



For immediate release: Jan. 6, 2011

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Alaska behavioral health boards promote “Sound Minds in Sound Bodies”

JUNEAU, Alaska — A new campaign encourages Alaskans to take five simple but effective steps to improve their mental well-being.

“*Sound Minds in Sound Bodies* shows people that they can take control of their mental and emotional fitness the way they can their physical health,” said Kate Burkhart, executive director of the Alaska Mental Health Board (AMHB) and Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse (ABADA).

The boards invite Alaskans to take these five steps over eight weeks:

1. **Connect** with friends and family.
2. **Move** your body 30 minutes a day.
3. **Be mindful** of your experiences, in the world and inside yourself.
4. **Learn** something new, take a class, or dust off an old skill set.
5. **Give** to your community or someone in need by volunteering or sharing with others.

Research has found these actions effectively build the resiliency that helps people reduce or avoid serious mental health and substance abuse problems.

Ways that people can join in the campaign include:

- Follow examples on the *Sound Minds in Sounds Bodies* [webpage](#) and share your ideas on the AMHB and ABADA Facebook pages: [AMHB FB](#) and [ABADA FB](#)

- Sign up for the AMHB and ABADA President's Active Lifestyle Challenge group at <http://www.presidentschallenge.org> (group number 96386) and get moving 30 minutes a day.
- Learn more about supporting mental health at [Speak Your Mind](#), the boards' online blog.

An estimated 34,000 Alaskan adults and youth experience serious mental health issues each year. Another 21,000 youth and adults are estimated to be dependent on alcohol. The State of Alaska spent more than \$90 million on mental health and substance abuse treatment services from mid 2009 to mid 2010. For more information, see the [2009 Alaska Scorecard](#).

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