

# Providers' Conference starts July 13

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by *Tundra Times* Staff

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If your lucky number is 13, then you should definitely be in Bethel for the 13th annual Rural Providers' Conference.

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The theme of the five day conference that celebrates the growing Native sobriety movement is "We Are Teachers - Show Love." The conference kicks off July 15 at 5:00 p.m. in the Bethel Regional High School.

The gathering allows community leaders, providers of substance abuse services, youth and elders to share information about effective programs in their

# • 13th Rural Providers Conference



villages. Substance abuse prevention is addressed through cultural events and talking circles besides keynote speakers and workshops.

It also provides an opportunity for many villagers to renew friendships and gain new energy in their pledge to a healthy lifestyle without drugs and alcohol, said coordinator David Mousseau.

The conference will end with a staking ceremony. For this, a couple is selected to hold a bundle of stakes. The

stakes use four colored rings to represent the different people of Alaska. It is the responsibility of the stakeholders to provide strength and protection to Alaska's people. The participants grab a stake and thrust it into the ground as a symbol of their commitment to sobriety.

The RPC is co-sponsored by the Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc. and the Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation. For more information, contact David Mousseau at 279-2511 or 1-800-478-7227, or Wally Richardson at 543-3221 or 1-800-478-2905.