

Tracy is Athabascan and was raised in Nenana. Tracy's story is one of personal success and perseverance. Tracy's spirit is strong and is fostered through the nurturance of her family. The choices she has made in her life reflect the support she has received throughout her life. Tracy was 26 at the time of the interview.

*“There was always alcohol in our home but alcohol wasn't a big deal to me. When I was little I could taste my dad's glass of beer and it wasn't a big deal. On my mom's side, my grandfather was a recovering alcoholic but I really don't remember him drinking. My grandmother, who is still alive, drinks quite a bit. On my father's side, both of his parents drank quite a bit when I was growing up. By the time I was older neither of them drank very much. So, growing up there was always alcohol in our family.*

*With my dad, alcohol never got in the way of our relationship. I believe his drinking put added strain on my mom. But, my mom was just the kind of woman that got married for life. She had kids, so I feel like she focused on us instead of my dad's drinking. I was never scared that my dad wasn't going to take care of me or didn't have my best interest at heart, even when he was drinking. Maybe that was because I had my mom to balance everything out. I always knew that she was going to take care of us, no matter what.*

*There were times I drank but I don't think that I ever even got drunk in high school. When I finished high school and went to college in Anchorage I partied a little more. But for the most part I was just as content being the designated driver as I was drinking. I do remember a few times when I actually got extremely buzzed. I like to be in control of things and I did not like the feeling of not being in total control of myself. So I never liked getting drunk.*

*I think that the main reason alcohol hasn't become a problem in my life is because I had a family base to support me growing up. My mom and I had a very open relationship. I always felt I could go to her and I could talk to her about things. There was also always a level of mutual trust there. I feel that having somebody like my mother always loving me and caring for me made a difference. I see that difference when I look at where I am now and where so many of my friends from Nenana are. Having a strong family network, like uncles and a Grandma that cared about where I was going and what I was doing and who I was doing it with, made all of the difference. I know a lot of my friends and my foster brother and sister didn't have that. Nobody cared if they got up in the morning and went to school. If they were in school it was because they chose to go, not because anybody asked them to. They definitely*



*Tracy Snow, an Athabascan raised in Nenana.*

*didn't have anyone to cook them breakfast or make sure that they had clean clothes to wear. I feel that I owe my healthy lifestyle to my family that has loved and supported me.”*

— Tracy Snow was interviewed by Dante Foster on October 10, 2001.