like to live here.

Q5. What kinds of things did you hear from the elders?

Stories about working hard

Stories about how it was when the elders were young

About respecting others

About becoming a man

Talked about family problems they had

They told my mom things about talking to me

They talked about helping my mom at home

Q6. Do you think your sentence is fair?

All youth stated that they thought their sentences were fair

Two added that it was a lot of work

Q8. Do you think it is a good idea for youth who get in trouble to go before the Elders' Group? Why?

All youth stated that they thought it was a good idea. One said that it might not be a good idea in some cases, due to privacy issues. Another mentioned that it was good because elders knew what it was like in the village, another that it was good to hear what the elders thought about things in the world.

Q12. What is good about the Elders' Group?

They talk to you
They know you and your family
They are at home
They tell you about hunting in old times
They tell you how not to fight with other people
They tell stories about village people and life in the village out here
They tell you about our traditional ways

Questions 9, 13, and 14 were concerned with whether the Elders' Group had an impact on the youths' behavior, how their behavior had changed, etc.

Most responded ambiguously: "maybe," "I don't know," "I think differently about things," etc. This type of abstract self-referential question is difficult for the younger respondents. They were much more at ease answering questions regarding what the elders talked about, which suggests the appropriateness of the elders' style of moral storytelling as an intervention.

Discussions with Elders

An effort was made to talk to all of the members of the Elders' Council, but only some were willing to participate in the discussions. The elders seemed to view their role as strengthening families, not just dealing with youth. They focused on the negative dynamics such as drinking and violence in families and saw youth issues as a product of these problems. Many elders discussed the problems they had in their own families and lives and used these events in their lives as lessons to impart to the younger generation. Along with traditional stories and historical descriptions, they used concrete descriptions of problems they have faced. They were asked to describe some of their beliefs related to intervening in the lives of the youth. The following are typical responses to questions relating to their style of imparting wisdom to youth:

Our role is to pass on wisdom. We don't add on stuff that we make up. It's knowledge, values, passed down. Knowledge is worthless unless it's passed on. We try to give advice, without breaking their spirit. This is what I see when kids come back, from Bethel. Their spirit is broken.

Everyone can change their way of life. I've seen this for many years. The kids know we think this.

The elders expressed great satisfaction with the way the Elder-Youth Specialist was running the project, and they saw him as playing a very important role in the functioning of the Elders' Group. Several elders have been involved in presentations to conferences and in training in the areas of youth and general community health. Since the Elders' Group was formally established, monthly public meetings have been held to give the elders a chance to speak to the general community. The JAIBG project is just one of several activities, both formal and informal, carried out by the Elders' Group, but by formalizing state recognition of elders' roles in the community, this project has helped to give credibility and structure to the role of the elders in Emmonak and has had an influence in the region.

Summary and Recommendations

The Elders' Group Project has, by several measures, been a success. Although a direct cause-and-effect relationship cannot be established, there has been a decrease in the number of Emmonak referrals to the Division of Juvenile Justice. There were none during the last six months of the evaluation period (September 2000 to February 2001). The relationship with the Division's Bethel Office is strong. In an interview with the *Delta Discoverer*, Probation Officer Don Constantine stated, "The community [of Emmonak] is assuming ownership for their problems with the kids. It is saving the Division of Juvenile Justice thousands of dollars and man hours. More importantly, it is making a difference in the kids."

Intensive on-site observation and discussions with parents, community members, and youth suggest that the program is having a positive effect on the community. More members of the community have had opportunities for contact with the elders, and many express pride in the elders and in the program.

One important measure of success is the interest in the program shown by nearby villages. One has suggested sending youth to Emmonak for appearances before the elders, but a more serious suggestion is to establish similar elder-youth programs in these villages.

Expanding the program to local referrals in Emmonak can also be seen as a measure of success. The proposal originally called for collaboration with the Division of Juvenile Justice to handle Emmonak youth referred for misdemeanors. The move toward dealing with local referrals whose offenses are usually status offenses suggests a high level of trust in the influence of the elders as well as a belief that earlier intervention in the behavior will have greater impact.

Another outcome of the project is a renewed interest in and understanding of youth needs. The people of Emmonak recognize that the village needs to develop more youth activities and is trying to find ways to establish Boys and Girls Clubs. This effort raises questions about the Sunshine

Club mentioned in the Emmonak Elders' Group proposal. This group was to have been an integral part of the elder-youth program. It was meant to involve referred youth in the planning and staging of activities with youth who were not at risk for delinquency. It appears that this is a very weak link in the program. Though the club sponsored two dances, members meet only sporadically and have not planned any other activities. The program does not seem to have any involvement with the Sunshine Club either on the part of elders or of youth in the program. An adult club adviser who might also serve as a liaison with the Elder-Youth Specialist might make viable this aspect of the program.

