

ACRF provides support and training for foster, adoptive, guardian and relative caretakers in Alaska



akresourcefamilyboard@yahoo.com

Meet the Resource Family Advisory Board Members... We want to introduce you to some of the Resource Family Advisory Board Members in the upcoming issues of Training Tracks. In this issue meet...

DIANNE VAN DAAM, Foster/Adoptive parent from the Mat-Su Borough.

My husband, Rod and I moved here 11 years ago from Oregon. We fostered and adopted in Oregon and before that, I began fostering in 1979 and began my forever family in 1986 with the adoption of a baby boy from Guatemala. My next son came from Israel, followed by a daughter from Guatemala and then 2 boys from Costa Rica, a daughter from the Philippines and another son from Costa Rica. Rod and I started taking in foster kids and adopted 3 in Oregon and have added 2 more here in Alaska, while taking foster children as well.

I had a heart for children needing to belong! I had a big house and thought it would be wonderful to fill it up with kids! I kind of looked at it as a perpetual birthday party and I love parties! Of course, it hasn't always felt like that. I have to say, that once you open your heart and home to kids who need to be safe, loved for who they are and nurtured and supported into adulthood, it's difficult to stop opening your home! It's exciting to watch each child settle in and becoming a contributing member of the household by participating in chores and feeling part of the activities each family has. This equips them for the future and hopefully, they will continue with some of the healthy traditions we have tried to establish. I love it when I get a call or a graduations announcement from a foster child who was in my home years ago!

I am excited and look forward to what can be accomplished by the Resource Family Advisory Board! With the broad spectrum of people on the board, we can bring the needs of the children, foster and adoptive parent/families to the table and get some very positive ideas for enhancing those lives we can be involved with. I would like to see a few seasoned foster/adoptive parents that would be available for new foster family recruits so that the wheel doesn't need to continually be invented. I would like to see consultants that can be 'sounding boards' for all of the agencies. I would hope that would be welcome with open arms by our OCS in our areas.

The most inspirational family I have met in the time I have been involved with foster care have been people that take children in that have already raised their families. To start over and open their home to children that they didn't have the luxury of starting at the beginning is admirable. The foster placements for these couples are truly blessed! Thank you to all of you who share your love and homes with those meet needing all you give of yourselves at a crucial stage in their lives.

To learn more about the Resource Family Advisory Board or to contact one of its members, go to <http://acrf.org/advisory/rfabsite.html> or email akresourcefamilyboard@yahoo.com.

Using the Alternative Training Information Sheet

When looking for ways to get your required training hours completed for your licensure, remember if you participate in training, workshops, conferences and individual instruction outside of ACRF classes, those hours may qualify for foster parent training.

Alternative training will be accepted and applied toward your training requirement if:

- It has an educational component related to foster care, parenting, special needs, or caring for the special needs of the child in your home;
- It can be documented with who, what, when, and where it took place. Acceptable documentation includes a certificate of completion, a copy of a certification card, a letter or note signed by the presenter, or a copy of the sign in sheet
- Training took place within the past twelve months; and
- You, the foster parent, complete and submit the Alternative Training Information Sheet to ACRF.

Continued on next page.....

ACRF STAFF/OFFICE DIRECTORY

Northern Regional Office

Rachel Hanft, Trainer/Family Support

Wanda Lindsoe, Data Coordinator

Dee Dee Keyser, Resource Coordinator

Julia Holmes, Project Assistant

815 Second Avenue, Suite 101

Fairbanks, AK 99701

Phone: 479-7307/Fax: 479-9666

Toll Free 1-800-478-7307

E-mail: acrf@nwresource.org

Anchorage Regional Office

Aileen McInnis, Director

Olivia Shears, Trainer/Family Support

Brenda UrseI, Trainer/Family Support

Lissa Rylander, Family Support Associate

Jayme Harris, Project Assistant

840 K Street, Suite 101

Anchorage, AK 99501

Phone: 279-1799/Fax: 279-1520

Toll Free: 1-866-478-7307

E-mail: acrfs@nwresource.org

Mat-Su Regional Office

Betsy Woodin, Trainer/Family Support

Kara Lang, Project Assistant

5050 Dunbar Street, Suite A2

PO Box 876844

Wasilla, AK 99687

Phone: 376-4678/FAX: 376-4638

Email: acrfs@nwresource.org

Southeastern Regional Office

John Bennett, Trainer/Family Support

9109 Mendenhall Mall Road Suite 6A

Juneau, AK 99801

Phone: 790-4246/Fax: 790-4248

E-mail: acrfs@nwresource.org

1-800-478-7307

Using the Alternative Training Information Sheet continued...

