

## Greetings from Alaska Center for Resource Families

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

### Alaska Child Welfare Conference

The Alaska Center for Resource Families joined the Alaska Child Welfare Academy and the Alaska CASA Program to present the first Alaska Child Welfare Conference on November 4, 5 and 6. The theme of the conference was “Safe, Thriving and Connected” and each day presented one of those themes. Our target audiences were OCS workers, tribal workers and ICWA representatives, Guardians ad litem and CASAs, and resource families. Our first day focused on the theme “Safe” and included a great morning of training focusing on tribal child welfare and the history of the Alaska Tribal-State Child Welfare Compact. Each day started out with a welcome and opening session, then proceeded to two series of workshops and ended with a panel discussion featuring a representation of all the people involved in child welfare (GAL/CASA, OCS, Tribes, and Resource Family) tackling challenging questions such as “What is the Best Interest of the Child?” and “How Do We Get Along When We Disagree?” A total of 422 people attended with the breakdown of 27 CASAs, 19 Guardians ad Litem, 11 Legal Representatives, 56 OCS staff, 52 foster parents, 86 tribal representatives; and 165 Other Community Partners.



Resource Family Advisory Board

### Hello from the Resource Family Advisory Board!

The Resource Family Advisory Board conducted one of its twice a year “face-to-face” meetings in October 29 and 30 but

on Zoom due to COVID restrictions. With new members Candice Arrington of Ketchikan; Tiffany Brookwell of Anchorage; and Fawn White of Nome, the focus was to develop new initiatives to work on this year. The proposed initiatives developed at the meeting included the following three:

1. Seek Strategies to Make Recommendations To Promote Retention and Recognition of Current Foster Homes.
2. Promote and Increase Effective Communication Between Resource Families and OCS.
3. Address Issues Regarding Supporting Resource Families Who Are Parenting Youth With Higher Needs.

The December meeting featured Kimberly Allen, Assistant AG, who did an in-service on licensing for the Board members. Brian Headdings, Co-Chair of the Resource Family Advisory Board was also asked to provide the opening remarks and an introduction to RFAB at the November Alaska Child Welfare Conference on the third day featuring the theme “Connected. ■

### Resiliency Conference III

## Celebrating Our Strengths: Beyond Surviving and into Thriving

Details  
coming  
soon

- Promoting child, family & community well-being
- Exploration & discussion of resiliency
- National & Alaskan keynote speakers
- Full day motivational interviewing training

#### SAVE THE DATES!

Wednesday, Feb. 16, 2022 &  
Thursday Feb. 17, 2022  
9am-4:00pm | Zoom Virtual Events

FAIRBANKS WELLNESS COALITION



## 1.0 HOUR SELF-STUDY

Licensed foster parents can read the following article and earn foster parent training credit by filling out the quiz and returning it to the Alaska Center for Resource Families, 815 Second AVE STE 202, Fairbanks AK, 99701 or FAX to 1-907-479-9666.

# “Addressing and Preventing Sex Trafficking One Youth at a Time”

January was Sex trafficking Awareness Month so we are running our course on Sex Trafficking and what resource families need to know. For more information also check out the web course on our website on What Caregivers Need to Know About Human Trafficking at <https://www.acrf.org/self-study/self-study-resources/webinars-and-videos>

When we think about human trafficking, we often think of modern slavery where individuals are forced into labor or commercial sex work and moved across borders. But trafficking also happens on a smaller scale right there in Alaska. Sex trafficking of children and youth is defined as the “recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act” where the victim is under the age of 18. For individuals over 18 year of age, force, fraud or coercion must be present but when the individual is under 18, there needs to be no coercion in order for it to be considered sex trafficking. This is called Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children or CSEC. And youth in foster care as well as runaway teens are particularly vulnerable.

**Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act of 2014** act requires Title IV-E agencies such as OCS to develop procedure to identify, document and provide services for children under their supervision who are at risk of becoming sex trafficking victims. OCS has implemented protocols to locate youth missing from foster care including determining why a child was absent from foster care and what happened during that time. What makes youth vulnerable for being recruited for trafficking? Traffickers have sophisticated ways to recruit and retain youth, including enticing young women and men with gifts, money, attention, and later with fear, abuse, and threats of violence or even death. Youth in foster care can be particularly vulnerable. They may have experienced multiple placements, few attachments, long stays in care and previous histories of sexual abuse and adults failing to protect them. Youth may be recruited by boyfriends, or other youth as well. Almost all victim of sex trafficking have some vulnerable that can be exploited or manipulated by the trafficker. Youth who run away from care or are on the street are particularly vulnerable because they might be compelled to trade sex for a place to sleep or for food. Youth in foster care who age out without permanent connections are also at risk. LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Questioning, Transgender) youth are disproportionately represented among the CSEC Population primarily due to being kicked out of their home because of their sexual orientation. Boys are often overlooked as being CSEC victims yet one study in New York City estimated that up to 50% of the CSEC population are boys. Children and youth who have experienced previous sexual trauma and more vulnerable. 70 to 90 percent of sexually exploited children have a history of child sexual abuse.

Recruitment can happen on the internet and in public places like the shopping mall and at school. It can happen by adults and other youth at foster homes, group homes, residential and juvenile justice centers, bus transportation centers, in villages, by extended family members, recreation centers, and strip clubs. Recruiters can use promise of a job, a modeling or acting center, a dancing or hospitality career, or recruiters can be boyfriends and romantic www.acrf.org relationships who use the relationship to coerce the youth into sex with others. Social media is popular for exploiters to find youth who are dissatisfied at home. Different apps, sharing photos, responding to posting about dissatisfaction at home can all be places where an online friendship might be sparked and a suggestion to meet light begin a relationship that turns exploitive. Offers to get together can turn into chances to run away or party.

Traditionally, the victims of trafficking may be called prostitutes and viewed and treated as criminals. The thinking has changed and we see these youth as not culpable for crimes committed due to human trafficking. Under the law children and teens involved in these crimes are victims, not perpetrators. That means we have stopped using the words child prostitute and reframed it as teen victim. The victims themselves may not see themselves as “victims”.

Remember that recruiters systematically break down youth with gifts and money, and then threats or violence. That can form a strong “trauma-bond” between them. Victims may believe themselves to be in love with their trafficker or not be able to survive without him.

What are the possible signs or indicators? Remember that this information is useful not only for the youth who come to your home as foster children or for your birth children, it is also useful for recognizing sexual exploitation of other youth you come in contact with—friends of your children, youth group participants, school children, other foster

youth, youth you meet in a professional contact, youth you have contact with in a day to day life. Signs that may indicate that a youth might be vulnerable to commercial sexual exploitation include:

- Adult male always present or sudden appearance of an older boyfriend.
- Sudden increase in money, expensive things
- Change in language or slang used
- Signs of physical or sexual abuse (bruises, cuts, burns, submissiveness, jumpy, malnourishment); appears fearful, anxious, depressed, submissive, avoids eye contact.
- Talk about losing property
- Chronic runaway/homeless youth
- Lying about age/False ID/Lying about identity
- Carries multiple hotel key cards, lots of money, sharp objects (weapons)
- Tattoo with a name that is not their own; or that he/she is reluctant to explain
- Staying out excessively late or secrecy about whereabouts or communication
- Associating with an older crowd or older men

In addition, if you are a foster parent, a child or youth who runs away while they are in your home,

- Notify OCS of an unapproved absence of 10 hours or more.
- File a report with your social worker or with OCS Intake
- Try to build good communication with your youth. When they return, the social worker should talk to them to determine what happened while they were away. But you may notice things or have information. Be sure to share these concerns with your caseworker.

To protect your children and your teens, learn everything you can about Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children. Covenant House Alaska and Priceless in Alaska are doing a lot of work in this area. Check [www.acrf.org](http://www.acrf.org) for more information about sex trafficking. There is also a National Human Trafficking Resource Center and a Hotline that for information or with concerns. ■



#### ONE-HOUR SELF-STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE

### "Addressing and Preventing Sex Trafficking One Youth at a Time"

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 202, Fairbanks, AK 99701 or email to [acrf@nwresource.org](mailto:acrf@nwresource.org).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Provider#: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

1. After reading this material, please list two (2) main nuggets of information you learned from the course.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
2. After reading this material, think about how this information can be useful to your foster parenting experiences. Please list two (2) specific ways you may use this knowledge in your home.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_

### TBRI TIP:

#### **You Don't Have to Be a Perfect Parent!**

This is great news to all us imperfect parents! It is no surprise that everyone has parenting fails. No one is more aware of that than our kiddos. To quote a Hannah Montana song, "Everybody makes mistakes, everybody has bad days." It is turning those bad days and parenting "fails" into teaching and healing moments for our kiddos.