There was some suggestion that the Elder-Youth Specialist might take on this advisor role. The evaluation found that he was already overextended. The additional of local referrals increased his workload and supervision of community service tasks is time-consuming. Hootch also talks to parents and to the youth in an effort to assure compliance with the elders' directives. His interactions with the families and his responsibilities to the elders leave little time for completion of paperwork or for building a data base. Poor record-keeping has been a major weakness in the program (Appendix L).

Early in the evaluation period an effort was made to design a data collection instrument which would help the Elder-Youth Specialist keep track of clients and their activities and provide base information on his contacts with youth and their families. The paperwork was rarely done, and when done was neither timely nor complete. If other villages hope to emulate this program, the base service information is important. It is also useful for evaluation. The number of contacts might be a factor in the success of some youth, but this cannot be determined without a log.

A related flaw in the program is the lack of a formal system for providing case information to referral agencies. Feedback may be provided verbally, but there is no record of these contacts. Communication with the Bethel Juvenile Justice Office is good, but feedback should occur with all local referral agencies (school, magistrate, police). This is particularly important for a project that deals with overlapping jurisdictions. Consistent written feedback to referring agencies is important to maintaining program credibility.

We recommend that a computerized data collection instrument be used to track community work assignments and contacts with clients and their families and to monitor participant outcomes. A part-time office assistant might be the answer to this program weakness. An additional use for such data would be provision of information to referral agencies.

One of the major strengths of the Emmonak Elders' Program is its Elder-Youth Specialist. He does scheduling, organizing, facilitating, counseling, supervising, advocating, and communicating. In many ways his role has expanded beyond the original position description. His willingness to take on new duties has contributed to the program's success, but it is difficult to separate the program and his accomplishments. It may be that personality rather than program is the chief factor in the program's success. It is not possible to assess this possibility given the lack of data.

Some training needs were noted in this evaluation. Of particular importance was training in the design, implementation, and maintenance of a record-keeping system. Also helpful would be training in compiling case notes and in setting confidentiality procedures.

We also recommend that the elders form working relationships with the service providers in Emmonak so that they can refer youth (or their families) for substance abuse counseling, anger management, etc.

A primary objective of the project was to incorporate traditional Yup'ik values and beliefs into ways of dealing with troubling youth behavior. The elders' stories and their discussions with the youth and his/her family certainly achieve this. We would, however, challenge the elders to find ways to involve the youth in traditional activities. Perhaps they could find adults in the community who would take time to teach youth some traditional activities. Then these could be incorporated into the child's disposition: provide fish to shut-ins, help with processing at fish camp, provide so many baskets of berries for a community gathering, etc. While cleanup contributes greatly to the quality of life in the community, the addition of traditional subsistence activities would add to the objective of incorporating Yup'ik values in dealing with Emmonak's youth.

The two major goals of the project are being met: juvenile crime has gone down and village control of the administration of justice has risen. The Emmonak Elders' Group Project has helped to demonstrate the efficacy of a restorative justice model particularly for small Alaska Native communities. Under the leadership of the elders, the whole community has been involved in a successful resolution to problem youth behavior.

Appendices

Appendix A. Elders Group Meetings Policy and Procedures

Appendix not available in electronic format. Pages omitted.

Appendix B. Referral Face Sheet, Alaska Department of Public Safety (Sample)

STATE OF ALASKA
DEPT. OF PUBLIC SAFETY

State Refer

CASE NO
EMK44-301

12-201 (INV. REPORT) SHORT FORM

INVESTIGATING AGENCY DPS Emmonak		DETACHMENT C	UNIT PAT	DATE REPORTED 5-2-99	TIME REPORTED 1725	DATE OCCURRED 5-2-99	APPX 1725	TIME OCCURRED 1725	APPA X	
OFFENSE CODE 3703	UCR NO 26	TYPE OF OFFENSE CRIMINAL TRES-		LOCATION OF OFFENSE/ACTIVITY Old BIA Schools in Emmonak			PATROL ZONE REWC			
RELATIONSHIP OF VICTIM TO OFFENDER -		ALCOHOL OR DRUGS INVOLVED NO	WEAPON/CAUSE NO	SITUATION CODE C	VIOLENT CRIMES/DOMESTIC VIOLENCE NOTICE GIVEN VC DC JUV DISPO		X			
PERSON	ROLE(S)	NAME		IDENTIFICATION NO		TYPE OF IDENTIFICATION		STATE		
HOME PHONE		WORK PHONE		DATE OF BIRTH		SOCIAL SECURITY NO		SEX	RACE	
RESIDENCE ADDRESS				MAILING ADDRESS				COMPANY/WORK ADDRESS / OCCUPATION		
DATE INTERVIEWED	ADVISED OF RIGHTS	Y	N	STATEMENT TAKEN	Y	N	CRIMINAL RECORD	Y	N	
CHARGED WITH		OFFENSE CODE 3703	UCR NO 26	CHARGED BY 14		P	W	S	SUMMONS NO	
VEHICLE	LICENSE PLATE NO	STATE	VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION NO		VEH YR	MAKE	MODEL	BODY STYLE		
COLOR	NUMBER OF OCCUPANTS	M	F	EVIDENCE FOUND IN VEHICLE	Y	N	EVIDENCE SEIZED	Y	N	
PROPERTY LOSS / RECOVERY VALUES		TYPE	\$	TYPE	\$	TYPE	\$	TOTAL \$ LOSS	TOTAL \$ RECOVERED	

