

Infant Learning Program

The Infant Learning Program promotes growth and development of children under three. Staff visit villages in the region based on children's needs and the number of referrals in villages. Children served may have been born prematurely, have delays in development, or have a diagnosed disability such as Down's syndrome or cerebral palsy.

In FY02:

- 82 children were referred to ILP for services (up from 65 the prior year).
- 26 children were enrolled in ILP services.
- 392 screenings, evaluations, and visits were made with enrolled and referred children.

Women, Infants and Children (WIC)

WIC is a supplemental food program that helps pregnant and post-partum women, infants, and children up to age five. We provide food packages, nutrition education, and referrals to other agencies. During FY02 we:

- Served an average of 561 clients per month.
- Continued to publish a quarterly newsletter to educate clients about nutrition.
- Participated in breastfeeding training and education.
- Worked to increase communication with related health departments.
- Traveled to villages to enroll clients.

Office of Environmental Health

The Office of Environmental Health works to protect the public from illness and injury related to the environment. We offer technical assistance and training concerning water, wastewater, solid and hazardous waste, food, air, pests, and safety.

During FY02, we:

- Made 72 village trips to address environmental health issues.
- Provided 10 training courses for water and wastewater system operators, utility managers, and village environmental staff. At year-end, all regional villages had at least one water system operator certified in water treatment.
- Helped implement the second year of the four-year St. Lawrence Island Environmental Health and Justice Project funded by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences.
- Conducted 26 animal bite and rabies exposure investigations.



NSHC's Infant Learning Program staff includes (from left) Kristen Penttila, Melissa Holmes and Rick Partridge.

Public Health Nursing

Public Health Nursing focuses on preventive health practices and early detection of disease.

During FY02, we:

- Increased our well child screenings by four percent.
- Had no Hib meningitis this past year, our first disease-free year in 3 years.
- Visited all schools in the region to educate students on healthy choices, tuberculosis, hand-washing, pregnancy prevention, sexually transmitted diseases, etc.
- Provided 177 family planning contacts.
- Provided 610 blood pressure screenings.

Our TB Control Program provides screenings and education about TB to the region's schools, health aides, inmate populations and others.

Our Arctic Babies are Cool home visit program has proven very successful, providing postpartum visits, calls, or letters to new families.



Nursing student LaVerne Anagick of Unalakleet weighs a baby while interning with Public Health Nursing at NSHC.

Tribal Healer Program

The Tribal Healer Program offers a traditional health care alternative. Once a thriving tradition, this method of care is indigenous to the Bering Strait region and was only provided by people naturally skilled in helping with their hands. During FY02, the Tribal Healer Program:

- Treated 214 patients in Nome and 96 in villages.
- Visited six villages.
- Participated in tribal healing in Kotzebue and at the Alaska Federation of Natives convention in Anchorage.