

## FAS THREATENS INDIAN CHILDREN

— Anita Austin

We would like to share with you some information about a disastrous birth defect that threatens all future generations of Indian people. The birth defect is called Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS). Although the physical and mental damage of FAS is irreversible; it is also 100 percent preventable!

We should all recognize that mothering begins before birth. Pregnant women or women who are planning to become pregnant need to be aware of the problems that may arise if they drink alcohol during their pregnancy.

Mothers who drink during pregnancy increase the chances of their off-spring having physical, mental and/or behavioral problems. This pattern of deformities is known as Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS). FAS is a birth defect and probably the number one cause of mental retardation. FAS is one hundred percent preventable! The only cause appears to be alcohol, and it is not caused by malnutrition.

Most women do not know that when they drink a cocktail, or a glass of wine or beer, their baby is drinking the alcohol, too. Alcohol is teratogenic, which means it crosses the placenta barrier and circulates in the blood stream of the fetus.

The fetus' blood alcohol level does reach that of the mother's. However, due to the small size and underdeveloped system, the baby cannot metabolize or expel the poison from its system as fast as the mother. So energy needed for cell and tissue growth is instead used to get rid of the alcohol poison.



The damage done by the exposure to alcohol in the womb is irreversible. The Fetal Alcohol Syndrome child will never 'catch up'. Both physical and mental damage is permanent.

There are certain characteristics common to Fetal Alcohol Syndrome babies. These characteristics remain through adulthood. People with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome are characterized by (1) growth deficiency, (2) a characteristic facial appearance, (3) some central nervous system damage, and (4) often some other malformations including heart defects, kidney defects, genital abnormalities and mild joint problems.

Facial characteristics that are tell-tale signs of FAS are:

- small head circumference
- small, widely spaced eye openings
- upturned nose
- flat and thin upper lip
- epicanthic fold in the inner eye

The central nervous system will exhibit itself in poor brain development. The FAS child will most often be mentally retarded, have poor coordination, show irritability in infancy and hyperactivity in childhood.

The FAS child will be smaller than other children, both height and weight, with very little fat tissue. Their heads are much smaller than normal because their skull stops growing when their brain does.

A woman does not have to be an alcoholic to have an FAS child. An example of this fact is a child born to a woman who only drank two drinks a day. That is the equivalent of two glasses of wine or two bottles of beer a day.

How much drinking is safe for a pregnant woman? Drinking alcohol is harmful all through pregnancy. Because of the uncertainty about how much alcohol is dangerous during pregnancy, it is important for a woman who is pregnant or planning to become pregnant to stop drinking immediately. Remember, one heavy day of drinking, one 'binge' may damage the baby permanently.

Researchers have also found that a drinking mother's milk contains the same level of alcohol as her blood, so it is not safe to resume drinking after delivery. If you breast-feed your baby don't drink.

Unfortunately, the fetus or newborn can't say 'no' when it has had enough. But the mother can. When you are pregnant or breast-feeding, the best drink is no drink at all. If you have a drinking problem, contact someone in your Community Health Program or Substance Abuse Program.

### — JOB OPENING —

#### St. Regis Mohawk Health Services HEALTH DIRECTOR

Salary: \$18,000 - \$22,000

**Summary Duties:** Under the direction of the Health Board, the incumbent is responsible for directing and administering the agencies health and social service programs aimed at elevating the health status of the St. Regis Mohawk People. With responsibility for supervising the following departments: Human Services, Partridge House, Medical and Dental clinics, Medical Outreach, Health Support and Contract Medical Care.

**Deadline:** August 22, 1983 at 4:00 p.m.

**Send resume and cover letter to:**

Mrs. E.C. Loran, Secretary  
St. Regis Mohawk Health Board  
Community Building  
Hogansburg, New York 13655

## ALCOHOLISM EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Alcohol and Substance Abuse Division of the Human Services Department and The North American Indian Travelling College will host a 3-part educational session at The Old Cornwall Island Indian School. On August 22nd, 23rd, and 24th at 7:00 P.M.

**EVERYONE IS WELCOME**

The overall theme is

**— ALCOHOLISM A FAMILY PROBLEM**

Aug. 22nd - Session I

-ALCOHOL/ALCOHOLISM/  
ALCOHOLICS  
- FAMILY DENIAL  
- THE CO-ALCOHOLIC

Aug. 23rd - Session II

- TOUGH LOVE  
- WHAT TO DO/NOT DO

Aug. 24th - Session III

- INTERVENTION  
- STRENGTHENING THE FAMILY  
- GETTING WELL TOGETHER

Participants will develop an understanding of the disease of ALCOHOLISM and the role the family members can play in the perpetuation of this illness.

The Instructor for these sessions will be Mia Tillman, a Credentialed Alcoholism Counselor presently working with the Human Services Department and a Native of the St. Regis Mohawk Reservation.