Participation in counseling, IEP meetings, regular licensing visits, family contacts and Team Decision Making Meetings do not count toward foster parent training hours. However, one-on-one training with a medical professional to learn a specific procedure needed by your child, Infant Learning Program visits where you learn a special routine to teach your foster child who is developmentally delayed, or time spent with a Parent Navigator from an FASD diagnostic team who is going through the diagnosis with you as you learn how to work individually with your child, and participation in job related in-services that are related to child care, child development, behavior management and special needs, may all count as potential training hours.

To receive credit, foster parents should submit an **Alternative Training Information Sheet for Resource Families** to ACRF with the needed information completed and attach documentation. This sheet can be found on our website at <http://acrf.org/Self-StudyCourses/trainingforms/TrainingInformationSheet.pdf> or request one from your local ACRF office. You will be asked how this educational opportunity increased your knowledge about how to care for special needs children and you will be asked to give the information we need to accurately enter into your training record. Remember that you need to attach some kind of documentation that shows you actually participated. Otherwise we have no way of certifying your participation. Information will be reviewed and if it fits the requirements, it will be entered into your training record and applied toward your training requirement.

If you have any questions, please contact your local ACRF office or call 1-800-478-7307.



Training Calendar

Fairbanks Training:

Unless otherwise noted, the trainings in Fairbanks are held at ACRF: 815 Second Ave, STE 101. Pre-registration is REQUIRED, call 479-7307 to register.

✦ OCTOBER:

Adopting Through OCS

Tues 10/22 from 11:30am – 1:30pm

Adoption 101

Wed 10/23 from 6:00 – 8:00pm

Building Multi-Cultural Competence in Your Home

Tues 10/29 from 6:00 – 8:00pm

✦ NOVEMBER:

Core Training for Resource Families

Mon 11/11, Tues 11/12, Mon 11/18 and Tues 11/19 from 6:00-9:00pm. Must attend all four sessions for training credit.

Adoption Information Session (FCA)

Thurs 11/14 from 6:30 - 8:30pm. Held at the Noel Wien Auditorium. Hosted by Fairbanks Counseling & Adoption.

Motivations for Adoption

Sat 11/16 from 10:00am - Noon

✦ DECEMBER:

Building Families Through Adoption

Wed 12/4 from 6:00 - 8:00pm, Thurs 12/5 from 6:00-8:00pm, and Sat 12/7 from 9:00am – 3:00pm. Must attend all three session for training credit.

What's Beneath the Behavior

Mon 12/9 from 6:00-8:00pm and Wed 12/11 from 6:00-8:00pm. Must attend both sessions.

Resource Family Holiday Gathering

Thurs 12/12 from 6:00-8:00pm. Held at the Chief David Salmon Tribal Hall

Juneau Training

Unless otherwise noted the trainings in Juneau will be held at ACRF: 9109 Mendenhall Mall RD, Suite 6A. Pre-registration is REQUIRED, call John at 790-4246 to register

✦ OCTOBER:

Special Ed Law

Wed 10/23 from 6:30-8:30pm

Core Training for Resource Families

Wed 10/30 from 9:00am – 2:00pm and Sat 11/2 from 9:00am – 5:00pm. Must attend both days for training credit.

✦ NOVEMBER:

Adopting Through OCS

Wed 11/13 from 6:30 – 8:30pm

Difficult Behavior in Foster and Adopted Teens

Thurs 11/14 from 6:30 – 8:30pm

Building Families Through Adoption

Wed 11/20 from 6:00 – 9:00pm and Sat 11/23 from 9:00am – 4:00pm. Must attend both days for training credit.

