



## *Proclamation*

Whereas, the youth of Alaska are this State's most precious resource and greatest hope for the future, and ensuring their safety, well-being, positive development and growth into healthy citizens is a priority and responsibility we all share; and

Whereas, the transitional adolescent years present new challenges and choices for teens as they experience dating relationships for the first time and, unfortunately, associated pressures and expectations that can lead to abusive behavior; and

Whereas, teen dating violence includes physical, verbal, and emotional abuse, sexual assault, and harassment and this abuse is now easier through texting and emailing and is a reality for many teenagers in Alaska; and

Whereas, a nationwide survey finds that 30% of teens in a dating relationship have been text-messaged 10-30 times an hour by a partner and yet 81% of parents don't believe that teen dating violence is not an issue; and

Whereas, 1 in 3 young people are affected by dating violence, with 1 in 5 in a serious relationship reporting having been slapped, pushed, hit, threatened or coerced and sexually abused by a dating partner; and

Whereas, studies also indicate that the effects of violent relationships can be serious and put victims at higher risk for substance abuse, eating disorders, risky sexual behavior, suicide, and adult re-victimization; and

Whereas, young people can make better choices when they understand that healthy relationships are based on respect and learn to identify early warning signs of an abusive relationship; and

Whereas, the elimination of dating violence must be achieved through the cooperation of parents, teachers, individual organizations, and the members of the community; and

Whereas, Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month provides an excellent opportunity for citizens of the community to learn more about preventing dating violence and to show support for the numerous organizations and individuals who provide critical advocacy, services and assistance to victims;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jeremy O'Neil Mayor of the City of Valdez, Alaska, do hereby proclaim the month of February 2019 as "Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month" and urge the citizens of the community to learn more about preventing teen dating violence and to show support for the numerous organizations and individuals who provide critical advocacy, services and assistance to victims.

DATED this 5th day of February, 2019

CITY OF VALDEZ, ALASKA

ATTEST:

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Jeremy O'Neil, Mayor

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Sheri L. Pierce, MMC, City Clerk