For further information please call:

Mia Tillman Gloria T. Thompson  
HUMAN SERVICES DEPT. NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN  
518-358-2272 ext.224 TRAVELLING COLLEGE  
613-932-9452

### — ALCOHOL —

Working in the field of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse there are many questions that are asked and many questions that go unasked. There are also many myths and misconceptions in the world of alcohol and drugs. We would like to clear as many of these misconceptions as possible by answering your questions thru the INDIAN TIME.

**QUESTION: Why do people drink?**

**ANSWER:** There are a thousand answers and reasons for a thousand individuals, but we can boil it down to simply because it makes them feel better. Alcohol relieves tension, it makes you forget your troubles - temporarily. It produces a euphoria (a high). People use it as a means of escape, to relax, to have pleasure, some people like the taste, others like what the alcohol does to them. Others feel a social pressure to drink and do it to conform. Still others are inhibited people who find it difficult to make small talk, drinking lowers their inhibitions and loosens their tongues and helps them to feel comfortable with other people. Others to help them sleep. Problems with alcohol arise when we need to have a drink in order to cope with everyday stress and pressures.

For further information call Mia or Ateronhiatakon at 358-2272 ext. 224.

### — JOB OPENINGS —

The North American Indian Travelling College is accepting applications for the following positions:

**Project Manager** — (6 month position) to oversee and manage the project, to coordinate travel arrangements, to organize and implement all materials produced, to develop an evaluation instrument and to meet all reporting requirements.

**Education/Skills** - Must have an administration background, skills in writing and implementing innovation programs. Minimum requirements - grade 12 education, prefer college degree with three years of experience.

**Secretary** — (6 month position) typing speed of 40 wpm, shorthand speed of 90 wpm, skills in answering telephone, running office machines and setting up filing system. Able to make travel arrangements and coordinate travel activities.

**Education/Skills** - A grade 12 degree minimum requirements with three years experience or secretarial school certificate.

**Researchers** — (5 positions) 6 month term - to gather material through interviewing the elders of the 6 nations. To write and collate all materials.

**Education/Skills** - Must have writing skills, be able to record notes and ability to speak the native language. Grade 12 minimum; two years college degree maximum or 3 years experience and knowledge of native programs and native people.

**Technician** — (1 position, 6 month term) - to be responsible for all audio visual work including care of equipment. To record and videotape all meetings with the elders and the leaders.

**Education/Skills** - Knowledge of audio visual equipment and recording of individuals and events skills in operating 3/4" video cassette recorders, tape recorders, and 35 mm cameras.

The project is titled *Action Research with Our Elders* and is a six month project. Applications will be taken at the North American Indian Travelling College. Resumes are necessary. **Deadline is August 5, 1983.**

North American Indian Travelling College

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Ontario K6H 5R7

Tel: (613) 932-9452



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## HEALTH SERVICES

### COMMITMENT AND THEME

The basic philosophy, spirit and drive of an organization have far more to do with its relative achievements than do technological or economic resources, organizational structure, innovation, and timing. All these things weigh heavily in success. But they are, I think, transcended by how strongly the people in the organization believe in its basic precepts and how faithfully they carry them out. The timeless set of beliefs include:

1. — Respect for Individual  
— Specifically for the dignity and the rights of each person in the organization
2. — Community Service  
— To give the best community service of any organization in the country
3. — Excellence  
— The conviction that an organization should pursue all tasks with the objective of accomplishing them in a superior way.

The beliefs are foundations for delivery of services. Additionally, perhaps what is needed is an overall theme for St. Regis Mohawk Health Services. I am accordingly requesting ideas on a theme for our organization from staff members, Health Board members, and community members. One example of a theme has been "Helping Others to Help Themselves". Please direct your ideas and suggestions to: Victor L. Martin, Director  
St. Regis Mohawk Health Services  
Community Building  
Hogansburg, N.Y. 13655



### — JOB OPENING —

**JOB TITLE:** Senior Alcoholism Counselor  
**LOCATION:** The Partridge House, Hogansburg, NY

**QUALIFICATION:**

- Bachelor's Degree in Behavioral Sciences
- Proficiency in counseling and group dynamics
- Credentialed Alcoholism Counselor
- Three years experience working with alcoholics
- Native American preferred but not essential

**DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:** Functions as a primary counselor; responsible for the general management of an appropriate workload; oversee the management of the therapeutic program and staff; responsible for improvement in the quality of the therapeutic program by giving in-service training sessions, meets weekly with Rehab Aides to evaluate residents' performance and adjustment in program, under supervision of the Program Director, he/she is responsible for the training of new therapeutic staff, responsible for his/her own continuing education in the field of alcoholism.

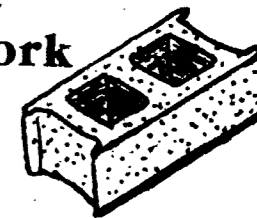
**SALARY:** Commensurate with qualifications

**DEADLINE:** August 22, 1983

**SUBMIT RESUMES TO:**

Lola Terrace, Program Director  
The Partridge House  
Box 162A, McGee Road  
Hogansburg, NY 13655

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