SYNOPSIS:

That I am charging [redacted] and [redacted] with **CRIMINAL TRESPASS 2ND DEGREE** and **CRIMINAL MISCHIEF 3RD DEGREE**, and J [redacted] with **CRIMINAL TRESPASS 2ND DEGREE**, and I am referring the charges to the Bethel Juvenile Intake. After an investigation revealed that on 5-2-99 at approximately 1725 hours S [redacted] saw [redacted] and [redacted] prying the west side door of the old BIA School open with a crow bar, and entering the building along with [redacted] S [redacted] went to the old BIA School building, and caught the 3 boys inside the building, told him that they were just checking around.

William Owens the Emmonak School principal estimated the damages to the door pryed open at the old BIA School at approximately \$223.16

[redacted] was playing basketball outside the old BIA School, she saw [redacted] and [redacted] prying the door open with as crow bar, and saw the 3 boys going into the building. [redacted] showed me where one of the 3 boys threw the crow bar they used to break into the building, I seized the crow bar. I took 2 polaroid photographs of the damages to the old BIA School door.

CASE CLOSURE	ARREST	PROS DECL	UNFOUNDED	NO LEADS	EXCEPTION	CASE REF	REFERRED TO	COPIES TO
						X	Bethel Juvenile Intake	Bethel Juvenile Intake
REPORTING OFFICER	PERM ID	REVIEWED & APPROVED BY		PERM ID	DATE CLOSED		PAGE	OF
Martin B Moore Jr	MMJL						1	OF

Appendix C. Notification Letter, Emmonak Elders' Group (Sample)

Emmonak Elders Group
P.O. Box 126
Emmonak, Alaska 99581

Name: [REDACTED]

Case Number: EYS 98-01

Date: 5-2-99

Charge: Minor offense

Contact Phone: 949-1820
Contact Fax: 949-1384

This letter is to notify you that you have been charged with a minor offense of State Law or City Ordinances. Your charging document is enclosed. You must appear at the Emmonak Court on (date) 15 July 99

At (time) 1:30 am/pm

After appearing before the Elders Group you may have the following options:

1. Continue to deal with this case in the State Court before the magistrate or,
2. After speaking with the magistrate you will be referred to the Elders Group to be counseled and follow their recommendation concerning this case.

If you do not appear at court on the above date a default judgment will be entered against you.

IMPORTANT: If you are under the age of 18 you are required to have a parent or legal guardian present with you at the Court House.

Appendix D. Emmonak Elders' Group Community Court Agreement (Sample)

EMMONAK COMMUNITY COURT AGREEMENT

Under AS47.12.010, AS 47. 12.030 and AS 47.12. 060, the juvenile and the parents/guardian/ custodian enter into following agreement for informal diversion through the Emmonak Community Court.

1. The juvenile and the parents/guardian/custodian have been advised of their rights and understand that any rights to a speedy trial are waived during the period of processing through this diversion action. All parties hereby consent to have the alleged offense(s) which occurred on 5-2-99 handled by the Emmonak Community Court.
2. The juvenile agrees to observe and obey all city, state and federal laws during this processing.
3. The juvenile agrees to attend school and follow school rules (or seek and maintain employment), obey the instructions of the parents/guardian/custodian and seek permission before leaving or staying away from home.
4. The juvenile agrees to participate in program and to abide by sentencing act set forth by the Community Court may not order removal from the home, formal state probation. Or formal state juvenile delinquency record.
5. Upon the juvenile successful completion of the agreement the case will be adjusted to closed. If the juvenile fails to complete this agreement, he/she may be brought before the state Superior Court.
6. The juvenile and parents /guardian/custodian authorize DFYS Juvenile Intake or its designee to release, share and keep record for administrative purposes as necessary to coordinate the referral with diversion programs and to facilitate successful completion of any sentence imposed by the community Court. Otherwise information is confidential and shall be protected.

Court Date/Time: 18 July 99

Hermon B. Hatch
Community Court Representative

18 July 99
Date

[Redacted]
Juvenile

7/18/99
Date

[Redacted]
Parent/Guardian/Custodian

18 July 99
Date

Juvenile Probation Officer

Date

Appendix E. Emmonak Elders' Group Court Procedures

Ensure the continuation of the Court as individuals leave or drop out of the program.

B. COURT PROCEDURES

1. All Elders are seated at the front table with the Tribal Elder/Youth Specialist. The Defendant(s) is seated facing the judges, the VPSO or Police are to the left. The public are seated behind the litigants, all facing the Elders.

