

About Derek

Derek Peterson is an international child/youth advocate and the voice of Integrative Youth Development™. He has dedicated his life to increasing the health and well being of youth worldwide. In his work he supports youth and adults in creating and sustaining developmentally rich ecologies for kids. Derek works to implement the best youth/human development research into the lives of youth, families, schools, and communities.



Derek has worked in over 150 Alaskan communities and villages. His mission is to increase caring and connection in schools, youth programs, and communities that lead to greater success and academic achievement among all students.

In 2000, Derek was honored by the Alaska Prevention of Drug and Alcohol Community as the "Prevention Professional of the Year." In the following year, he was presented with the "Distinguished Service Award" by the Alaska Principal's Association.

He has been leading Alaska student leadership conferences since 1990, and in that time, graduates of his programs of gone on to attend many of America's most distinguished universities, have started large companies and small businesses, have traveled the world, appeared on national television, and lived their dreams.

Upcoming Kenai Region Phlight Clubs

Fall Phlight Club

October 24-27, 2013

Spring Phlight Club

March 7-10, 2014

Adults are also encouraged to apply and join us
for the fun and learning!

Contact your AKISS program leader for an application to join the Club!

Bonnie Pierce

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Empowering
ourselves to
take flight
into
our futures

Youth-centered events sponsored by the



**Alaska Institute
of Student Support**

A project funded by the Alaska Native Education Program (ANEP).

What Is Phlight Club?

Phlight Club is a youth leadership and empowerment EXPERIENCE.

We bring together at least 30 of the school district's student leaders each year. The students come together to learn to identify and measure their web of support, and how they can self-activate it. They learn about the power of the full-spectrum approach to youth development and its seven colors. They practice working together to solve problems using their heads, hands, and hearts. They solve these problems while keeping each other safe, focused, respected and involved.

Phlight Club is about action, interspersed with short opportunities for "lessons" about school, life, and friendships. Each village takes a turn at hosting the gathering. The activity is organized and chaperoned by adults from the community, and staff and parents from around the district. Each site sets up one or two community nights during the event, where the youth have done presentations to the whole community to thank them for their support. We have had the adults come and join in some of the Club activities along side the teens.



We carefully review each application to make sure that we get a cross-section of the students from throughout the district. Unfortunately, we can't bring everyone who applies. You can get an application from your AKISS program leader.

"I've lived here for 25 years, and I have never seen a school activity where ALL of the students are involved. This is AWESOME."

- Teacher's Aide



"You taught me more in 3 days than I thought was possible in my life. ... I can't thank you enough. You saved my life."

- Nanwalek Student



"This is the best leadership experience I have ever attended."

- Nulato Student



"What has changed about me since Phlight Club is I'm able to see life in a more positive way, and that I feel I can achieve anything I put my mind to."

- Hydaburg Student



Raising Resiliency — Learning, Living, and Connecting

Resiliency is almost guaranteed when a teen has a web of support. This web is made of protective factors that guide youth to make good decisions and grow to be healthy and successful. This protection is found within the complete spectrum of each student's developmental ecology.

Phlight Club concentrates on building and sustaining a web for all students, both inside and outside of the classroom. These webs will help our kids to succeed, now and long into the future.



More than fifty years of national research has proven that the tighter the web teenagers have, the more likely they will succeed in school, help others, and avoid alcohol and drugs. We know the seven “phactors” (areas of impact) that make strong children and youth. We know what to do.

The basic wisdom of the resiliency research is that adults must focus

on the positive attributes that we want for our children. We focus on growing something, not stopping something. When adults guide and support students to build the skills and values necessary to stay connected to their web, then many of the problems that we currently focus upon will be eliminated or significantly reduced. The home, family, school, and community are critical in building resiliency in students.

“My involvement with Phlight Club has given me both personal and professional connections in life that I can carry with me life-long. That is what we, the many counselors, district support staff, chaperones, and the principals and schools that support this program, also want to instill in our students. We want them to make connections, build webs of support anchored by caring adults in their lives, build positive relationships with their anchors and with their peers, and use this program as a “spring board” to have successful lives.”

- School Counselor

What We Know

The development of resiliency involves all potential anchors in discovering and sharing how to best build the webs of support that youth need. The design of this project is built on the following:



All students need a rich web of support.

While it is crucial to pay special attention to those youth who have fewer strings in their web, all young people can use more.

Every adult can play a role in building webs.

Integrative Youth Development requires consistent efforts across a community.

Building webs is an ongoing and complex process.

A web of support is necessary from early childhood through high school and beyond.

Relationships with Anchors are the foundation.

Strong relationships between adults and young people are the building blocks of youth development. Integrative Youth Development requires the presence of at least five caring, supportive adults and peers in each student's life.

Consistent messages through social norms.

Youth Development requires consistent, positive, and clear messages about high expectations and what is important.

Redundancy.

To sustain the web, students need to hear connecting messages and feel regular (almost constant) support from the adults who anchor their web.

Catchers of Dreams

Phlight Club activities are based on a full-color spectrum approach involved seven factors, or metrics:



Red – The Rule of Five (Anchors for the “Web of Support”): The foundation for your own personal villag by five caring adults (or more,) having high expectations and providing opportunities, teaching skills, and celebrating relative best in appropriate ways.



Orange – Tangible Supports (Adding strings to the “Web of Support”): Measurable supports provided through your anchors that shape your home, school, and community environment.



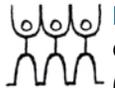
Yellow – Intangible Supports (Adding strings of virtue to the “Web of Support”): Important, yet difficult to measure, beliefs, values, and behaviors that are being taught to and caught by you.



Green – Growing Your Balloon: These DNA-based characteristics and talents increase the likelihood that you will remain connected to any web that you are given.



Blue – Scissor Cuts: Reducing or eliminating the conditions, actions, and attitudes that erode the strings being created by the adult anchors.



Indigo – Caring for the Carers
(The web beneath your Anchors): Supporting those who anchor your web so they do not drop out of your life, even when circumstances in their own lives change.



Violet – Social Norms
(The storm that affects the entire web) – The climate and culture of the social environment (home, school, and/or community) that have been accepted or agreed upon by a critical number of adults.

Phlight Club is a multi-day event of non-stop learning, connecting, and working!



Debriefing the activity

After each activity we ask the participants to think about how the problem was solved, what they learned from the experience, and what they will build upon for next time.



Doing the lessons

We teach lessons on “What Teens Need to Succeed!” Here, a group of students is working on developing lessons for future Phlight Club meetings.



Protecting the Head and the Heart

The Phlight Club is very physical. Teens are literally lifting their classmates high over their heads, passing them over, through or around obstacles. Always being careful to protect their safety and dignity.