This may be a challenge if you grew up in a family that did not deal with relational conflict in a healthy way. Avoidance, giving someone the cold shoulder, silent treatment, or using passive or actively aggressive techniques are common coping strategies for people who could not use their voice to deal effectively with conflict.

Learning how to repair the relationship following a rupture is a powerful teaching tool. There are going to be times when you are harsh, short tempered and/or emotionally reactive with your child.

While these moments are a given, it is your reaction that will be the most telling. Remember the first tenant of TBRI? Mindfulness. This refers to the awareness of what you are bringing to the interaction in any given moment. It is the awareness of your internal state, triggers and past traumas that are impacting your response.

Parents who are "hangry," stressed, frustrated, tired or otherwise overwhelmed are more likely to be short tempered and reactive with their kiddos and others. In TBRI terms, this results in a "rupture" in the connection with your child. You will have these moments and when you do, it is important that you go back and learn how to repair the disconnect.

This is going to require you to;

1. Accept responsibility for your behavior.
2. Demonstrate humility and go to the child and apologize.
3. Ask for a "do over " and do a redo.

For children from hard places, it is safe to assume they have never learned conflict resolution or witnessed a safe adult come back to them to repair the relationship with a redo and apology. Parents who are willing to do this are modeling and teaching their child a valuable life skill. They are demonstrating that making mistake is not dangerous and will not result in the disruption of the placement in their family. You are also helping that children learn to accept responsibility and apologize for hurtful actions. This is a lifelong relational skill that will serve them well!

Are you interested in more TBRI Tips?

Sign up today and you will get a monthly TBRI Tip developed and delivered to your email inbox by Brenda Ursel, M.S., TBRI Educator

**To subscribe please email**  
[bursel@nwresource.org](mailto:bursel@nwresource.org)

Would you consider adopting an older child or sibling group but are not sure where to start?

#### **WE HAVE A PROGRAM FOR YOU!**



PARKA stands for Preparation and Adoption Readiness for Kids in Alaska. PARKA is a small intensive, dynamic adoption preparation program. PARKA serves ten families a year who are interested in becoming the healing adoptive family for a legally free child through the State of Alaska foster care system.

The children matched through this program are usually school aged and/or sibling groups. There is no fee for the PARKA program and support is offered at all levels to help the child thrive in your family. Enrollment is open to families statewide. (Solid internet service required) Interested in learning more? Contact Brenda Ursel at [bursel@nwresource.org](mailto:bursel@nwresource.org) for more information.



#### **WEBI-CONFERENCE:**

**Teens**  
**Via Zoom**

**Wednesday and Thursday**  
**April 20 - 21, 2022**  
**9:00am - 4:30pm**

#### **Rising to the Challenge:**

**Sessions for Adoptive Parents on Perplexing, Challenging and Difficult Behaviors**

**Presented by Dr. Rick Delaney**  
**Noon - 2:00pm, via Zoom**

**February 7:** Adoption and the Social Brain: Promoting Social Intelligence & Skills in Kids

**March 7:** The Pinocchio Complex: Reducing Fibs, White Lies & Truth Deficits

**April 4:** Making Peace with the Aggressive Child

**May 2:** The Horn of Plenty: Reducing Children's Food Insecurities

**June 6:** Empathy Deficits in Traumatized Children: Understanding & Supporting Growth in Compassion

**To register call 907-279-1799.**

Richard Delaney, PhD, is an internationally known trainer of foster, kinship and adoptive parents. He is the co-founder of and a principal contributor to FosterParentCollege.com®



# MONTHLY RESOURCE FAMILY TRAINING SCHEDULE:

## ACRF Teleconference Schedule, February—May 2022

Tues. Feb. 8th, 7-8pm **Building Trust with Teens & Preteens—Part 2** Maria VanOrd, ACRF, Anchorage Family Support/Trainer