2. The Elder/ Youth Specialist starts the tape and states the following:

a) All Rise

b) The Elders Group is know in session.

c) Presiding over the Court are Tribal Elders Group.

1) State the names of the Group.

2) State who is the Group Chief.

d) Today is 18 July 1999. Today the Elders Group will hear the case # EYS-99-01 involving (Juvenile's name(s)). a minor under the eighteen years of age and a member of the Village of Emmonak.

e) The defendant present. Direct the question to the juvenile or Direct the questions to the public.

f) Are the defendant parents present?

g) Will the Defendant please place he/she in front of the Elders Counsel.

3. Swear the litigants, VPSO, The Police Officer and than the defendants and any witnesses.

a) Have the person raise their right hand and place their left hand on the Bible.

b) Than ask them, Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God (They say, I do)

4. Have the Police present the case. They can do this by reading the case synopsis or complaint while the Elders Group follow alone.

a) The Police Officer may also just tell what happened in his own words and may also refer to his/her note books.

b) The Police Officer may also question the juvenile although they may refuse to answer.

5. Then the Elder/Youth Specialist ask the defendant wishes to speak in response to the charge. The defendant's parents may also be asked if they have anything to say.

6. If there is a witness, ask them if they wish to speak.

7. Finally, ask if anyone else has anything to say or add.

8. Take a recess. The Elders Group will go out to confer and decide on guilt or innocence and an appropriate sentence, if applicable. The Specialist states, The Elders Counsel will take a recess and gather again in 15 minutes. (or however much time they need)

(ELDERS MEET AND REACH A DECISION)

9. The Specialist reconvenes the Elders stating, The Elders Group is now in session again for case # EYS-99-01

10. Have the Group Chief read the determination of the group.

11. The Group will make comments to the defendant or parent at this time.

12. The Specialist then asks the defendant and the parents if they have anything to say or comment on before the case is closed.

13. The Specialist will then close the case stating, this case is closed.

SHUT OF THE TAPE IF RUNNING.

At this time the Elders may move on to another case or review the process of any juvenile and their community work services. At the end of the last case the Specialist shall announce that The Elders Group is now closed. The next regular scheduled Elders Group Hearing is on _____ at _____ am/pm

Appendix F. Community Service Work Agreement (Sample)

The following person has appeared before the Emmonak Elders Group on (date) 18 July 88 and requested assistance in resolving their minor offense charge (name and case number listed below).

The Emmonak Elders Group will assist (name): [REDACTED]

Case Number: EYS - 77 - 01

This person has been counseled and agrees to complete the following tasks:

1. CHOP WOOD 2. PACK WATER 3. CLEAN YARD

 Attend Elders Group meetings to receive counseling and guidance concerning the above issue.

 Other: _____

The above must complete by (date) _____ and this document with accompanying signatures must be presented to the Emmonak Elder Group before this case will be dismissed. Appearing before the Elders Group is a privilege and should be treated as such. The Elders Group can decide at any time to not assist you with this case and you will be required to deal with this case before the State Court. At least four Elders signatures are required to document the completion of these requirements.

ELDERS SIGNATURES (To be sign on completion of tasks)

1. Alex Bird 1st Chief
2. _____
3. Ben Tucker 3rd Chief
4. _____
5. Mike B. Moore Member
6. Luelle Westlake member
7. Virginia Kassock member
8. _____

TO DEFENDENT: The court has to be notified if you choose to comply with the recommendation of the Elder Counseling. Call the Tribal Office so your case can be scheduled for a status hearing upon completion of the assigned tasks. If you do not let the Tribal Office know the Court will assume that you want to deal with the case in the State Court. If the Tribe receives no response at all a default judgment will be entered against you

Appendix G. Case Review Form

**Emmonak Elder Group
Juvenile Accountability Project
Case Review Form**

Case Number

ID#

Youth Initials

Referral Agent

State

Family

School

Other, Specify: _____

Date of Referral

Date of Elder's Meeting

**Reason for Referral
(Include type of Offence)**

**Elder's Verdict or Sentence
(Include # of Hours and/or
Amount of fine)**

**What social services or community
activities was the youth and
or family referred to?**

Follow-up statement

**Date: _____
(List progress made, activities
involved in, school success,
reports of misbehavior,
including citations, community
service hours completed)**

Page 2- Case Summary
Case # _____

Follow-up statement
Date: _____
(list progress made, activities involved in, school success, reports of misbehavior, including citations, community service hours completed)

Follow-up statement
Date: _____
(list progress made, activities involved in, school success, reports of misbehavior, including citations, community service hours completed)

Follow-up statement
Date: _____
(list progress made, activities involved in, school success, reports of misbehavior, including citations, community service hours completed)

Follow-up statement
Date: _____
(list progress made, activities involved in, school success, reports of misbehavior, including citations, community service hours completed)

Questionnaires Completed Youth Survey - Date: _____
(Attach completed surveys) Family Survey- Date: _____

Appendix H. Family Follow-Up Survey Form

Emmonak Youth Accountability Project
1 month Family Follow-up

TO BE COMPLETED BY FAMILY MEMBER

Youth ID# _____ Date: _____
CASE ID# _____

Original Elder Court Date: _____ Sentence: _____

What is your relationship to the youth: mother, father, aunt, etc.

