Heidi Hedberg
Commissioner

Department of Health

health.alaska.gov

Anchorage, Alaska

STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

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Young Alaskans invited to show their superpowers in

"Healthy Heroes Bookmark Challenge"

September 4, 2026, ANCHORAGE, Alaska — What does it mean to be a Health Hero? The Alaska Department of Health is inviting young Alaskans ages 3–18 to answer that question through art as part of the second annual bookmark challenge.

The statewide activity encourages children and teens to think creatively about the everyday choices that help them feel healthy, strong, safe and connected. That might mean eating colorful foods, staying active, getting enough sleep, helping others, spending time with people they care about or taking a moment to breathe through big feelings.

Every healthy choice is a superpower

Participants can choose any artistic medium to create an original bookmark showing what makes them a "Health Hero". One winning design from each age group will be professionally printed, with copies mailed to the winning schools. Winning artists will also receive an Amazon gift card for their classroom.

Last year, nearly 200 young Alaskans from communities across the state participated in the challenge. "It was wonderful to see the creativity of young Alaskans from communities across the state in last year's challenge," said Heidi Hedberg, Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Health. "I look forward to seeing how this year's participants bring the Health Hero theme to life and share what being healthy means to them. There are so many ways to make healthy choices every day, and I'm excited to see those choices reflected through their art."

How to participate

1. Download the Healthy Heroes Bookmark Challenge materials at ConnectionsForKids.alaska.gov
2. Create a bookmark showing what being a Health Hero means to you
3. Submit your artwork by **Oct. 9, 2026**, using one of the following options:

a. Scan or photograph the completed artwork and submit it through the online submission form
b. Mail the original artwork to Alaska Department of Health, Attn: Communications Team, 3601 C St., Suite 902, Anchorage, AK 99503

See last year's winning designs selected from young artists in our *2025 Bookmark Challenge recap video*.

More ways to learn with Hope the Husky

The Healthy Heroes Bookmark Challenge is part of a growing collection of Alaska-themed activities featuring Hope the Husky and her friends. Each activity is grounded in evidence-based research and protective factors and reflects work across the Department of Health. The department's **"Wild About Wellness with Hope the Husky and Friends"** activity book is filled with activities designed to encourage healthy habits throughout the year. Copies have been distributed to Public Health Centers, Public Assistance office locations, WIC offices and other organizations that serve Alaskan children.

Families, providers, educators and other caring adults can place online orders for activity books and find activities that make it fun for young children to explore healthy choices, relationships, safety and wellness at ConnectionsForKids.alaska.gov.

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Connections for Kids is an Alaska Department of Health initiative that provides free, Alaska-themed activities and resources to help children learn about healthy habits, safety, kindness and well-being. Featuring Hope the Husky and her animal friends, the initiative gives families, educators, health care providers and other caring adults engaging tools to help children make healthy, safe and connected choices. Learn more and find free resources on our website.