✦ DECEMBER:

Caring for a Relative

Tues 12/3 from 6:30 – 8:30pm

Talking to Kids about Foster Care and Adoption

Thurs 12/5 from 6:30 – 8:30pm

Helping Youth Prepare for Adulthood

Wed 12/11 from 6:30 – 8:30pm

Juneau Support Groups:

✦ *Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Support Group meets on the last Wednesday of each month from 6:30-8:00pm at the old Moose Lodge, 8335 Old Dairy Rd in Juneau. Call TJ Arnold for details: 209-0516.*

✦ *Our Time Group for parents and caretakers of children with special needs meets every Monday from 6-8pm at Aldersgate United Methodist Church, 9161 Cinema Drive in Juneau. Call Lori King for details: 463-6103.*

Fairbanks Support Groups:

- ✦ **Grands Raising Great Children Support Group.** There is limited supervised children's activities available during the group. Please pre-register if you are bringing your children. **Group meets the second Monday of every month from 6:30–8pm, at RCPC, 726 26th AVE, Suite 2 in Fairbanks.** Call 456-2866 for more information.
- ✦ **Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Support & Discussion Group.** Held at Alaska Center for Children & Adults. FREE Child care provided. Call Jenn Wagaman 456-4003 for more information.

Mat-Su Training:

Unless otherwise noted, the trainings in Wasilla will be held at ACRF: 5050 Dunbar ST, STE A2 (off the Palmer/Wasilla HWY, Brentwood Plaza). Pre-Registration is required for the following events by contacting Betsy at 376-4678 bwoodin@nwresource.org. **You must pre-register as classes will be cancelled without notice if no one signs up.**

✦ **OCTOBER:**

FASD 101

Thurs 10/17 10:00am – 2:00pm (lunch provided). LINKS Parent Resource Center on P-W Hwy in Regan Building.

Adopting Through OCS

Tues 10/22 from 6:00 - 9:00pm. Held at OCS in Wasilla.

✦ **NOVEMBER:**

Video Day: Foster Parent Adoption

Fri 11/15 stop in anytime between 9:00am – 2:00pm

Building Families Through Adoption

Mon 11/18, Wed 11/20 and Fri 11/22 from 6:00 - 9:00pm. Must attend all three classes to receive training credit.

The 3-5-7 Model: A Practice Approach to Permanency

Mon 11/25 from 10:00am - 2:00pm.

✦ **DECEMBER:**

Video Day: Kids Are Worth It

Thurs 12/5 stop in anytime between 9:00am – 2:00pm

FASD 201

Thurs 12/12 from 10:00am – 2:00pm (lunch provided). LINKS Parent Resource Center on P-W Hwy in Regan Building.

Understanding Trauma

Thurs 12/12 from 6:00 - 9:00pm.

Mat-Su Support Groups:

- ✦ **Mat-Su Developmentally Disabled Parent & Child Support Group.** Join Access Alaska for a new peer run support group assisting parents of developmentally disabled children. Bring your children for group play; there will be toys, coloring and snacks. **Group meets first and third Tuesdays of every month 4-6pm at Access Alaska, 1075 Check ST STE 109 in Wasilla off KGB and PW Hwy.** Call 357-2588 for more information.
- ✦ **Foster Parent Support Group: AGAPE.** A faith-based network of foster and adoptive families. **Group meets first Thursday night from 6-8 monthly at the Palmer Church of God.** Attendees are encouraged to bring a finger food to share and childcare is provided. For information or to make arrangements for childcare call Vickie at 863-2144 or Andrea at 315-7168 or email agapeak@att.net.
- ✦ **Grandparents Support Group.** Sponsored by Volunteers of America, Alaska Grandfamilies Project. **Group meets second Wednesday every month from 11am-12:30pm at ACRF in the Brentwood Plaza STE A2.** Snacks are provided. For local information call Betsy at 376-4678 or email bwoodin@nwresource.org or Linda Price 1-888-522-9866 or grands@voak.org or visit www.voak.org.
- ✦ **The Mom2Mom, Dad2Dad Parent Support Group.** For Adoptive, foster, kinship care, guardianship, and grandparents who care for children with Attachment Disorder. **Group meets the first Monday of every month from 10:30am-Noon at the Alaska Attachment & Bonding Associates Office.** For more information call 376-0366.