Why was your youth referred to the Elders Group? _____

Who referred them? _____

Did you go to the Elders Court hearing with your youth? Yes _____ No _____

In what ways did appearing before the elders affect your youth's behavior?

Do you think this program is a good idea? Yes _____ No _____

Why or why not?

What would make this program better?

What other things would you like to tell us about the youth/elder project or youth in Emmonak?

Appendix I. Youth Survey Interview Form

Emmonak Elders Group
Youth Accountability Project
ID# _____ Date: _____

Pa 1 of 2

YOUTH SURVEY

7. Did you understand what you had to do to complete your sentence?

1. Why did you get referred to the Elders Group?

2. Whose decision was it for you to go to the Elders Group?

3. Would you have rather gone through the Juvenile court system or the Elders Group Process? Why?

4. How did you feel when the Elders were talking to you?

(happy/sad/mad/embarrassed/confused/
hopeful/cared about/bored)

5. What were some of the things you heard from the Elders?

6. Do you think your sentence was fair?

Emmonak Elders Group

Pa 2 of 2

Youth Accountability Project

ID# _____ Date: _____

8. Do you think it is a good idea for young people who get in trouble to go before the Elders group? Why or why not?

9. Do you think going before the Elders group will make you change your behavior?

10. If you get in trouble again would you rather go through the regular juvenile justice system or go to the Elders group? Why?

11. What things could be done to help young people in Emmonak stay out of trouble?

12. What's good about the Elders Group?

13. In what ways did you change after going before the Elders group?

14. Did what the Elders said to you and what you did for your community service have an influence on your behavior, and how you felt about yourself?

Appendix J. News Story from *Delta Discovery*, 2/21/01

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Serving Bethel and the
of the Yukon-Kuskokwin



**The
Delta Discovery™**

Volume 3, Issue 8
Wednesday
February 21, 2001

"Real news for the Real People."

50¢ FREE
in
Villages

Elder's Group succeeds in village

**PETER ATCHAK
RE-ELECTED
S & R
PRESIDENT**

page 4



**NEW ANCHORAGE
POLICE CHIEF
BRINGS DELTA
TIES TO OFFICE**

page 28

**TODDLERS GET
NEW LOCAL
BOOKS**

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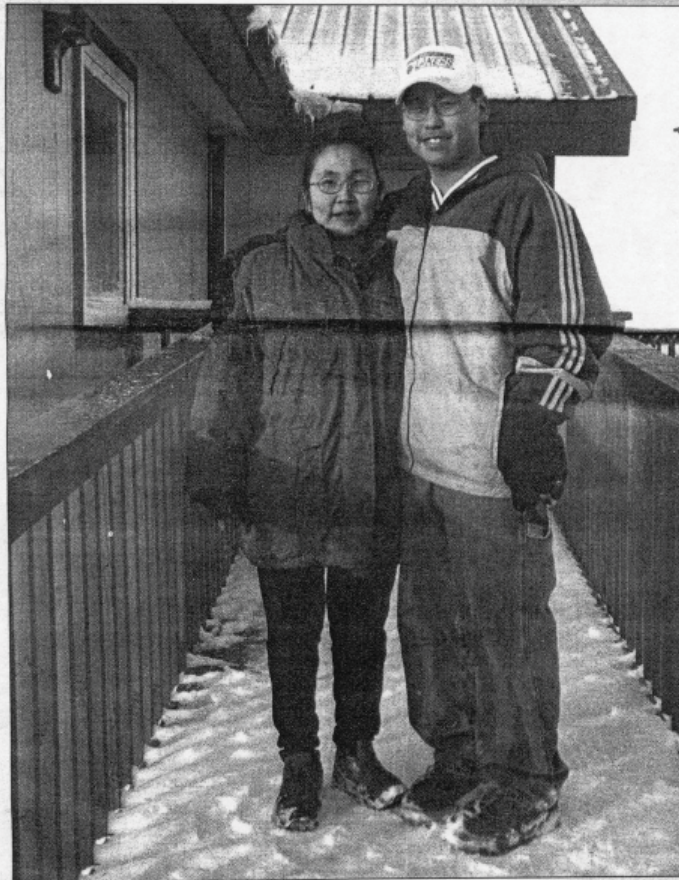


photo by Ted Horner

Clara and Bobby Bird are closer as a family after son Bobby went before the Emmonak Elder's Group for counseling. Many local youth are staying out of the criminal justice system thanks to Elder intervention. Story on page 14.

The Delta Discovery • P.O. Box 1028 Bethel, AK 99559 • (907)543-4113 • (fax) 543-4116 • realnews@deltadiscovery.com

Elders intervene to save village youth

State funded group gets results with youth at risk

by Ted Horner

Like many other rural Alaska communities undergoing social upheaval, Emmonak has had its share of problems, particularly with their young people. Curfew violations, theft and weapon incidents began to emerge as everyday occurrences in this coastal village of 800.

