

## ***Provider-Supported Political Socialization for Civic Involvement: Outline for Voter Education***

### ***What is Civic Involvement?***

Civic involvement means being actively interested in the life of your community, city, state and country. It means getting informed about the issues that affect you, and making a choice about who represents you on your city council, state legislature, Congress or as President of the United States – **by voting**. The ability to vote is one of the most prized Constitutional rights and the foundation of our democracy.

The more you know about the issues that affect you, the more likely it is that you will get involved in civic affairs, especially voting<sup>1</sup>. And if you vote, you have a way of influencing public policies to make sure people with disabilities get the help they need.

Each vote really does counts, and each vote is significant. Many races in Alaska are decided by margins of few votes (see “Your Vote Counts”). More fundamentally, each vote contributes equally to the outcome - your vote is no less important than any other vote, and the issues you are concerned about cannot be won without your vote.

After today’s discussion, clients should be able to:

- exercise their right to vote – you will learn about the voter registration process and how to get out to vote on election day;
- recognize their personal stake in issues being discussed in the state legislature and Congress;
- find the information they need to learn about the issues they are concerned about and decide on which candidates to vote for.

**Partners in Policymaking** is administered by the Center for Human Development, University of Alaska Anchorage, and is funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust.

**The I Vote, I Count Campaign** is sponsored by Partners in Policymaking, which is a program administered by the Center for Human Development, University of Alaska Anchorage, and is funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust. The mission of the *I Vote, I Count Campaign* is to empower Alaskans with disabilities and

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<sup>1</sup> Research shows that early voter education and mobilization training may increase voter participation by almost 20%. Addonizio, Elizabeth “A Social Approach to Voter Mobilization and Election Day.” Unpublished Manuscript. Institution for Social And Policy Studies, Yale University. <http://research.yale.edu/GOTV/?q=node/38>

## ***Registering to Vote or Registration Changes***

The State of Alaska Voter Registration Application is available on-line at <http://www.elections.alaska.gov/forms/c03.pdf>.

You may use the Voter Registration Application to:

- Initially register to vote in the State of Alaska.
- Update your residence and/or mailing address, perform a name change or party affiliation change.

**To be eligible to vote in an election for the first time or when updating your registration information, your application must be received or postmarked 30 days before an election.**

Once your application is processed, a notice and Voter ID card will be mailed to you within 3 to 4 weeks.

### ***When to Vote***

#### **PRIMARY ELECTION - August 26, 2008**

The Primary Election includes races between members of the same party to decide who will go on to face challengers of other parties in the General Election.

#### **GENERAL ELECTION – November 4, 2008**

Polling Places are open 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Election Day for Primary and General Elections

### ***Where to Vote***

Your polling place is determined by where you live, so you need to know your **House District number and your Precinct number.**

How do you find these numbers? Check your voter ID card for the two-digit number followed by a three-digit number. Those are your House District and Precinct numbers.

When you have your House District number, call the Alaska Division of Elections toll-free Polling Place Locator, enter your Social Security Number or your voter number when prompted, and you will be told where your polling place is located.

**1-888-383-8683. if you live in Anchorage, you can locally dial 269-8683.**

You can also visit the Alaska Division of Elections web at <http://www.elections.alaska.gov/polling.php> for more information and help.

## ***What is Your Stake in the Issues?***

Many issues that affect you, your family and your community are decided by the elected officials that represent you in the Alaska House and Senate, the two houses of Congress or by the President of the United States. You will have the chance to vote for each of these offices in the 2008 elections.

## ***What are the issues that you are concerned about?***

*(Facilitate a discussion of issues relevant to the individual or group you are working with)*

*Suggested issues:*

- Access to health and behavioral health services
- The US economy
- Energy and ANWR
- Environment and climate change
- Financial aid for college
- Government corruption
- Gun control
- Homeland security
- Housing
- Minimum wage
- Permanent Fund
- Prison – punishment vs. rehabilitation
- Renewable resources
- Safe water and sanitation
- Social Security
- The war in Iraq

**How will you vote to make sure your concerns are addressed?  
Find out what the candidates think!**

## Web Resources on Candidates and Issues

**[AARP – Divided We Fail Campaign](http://www.aarp.org/issues/dividedwefail/)**. Information on issues of health and financial security. <http://www.aarp.org/issues/dividedwefail/>

**[Alaska Division of Elections](http://www.elections.alaska.gov/)**. Information on candidates for the Alaska Legislature, voter registration rules and key election dates. <http://www.elections.alaska.gov/>

**[Kaiser Family Foundation health08.org](http://www.health08.org/)**. Analysis of health policy issues and news and video coverage from the campaign trail. <http://www.health08.org/>

**[The Sentencing Project](http://www.sentencingproject.org/tmp/File/PresidentialCandidatesPlatforms.pdf)**. Information on a range of key criminal justice issues, including sentencing policy, reentry, felony disenfranchisement, and the death penalty. <http://www.sentencingproject.org/tmp/File/PresidentialCandidatesPlatforms.pdf>

**[Rock the Vote](http://www.rockthevote.com/home.html)**. Information on voting and election issues. <http://www.rockthevote.com/home.html>

**[Declare Yourself](http://www.declareyourself.com/?qclid=CLGIn8nYzpMCFQ4UiQodc2Mjhw)**. A national nonpartisan, nonprofit campaign to empower and encourage every eligible 18-year-old in America to register and vote in the presidential primaries and 2008 presidential election. <http://www.declareyourself.com/?qclid=CLGIn8nYzpMCFQ4UiQodc2Mjhw>

**[Vote 411](http://www.vote411.org/)**. League of Women Voters of America. A "one-stop-shop" for election related, nonpartisan information on both general and state-specific elections. <http://www.vote411.org/>

**[Project Vote Smart](http://www.votesmart.org/)**. Bi-partisan research and analysis of backgrounds and voting records, campaign contributions, public statements, biographical data (including their work history) and evaluations of political candidates and elected officials generated by over 100 competing special interest groups. <http://www.votesmart.org/>

**[AAPD Voting Issues](http://www.aapd.com/dvpmain/voteneeds/indexvoteneeds.php)**. American Association of People with Disabilities. Voting issues affecting people with disabilities. <http://www.aapd.com/dvpmain/voteneeds/indexvoteneeds.php>

**[NAMI – Explore the Candidates](http://www.nami.org/Template.cfm?Section=2008_Primarys_and_Elections&Template=/ContentManagement/HTMLDisplay.cfm&ContentID=55411)**. National Alliance on Mental Illness. Results of questionnaires given to candidates for President. [http://www.nami.org/Template.cfm?Section=2008\\_Primarys\\_and\\_Elections&Template=/ContentManagement/HTMLDisplay.cfm&ContentID=55411](http://www.nami.org/Template.cfm?Section=2008_Primarys_and_Elections&Template=/ContentManagement/HTMLDisplay.cfm&ContentID=55411)

**[CNN Politics.Com](http://www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2008/issues/)**. Election Center 2008. Information on presidential candidates positions on a variety of important issues. <http://www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2008/issues/>

**[Select2008.com](http://www.select2008.com/)**. Information on presidential candidates positions on a variety of important issues. <http://www.select2008.com/>