Wed. Mar 2nd, Noon-1pm **Runaways: What to Do and How to Respond** Kendall Musser, ACRF, Rural Family Support/Trainer

Tues. Apr 5th, 7-8pm **Kinship Care Resources for Families**

Wed. May 11, Noon-1 **Travelling with Kids** Jodi von Brandt, ACRF Mat-Su Family Support/Trainer

Please call in 5 minutes early to give us your contact information so we can record your attendance, or stay on the line and speak to the facilitator after the teleconference ends. Check the [www.acrf.org](http://www.acrf.org) teleconference training calendar prior to the teleconference for posted handouts or PowerPoints.

**Call 1-800-944-8766, Participant Code 26867#**

**Check [www.acrf.org](http://www.acrf.org) Teleconference Training Calendar prior to the teleconference for posted handouts or PowerPoints**



## Statewide Foster and Adoptive Support Group

**3rd Thursday of each month at 6pm via Zoom**

Join us for a chance to talk with other foster and adoptive parents, discuss issues or concerns, get advice and tips, or to share in supporting this group of amazing people and the hard work that they do!

Please call or email for Zoom meeting link or phone number. [acrf@nwresource.org](mailto:acrf@nwresource.org) 1-800-478-7307 or 907-479-7307.

## FASD Caregiver Support Group

**Last Thursday of each month from 9-10am via Zoom**

Parents and caregivers of those affected by Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) are welcome to join us!

Please call or email for Zoom meeting link or phone number [jenn.wagaman@alaskacenter.org](mailto:jenn.wagaman@alaskacenter.org) or 907-371-8247.

See upcoming topics at [www.alaskacenter.org/fasdsupport/](http://www.alaskacenter.org/fasdsupport/).



## STATEWIDE: Let's Talk ICWA

**NOW BY ZOOM, Thursdays: February 10, March 3, April 7, May 5**



This telephonic event is designed specifically for foster and pre-adoptive parents across Alaska to learn about ICWA (Indian Child Welfare Act) and to have a chance to get your questions answered. Each session will start with a brief discussion of a specific topic related to ICWA and then be opened up for questions or concerns about what ICWA means and does in Alaska. Foster and pre-adoptive parents are encouraged to call in and participate. Co-Sponsored by the Office of Children's Services and ACRF.

## PARENT LEARNING HOUR

Spring Semester 2022



Presented by:  
Fairbanks North Star Borough School District & Stone Soup Group  
Virtual Class offered via Zoom



**Jan 8th**

**UNDERSTANDING  
BEHAVIORS**

What is your child's  
behavior telling you?

**Feb 12th**

**SECONDARY  
TRANSITION:**

A deeper dive of the  
process & resources

**April 9th**

**ASSISTIVE  
TECHNOLOGY:**

Low and high tech  
solutions for children

**May 14th**

**TRAUMATIC BRAIN  
INJURY 101**

Overview & learning  
effects for youth

**TIME & DATE: 10am – 11am, 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month**

**REGISTER: [Click HERE](#)**

**Questions: Stone Soup Group – 907.561.3701, [info@stonesoupgroup.org](mailto:info@stonesoupgroup.org)**

# FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE PARENT TRAINING:

## **Building Families Through Adoption via Zoom (Two upcoming classes)**

6:30 to 8:30pm, Tuesdays & Thursdays

Five Sessions: February 17, 22, 24, March 1, and 3

Five Sessions: June 6, 8, 13, 15, and 20

Building Families through Adoption aims to prepare potential adoptive parents for the realities and joys of adoption. All potential adoptive parents are welcome but it is particularly valuable for persons wanting to adopt from Alaska's foster care system.

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## **Adopting Through OCS via Zoom**

6:30 to 8:30, Monday, March 21

This zoom class will include information about adopting through the foster care system and reviews the "nuts and bolts" of what families need to know.

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## **Introduction to Trust-Based Intervention (TBRI) via Zoom**

Two Sessions: 9:00am to Noon, Saturdays: April 2 and 9

This training is specifically targeted to Alaska's foster and adoptive families. Other families are welcome to join, but we ask you email specific family circumstances first so our trainer can chat with you to make sure this training will be helpful. To register: [acrf@nwresource.org](mailto:acrf@nwresource.org) or 279-1799. Check our Training Schedule at [www.acrf.org](http://www.acrf.org) for handouts.