"Before 1998, parents were having a hard time with their children," said Herman Hootch of the Emmonak Tribal Council. "We were fed up with kids getting into the (state) criminal justice system and re-offending."

Then a suicide and a juvenile shooting incident caused the community to take action to save the future generations. Traditionally, prior to Western contact, justice in the Native village was attended to by the community elders, and later, when faced with the revolving door of the state criminal justice system, it was the elders who stepped forward and formed a group to deal with the young people.

"In the old days, there were few problems and hardly any fights," said 1st Chief Alex Bird, 80, of the elder's group. "When someone got drunk and would fight, we would tie them up in the steam house and leave them until the morning."

Thieves would have their hands beaten with a stick. The most serious punishment would be banishment from the village.

30 years ago, an 11-year-old boy was smoking cigarettes by the river bank and caused a snowmachine to burn up. The quaking lad was hauled before an assembled tribal group, including a younger Alex Bird.

That youngster, Herman Hootch, learned his lesson and grew up to pay back his community by helping to form the region's first-state recognized village-based juvenile justice intervention program, now known as the Emmonak Elder's Group. He serves as the program coordinator and liaison with the state agencies.

"Kids in the Bethel Youth Facility are not getting rehabilitated," Hootch said. "It doesn't help them and it makes them more angry."

The Emmonak Tribal Council submitted a \$30,000 grant in 1999 to the Alaska Dept. of Health and Human Services to form the Elder's group which intervenes in juvenile misdemeanor cases. Cases are referred by State Troopers and Juvenile Probation Officers. The youthful offenders are given the choice - the state criminal justice system or coming before the Elder's Group. Most choose the later.

Several years ago, Bobby Bird, who was 15-years-old at the time, had discipli-

nary problems. As the eldest child in a family raised by a single mother, Bird lacked direction. When charged with a misdemeanor count of minor consumption of alcohol, he was given the choice - state courts and sentences or go before the Elder's Group. He chose the elders who counseled him and issued him community service.

"It made me think about how much people care," Bird said. "The Elders talked to me and told that it hurts them to see me act the way I did. It made me feel funny seeing the elder's cry, it made me think."

His mother, Clara Bird, a Head Start teacher, participated in the proceedings. Along with her son, she learned from the elders - how to become a better parent.

"I've learned to talk to my son as a person," she said. "We can cry together, laugh together. The communication between a parent and their child is very important."

In its second year, the program's success has caused parents and the local school officials to refer students to the elder's group at the first sign of disciplinary problems, before they become the subject of a law enforcement action.

"It's making a great big impact, they are showing respect to their parents and elders," Hootch said. "We want to restore justice here. In our long range plans we want to be able to deal with adults, domestic violence and assault cases."

No one could be happier about the success of the program than the state probation officers in Bethel who have to deal with youth referrals from around the Delta.

"It's working wonderfully," said Probation Officer Don Constantine. "Prior to that (Elder's Group) Emmonak was the worst village because of the number of referrals."

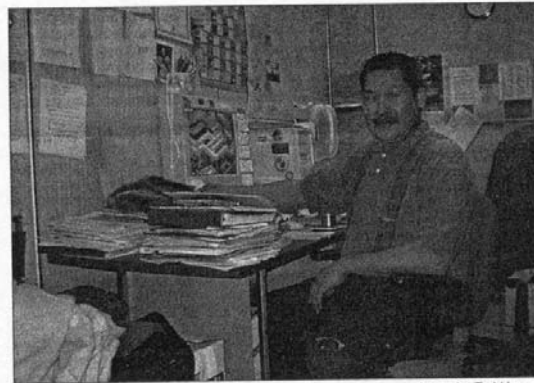
Constantine now says they haven't had a referral in six months.

"The community is assuming ownership for their problems with the kids," he said. "It is saving the Division of Juvenile Justice thousands of dollars and man hours. More importantly, it is making a difference in the kids."



photo by Ted Horner

The Emmonak Elder's Group regularly meets with young people referred by state agencies, school and parents. (L-R) are 3rd Chief Edward Andrews, 1st Chief Alex Bird, members Ambrose Shorty and Lucille Westlock. Not pictured are 2nd Chief Ben Tucker, members Maggie Charles, Virginia Kassock, and Mary Ann Andrews.



photos by Ted Horner

Above, Elder/Youth Specialist Herman Hootch is the fulltime coordinator for the Emmonak Elders Group.

Below, the Emmonak Elders encourage community participation in Eskimo dancing, particularly with the young people of the village.

At right, Elder's Group member Ambrose Shorty joins in with the dancing.