Homer Early Child Wellness Fair

Sat Nov. 2nd from 7:30am-1:00pm
Homer High School

Resources, Information Booths and Informational Presentations for families with young children. There will also be healthy snacks for kids and child care available so parents can attend presentations, get their blood work done or walk around the fair. Call 435-7101 for more information or www.pop411.org. Sponsored by Best Beginnings, SPROUT, RuralCap-Homer Head Start, Paul Banks Elementary School & PTA, and The Center's Children's Program.

Rural Teleconference Training

Families may participate by dialing **1-888-626-7441** and when asked enter the code: **9939775#**. For more information email Betsy at bwoodin@nwresource.org or call 1-800-478-7307.

Wed Nov. 6th, 7-8pm

- *Dealing with Problem Behaviors, John Bennett, ACRF*

Tues Nov. 12th, Noon-1pm

- *Adopted Teens and Birth Family Connections, Ruth Post*

Wed Dec. 4th, 7-8pm

- *Therapeutic Communication, Olivia Shears*

Tues Dec. 10th, Noon-1pm

- *OCS Quarterly Topic*

Statewide Autism Spectrum Disorder Support Group

First Tuesday of EVERY month from Noon-1pm. Dial 1-800-315-6338, follow voice prompts, then enter code 2272#

Online Training:

Check out ACRF online courses at www.ACRF.org

Click on the Self-Study tab and choose from taking an online interactive course, a written course that is printable, or an audio course.

1.0 HOUR SELF-STUDY

Licensed foster parents can read the following article and earn foster parent training credit by filling out the following questionnaire and returning to the Alaska Center for Resource Families.

Alaska Early Intervention/Infant Learning Program

Rachel Hanft, Family Support Specialist-ACRF Fairbanks

Alaska's Early Intervention/ Infant Learning Program (ILP) is a Federal and State funded program, available to **any** child, ages 0-3, that may have developmental delays and/or disabilities. The program is managed through the Office of Children's Services and is a tremendous support for Resource Families working with infants and toddlers. If you have a child, ages 0-3, in out-of-home care, the child should automatically be referred to the ILP. If your child has not been referred, or you are unsure whether you should make a referral, be the advocate and make a connection with your local program. Early detection and getting supports in place are important components for helping children develop and grow to their potential.

All children grow and develop at different paces, even among siblings, but there are certain social, emotional and cognitive milestones that most children should be attaining during those crucial first three years of life (please reference the chart included). Perhaps you have noticed your infant tilts his head to one side (torticollis), just slightly; or your 2 yr. old has yet to utter her first word; or your 1 yr. old reaches for small objects, but is unable to grasp and hold the object; or a drug-exposed, premature infant has been placed in your care. There can be varying reasons why a child may have delayed development or disabilities including, but not limited to: genetics, gestational environment, prenatal exposure to drugs or alcohol, abuse and neglect and birthing trauma. The key is identifying concerns and putting proper supports and services in place to help the child reach their potential. ILP is an early intervention practice that is authorized through the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA) and administered through the State Office of Children's Services. Often, resource families find it challenging with the flood appointments and professional interactions that come with being a foster parent, but the ILP is one professional relationship that could actually bring immense support to a family and the child they are caring for. I recently had the opportunity to sit down with one of the Fairbanks ILP staff and I got answers to some questions about Alaska's Infant Learning Program:

How does the Infant Learning Program work?

The ILP services work with a coaching model where the ILP staff work to help the parent help the child. The parent comes up with identified goal(s), and the ILP provider, most often, comes to the home to figure out options and necessary referrals to support the parent to help the child meet those goals.

What's the big thing resource families should know about the ILP?

The Infant Learning Program is intended to provide focused services for children with developmental delays and/or disabilities. The program should be seen as a supportive benefit for young children in out-of-home care. While the ILP is an extension of OCS, it does not serve the same function that the Protective Services division provides.

What kind of appointments and time commitments should a resource family expect when working with the ILP?

That's the great thing about this program. It depends on the parent, their investment in the child and the desired needs. Visits can happen weekly, twice monthly, monthly, or basically as the child's need and the parent's attentiveness dictates. This is also a great chance to work with birth families, in regards to normalized visits. If it is safe and authorized through your Protective Services Specialist, ILP appointments could be an ideal bridging opportunity for resource families and birth parents. The coaching model that the ILP staff work by is dependent on the family's concerns and goals in mind for the child. Resource families are increasingly tasked with helping to support normalized contact with a child's birth family. Working with an ILP specialist, and involving the birth family in that process, will only help the long-term outcomes of the interventions and services that have been put in place. The ILP could quite possibly help meet a pivotal need a struggling family is facing.