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## **Core Training for Resource Families Via Zoom**

6:30 to 8:00pm, Tuesdays and Thursdays—7 Sessions: April 26, 28, May 3, 5, 10, 12, and 17

Core Training for Resource Families helps you gain a better understanding of the child protection process, the special needs of your children in foster care and your role as a foster parent. It is also a great way to meet other foster parents and hear their ideas about fostering and adopting!

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## **Core Training for Relative Caregivers Via Zoom**

6:30 to 8:00pm, Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursday—5 Sessions: April 25, May 2, 10, 12, and 17

Core Training for Relative Caregivers will help you understand the child protective system, know what your role is as a foster parent to your relatives, and help connect you with resources to support your care for the children in your home.

Please call or email to pre-register and get the zoom access information:

[acrf@nwresource.org](mailto:acrf@nwresource.org) 1-800-478-7307 or 907-479-7307

## **BECOMING A FOSTER PARENT ORIENTATION**

### **Statewide Resource Family Orientation**

via Zoom, Wednesdays 6-7:30pm:

February 9

March 9

April 13

May 11

June 8

Telephonic, Thursdays:

February 17, 7-8pm

March 17, Noon-1pm

April 21, 7-8pm

May 19, Noon-1pm

June 16, 7-8pm

**IF YOU NEED ASSISTANCE WITH COMPLETING THE APPLICATION  
AN OPTIONAL ADDITIONAL HOUR IS PROVIDED AT THE END OF EACH OF THE ABOVE SESSIONS.**

To learn the steps to becoming a foster or adoptive parent call 1-800-478-7307 to pre-register.

**FOR THE TELEPHONIC ORIENTATION CALL:**

**1-800-944-8766** then you will be asked to enter a code; please enter: **26867#**

**Note:** Don't forget to press the # button! If you call in before the group leader, you will hear music, stay on the line.

# ACRF Office Thank You's....

- ◆ **Our 2021 Adoption Awareness Month was a huge success!** Through the generosity of our community partners, specifically Dianne Olsen, Otterson Law and Mediation, and Perk Up Coffee, we spread the message of foster care and adoption in Alaska throughout our community. From the Zoo Boo to Anchorage People Mover Bus ad campaign, and coffee sleeve project, we are so thankful for our wonderful partners who made these events possible!
- ◆ **Thank you to Beacon Hill** for partnering with ACRF in support of our Foster/Adoptive Parent Support Group, Connection Café. Beacon Hill has donated meeting space, staff and supplies as well as assistance with marketing, advertising and providing childcare. The support group meets on the first Tuesday of each month in the Mat-Su Valley and offers food, training, and a welcoming space for folks to gather, network, exchange resources, and connect with other parents who might be experiencing similar things.
- ◆ **Thank you Foster Parent Panelists (SKILS/FASD Teleconference):** Alan Corrick, Dora Wilson, Grace Hakanson, Kristen Haddox, Jennifer Luke, Laurie Hodne, Amanda Rowley, Kelly Doughty and Shannon Bigham. **Presenters for Web-Conferences:** Supporting Cultural Connections for Children in Care, OCS ICWA Specialists- Casey Groat, Tash Yatchmeneff, Sheila Randazzo, Brianna Gray- FNSBSD, Jaclynne Richards- ANTHC, Jackie Engebretson- ANTHC, Jessica Ullrich, Rachel Robertson, Dr Jessica Black, Amelia Wilson, Janet Lewis, Malia Tuga, Carol Edwards, Kayla Cox, Cindy Smith and Stephen Adams. **Presenters for The Road To Permanency:** OCS Permanency Unit in Anchorage and Wasilla (Dawn and Rose), OCS ILS Unit in Anchorage (Amy), Michael Schwieter, Bobbi Green, Jamie Bleakley, Jessica, Erica Johnson, Sharon Bronee, FFCA Members-Anna Redmon, Neveah, Monica, Zanella and Isaac. **Training Presenters or co-presenters:** Sara Alden-OCS, Christine Schut-FNSBSD, Jenn Wagaman-ACCA, Anna Zierfuss-SSG, Jeanne Gerhardt-Cyrus and RnR Interpreting Services.
- ◆ **Thank you for supplies:** Rotary Cares for Kids Packs- Bart Maize, Stacie Sigar, and Liz Bowman, My Very Own Blanket-Mitali Ghatak, and Jockey Being Family.
- ◆ **Thank you for cash donations:** Sunrise Bagel and Espresso, 100+ Golden Heart Women Who Care, Fred Meyer Community Rewards, Rotary of Fairbanks-Bart Maize.
- ◆ **Thanks to the great crew at Pet Smart** for stuffed animals for youth in foster care. We were able to distribute these furry fellows at the Gift Pick Up in Anchorage and to Alaska Cares.
- ◆ **Max Burger on Northern Lights has good food and a great heart.** In December, the restaurant held a fundraiser for ACRF and offered a great meal for just \$5. Rebekah and JB Son opened up their restaurant and worked hard flipping burgers, filling orders and raised a great sum for ACRF to use with supporting families and children.
- ◆ **Resource Family Christmas Gift Pick Up Anchorage Area:** Thanks to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints for hosting this event and to all your volunteers. Thank you Beacon Hill for the fun activities for kids this year with the Anchorage Fire Dept and Police vehicles, and Santa. Thanks to Alaska Club for all the gifts for kids in care and to the Anchorage Community for such generous gift donations.
- ◆ **PUMP UP THE KIDS event!** Thanks to PUMP UP THE KIDS crew and Michael Dukes of Last Frontier Mediaactive LLC, and the rest of the great crew at KZND/Anchorage Alternative Radio. We thank everyone in the community who took a list or donated gift cards to the event.
- ◆ **Thank you to Power Hounds Ski Shop in Girdwood and Lindsey Helmbrecht** for donating the proceeds of their ski film fest to ACRF!