Appendix K. FY00 Grant Progress Report

STATE OF ALASKA

Department of Health & Social Services

Division of Juvenile Justice

P.O. Box 110635, Alaska Office Building Room 517, Juneau, AK 99811-0635

FY00 Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grants (JAIBG)

Final Narrative Report (Due August 15, 2000)

Instructions: Please answer the questions completely. If given question does not apply, indicate by writing "N/A." Please be sure all numbers are correct and if textual information contains what would appear to be conflicting information, please provide a clear explanation. If you choose to submit the report on a form other than the one provided, the text of ALL questions on this form MUST be included and answered appropriately. Yes, there are seven pages to this form. Do not feel compelled to fill it ALL up! Clear, Concise, and Complete answers are appreciated! If you have questions or would like an electronic copy of this form, please contact Bill Hurr by e-mail at Bill_Hurr@health.state.ak.us, and he will send a reply e-mail with a Word97 version of the form attached.

Grantee Information

Grantee:		
Program Name:		
Grant Number:		
Reporting Period:		Quarter No.:

Activities & Outcomes:

- List the each of the Project Goals and related objectives the agency describes in the grant application. In **MEASUREABLE TERMS**, summarize the progress the agency has made with respect to each of the goals/objectives project. The agency MUST clearly report on the behavioral and project specific outcomes it chose, as required by the RFP. Be sure to use baseline data cited in original application and data collected as a part of the program evaluation plan cited in the agency's original application. Attach relevant documentation as necessary.

The Elders Group is charging the juveniles an amount of \$50.00. After the fact that the juvenile gets sentenced and charged at the Court presiding. My job is to monitor the juvenile during there work service program and after the sentence we give them a certificate for completing. This approach is to let the youth know that its not OK to commit a crime.

And also that the juveniles well learn that the community as a whole cares for the youth to be successful, responsible and to be accountable for their criminal and misbehaved actions. The Elders are making progress with the juvenile and that they are talking more to the parents and the Elders.

**FY00 JAIBG
Final Narrative Report
Page 2**

Reporting Period: *
Grantee:
Program:
Grant Number:

(A. Cont.)

The Elders feel that letting the youth walk at the first presiding well give the youth the sense that its OK to commit a crime, so therefore they have come to a conclusion that putting the youth on a work program and having me monitor there completing there community work services. The Elders don't want the youth repeat the crimes, working with them through me we can make a different in their lives as youth of this community to be productive and to go to college, job corp. and to be a working members of the cash economy and new technology of today.

The community likes the intent of the Elders to take referrals from the Juvenile office at Bethel and that they are glad that the Division Juvenile Justice is work for the Elders of Emmonak. That the State of Alaska is recognizing the Elder for the work they are doing and that is a booster for them, the meetings and the presiding are being volunteer bases right know.

The community has told the Elders countless times at there regular meetings that they appreciate what they are doing to help our youth to stay away from THINKING misbehavior and criminal acts and that having the minors juveniles that there is more to life than committing a crime.

**FY00 JAIBG
Final Narrative Report
Page 3**

Reporting Period:
Grantee:
Program:
Grant Number:

- B. What goals and/or activities were planned but not implemented by the Agency. Explain why the goal/activity was not implemented.

Our goals are that we have our youth to be successful in all aspects of there young teenage years and to guide them in the right direction to succeed during and after there school years.

The Elders Group is here to help community members and to let them know that we have a group that want the best from our members to guide and give wisdom from the Elders prospective.

That is enhanced to our youth through there meetings and presiding and we have statements from community members that there are proud to have a group of elders That are here in our community that help

- C. List any goals/activities the agency implemented through the program not originally planned. Explain how the goal/activity came to be a part of the program.

Fund raising is an issue to them because they are feeling that volunteering to taking there time away from home is starting to burden them.

**FY00 JAIBG
Final Narrative Report
Page 4**

Reporting Period:
Grantee:
Program:
Grant Number:

Participant Feedback:

- A. Whom did the agency define as a **CONSUMER** for the purposes for programming and evaluation?

The Tribal Council hired me to monitor and evaluate the completion of the youth that have been ordered to community work service by Elders Group.

- B. What method(s) of Consumer Evaluation did the agency employ?

Currently we don't have an evaluation plan for our youth .

- C. Discuss in detail the results of the Consumer Evaluation, including what was most liked or valued about the program, as well as the concerns consumers raised during evaluation.

The community is please that we are working for youth to lead them to a right direction to succeed in life at home and school, these kind of information is being talked about that our kids after being processed through the elders are leading to a better behavior pattern and also the survival of hunting and how to travel both at winter and summer months.

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Final Narrative Report
Page 5**

Reporting Period:
Grantee:
Program:
Grant Number:

Training:

- A. Summarize the training activities which benefited agency staff or program volunteers.

The training with the Canadians was developmental and enhancing to our Elders because they saw how their community pulling together to help community their members to succeed after the fact that they did a crime. Our elders want to succeed in there quest to help the youth that have committed a crime. They want to past the knowledge they learn from their parents. Them older days was not easy because they had to survive to hunt without the cash and the school they need today.