What are some supports and services you can provide?

ILP is equipped with dedicated, trained professionals and prepared for an array direct intervention services such as: evaluation and assessment, home visits, speech therapy, occupational therapy, and physical therapy. Sometimes, it's not even direct interventions that are assessed as being a prioritized need, right away. ILP staff find that they are helping a family get support services, such as housing, transportation, food boxes and Medicaid in place, before they can even implement intervention strategies. Base supports have to be established before interventions can work. Resource families are base supports for children who are unable to be in their own home, and the ILP is great opportunity to build on those supports.

How do rural families make referrals?

ILP is a national program that is administered by each state, so the program is available to **any** child, ages 0-3. That includes rural communities, from Barrow to Hoonah to Ft Yukon to Kobuk. This means home visits, referrals, and services are available to rural families. Visits may look different; interventions might involve travel, but it is the child's developmental needs and getting the interventions and services to the parents that remain the priority for the program. There are Infant Learning Programs available to all of Alaska's communities. Are you familiar with the name of your program? Information about and the name of your local program can be accessed from the link provided, at the end of this article. ■

For more information regarding Alaska Early Intervention Infant Learning Program, please refer to the following websites & literature:

<http://dhss.alaska.gov/ocs/Pages/infantlearning/information/default.aspx>

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html>

1.0 HOUR SELF-STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE
Alaska Early Intervention/Infant Learning Program

If you read the above entitled article and want foster parent training credit applied to your training requirement, fill out the following questionnaire and FAX it to 1-907-479-9666, mail to ACRF, 815 Second AVE STE 101, Fairbanks, AK 99701 or email to acrf@nwresource.org.

Name: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____ Provider#: _____

1) What age range does the Infant Learning Program serve?

- a) Newborns only
- b) Birth to three years
- c) Pre-Kindergarten
- d) None of the above

2) The Infant Learning Program is a division of the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development.

- a) TRUE
- b) FALSE

3) The following are examples of supports and services the Infant Learning Program provides:

- a) Screening and Evaluation
- b) Monthly Stipends
- c) Home Visits
- d) Both A and B

4) List a developmental milestone for 6, 12 and 24 months:

6 months: _____

12 months: _____

24 months: _____

5) Name the Infant Learning Program that serves your area.

Northwest Resource Associates
Alaska Center for Resource Families
815 Second Avenue Suite 101
Fairbanks, AK 99701

NONPROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
FAIRBANKS, AK
PERMIT NO. 88

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



To order any of the following materials call
1-800-478-7307
or in Fairbanks call 479-7307

Adolescence:

- Information Packet: Fostering an LGBTQ Youth (1 Hour)
- Information Packet: If you Are Concerned About Your Child's Gender Behaviors (1 Hour)
- Information Packet: LGBT Foster and Adoptive Parents (1 Hour)
- Information Packet: LGBT Youth in Foster Care (1 Hour)
- Information Packet: What Children Want LGBT Parents to Know (1 Hour)
- Information Packet: Helping Youth Transition to Adulthood: Guidance for Foster Parents (1 Hour)
- Information Packet: Help Me to Succeed: A Guide for Supporting Youth In Foster Care to Prevent Teen Pregnancy (1 Hour)

Mental Health & Illness :

Course: Healing the Invisible Wounds: Children's Exposure to Violence: A Guide for Families (2 hours)

Special Needs:

- Information Packet: Deaf and Hard of Hearing (1 Hour)
- Information Packet: Seizures, Epilepsy and Your Child (1 Hour)
- Information Packet: Abusive Head Trauma (Shaken Baby Syndrome) (1 Hour)
- Information Packet: Asperger Syndrome and High Functioning Autism Tool Kit (1 Hour)
- Information Packet: Autism: 100 Day Kit (A tool kit to assist families in getting the critical information they need in the first 100 days after an autism diagnosis) (1 Hour)
- Information Packet: Cerebral Palsy (1 Hour)
- Information Packet: Epilepsy: You and Your Child (Information for Parents) (1 Hour)