every contribution is  
hugely valued

thank  
you!

Northwest Resource Associates  
Alaska Center for Resource Families  
815 Second Avenue Suite 202  
Fairbanks, AK 99701

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## ACRF STAFF DIRECTORY

### Northern Regional Office

*Rachel Hanft, Trainer/Family Support*  
*Kendall Musser, Rural Outreach Coordinator*  
*Melody Jamieson, Adoption Support*  
*Vacant, Project Assistant*  
*Dee Dee Keyser, Resource Coordinator*

### Mat-Su Regional Office

*Jodi von Brandt, Trainer/Family Support*  
*TBA, Adoption Support*

### Anchorage Regional Office

*Aileen McInnis, Director*  
*Maria VanOrd, Family Support Specialist*  
*Brenda Ursel, Adoption Support*  
*Debbie Laflamme, Project Assistant*  
*Lissa Rylander, Database Coordinator*

**[www.acrf.org](http://www.acrf.org)**



## Consider Supporting ACRF By Doing What You Do Every Day!

There are many ways to support Alaska Center for Resource Families just by shopping as you normally do, or by choosing to shop at these locations and selecting us as your Non-Profit of choice.

Link your Fred Meyer Rewards Card to [Alaska Center for Resource Families](http://Alaska Center for Resource Families) and you still earn reward points and ACRF receives a donation! Shop at [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) and when you choose [Northwest Resource Associates](http://Northwest Resource Associates) as your charity, ACRF will earn while you shop, at no additional cost to you!



### ACRF Northern Region

815 Second AVE, STE 202  
Fairbanks, AK 99701

479-7907/FAX: 479-9666  
Toll-Free: 1-800-478-7307

Email: [acrf@nwresource.org](mailto:acrf@nwresource.org)

### ACRF Anchorage

840 K ST, STE 101  
Anchorage, AK 99501

279-1799/FAX: 279-1520  
Toll-Free: 1-866-478-7307

Email: [acrfsc@nwresource.org](mailto:acrfsc@nwresource.org)

### ACRF Mat-Su

5050 Dunbar ST, STE A2  
PO Box 876844  
Wasilla, AK 99654

376-4678/FAX: 376-4638

Email: [acrfsc@nwresource.org](mailto:acrfsc@nwresource.org)