Reflections:

- A. If the agency was to implement the program again, is there anything that should be done differently?

Working closely with interested groups within the State to brain storm ideas that they have in dealing with juveniles that have committed crimes, and have them groups tell us how they deal with there youth that think misbehavior and criminal acts. This way we have working groups to come up with ideas to help youth to be productive through the Division of Juvenile Justice (PROJECTS).

**FY00 JAIBG
Final Narrative Report
Page 6**

Reporting Period:
Grantee:
Program:
Grant Number:

Reflections, Cont.:

B. What elements of the program were a valuable part of the success of the program?

That the Elders Group developed to help our youth to be good and productive members of community. And also the surrounding villages calling asking how we got established and how we are dealing with our youth that think misbehavior and criminal acts.

C. What advice would the agency have for another agency, group, or person planning to implement a similar program? (i.e. what lessons did your agency learn?)

That all the organization have to work collaboratively to make a project such as the Emmonak Elders group, having input from all members of plan group letting all person testify about how they want there youth dealt. And also if an group gets established they need to understand the word CONFIDENTIALITY.

Additional Information:

If there is any additional information the agency would like to provide, please feel free to include attachments with the report. If any brochures, pamphlets, fliers, or newsletters were produced by or for the program, please send copies of these documents along with the report. Thank you.

**FY00 JAIBG
Final Narrative Report
Page 7**

**Reporting Period:
Grantee:
Program:
Grant Number:**

Grant Process:

- A. If you have any feedback regarding the granting process, it would be most appreciated. We are interested in constructive feedback regarding your experience in this process including Requests for Proposals (RFP's), the Proposal Evaluation Committee process (PEC's), technical assistance, communication with the grants office, and reporting forms. Let us know what went well, and let us know where you believe improvements might be made. Thanks!

The grant is excellent stage we are work well with parent that are wanting there youth processed through Emmonak Elders Group. We are getting cooperative results from Division of Juvenile Justice. The most important is Training and Technical Support from the Department of Health and Social Services. To make a project work affectively need lots of cooperation with the working groups and all that signed the agreement to work cooperatively and to have a project to work in rural area.

We have reports that Elders Group of countless testimony from the community organization and parents that they like the idea of youth being address by our elders about the proper ways of survival and living techniques, what they learned from there parents. Not only that but about what it takes to survive this day and age at the school, community and at home. And also why its important to listen our teacher, parents and community organizational leader, because they already know what it takes to be a productive member of a community.

Appendix L. Emmonak Elders' Group Cases, FY99 and FY00

EMMONAK ELDERS GROUP (EEG) CASES F/Y 99 AND 00
Grant Award Period July 1999 Thru July 2000
12/30/00

CV
of need age? (Offense) CV

Case #	Date of Crime	M/F	Ethnicity	Date Referred	Date Elder Mtg.	State/Local	Comments
EEG-99-01 13 y.o	2 May 99	M	YUPIK	5 May 99	18 July 99	S	Fairbanks juvenile holding facility flying chopped
EEG-99-02	2 May 99	M	YUPIK	1 Sept 99	1 Sept 99	S	Completed
EEG-99-03	2 May 99	M	YUPIK		15 Sept 99	S	Handled by adult court
EEG-99-04						L	Name withheld
EEG-99-05		F	YUPIK		Sept 22 99	L	L - Family name? Name Withheld why? why?
EEG-99-06						L	Completed
EEG-99-07						L	Completed
EEG-99-08 CV & MCA #5	8, 22 Aug 99 & 2 Sept 99	F	YUPIK	8 Oct 99	12 Nov 99	S	Completed
EEG-99-09 Burg - 11 y.o		M	YUPIK		12 Nov 99	S	Juvenile holding Facility
EEG-99-10		M	YUPIK		14/14/99	L	Completed
EEG-99-11		F	YUPIK			L	Completed
No case # adult		M	YUPIK			L	That this case did not
EEG-99-12 Kipster & Kipster committed suicide		F	YUPIK			L	Completed
EEG-99-13		M	YUPIK			L	Completed
EEG-99-14		M	YUPIK			L	Completed
EEG-99-15		M	YUPIK			L	Completed
EEG-99-16		M	YUPIK			L	Completed
EEG-99-17		M	YUPIK			L	Completed
EEG-03-00		M	YUPIK	5/00	12/01/99	S	Completed
EEG-04-00		M	YUPIK	5/00	12/99	S	Completed
EEG-05-00	06-11-00	F	YUPIK	5-25-00		S	Completed
EEG-06-00	2-23-00	M	YUPIK	5-25-00		S	Completed
EEG-07-00	2-25-00	M	YUPIK	5-25-00		S	Completed
EEG-08-00	2-5-00	M	YUPIK	5-25-00		S	Completed
EEG-09-00	6-12-00	M	YUPIK	5-1-00		S	Completed
EEG-10-00	2-25-00	M	1/2 YUPIK	6-12-00	??????	S	Completed

Living in Anchorage
no elder Mtg;

