



## Greetings to OCS Foster Families!

In the Fall of 2008, the Office of Children's Services completed a federal review of our services that we provide to children and families. From this review, many recommendations were made designed to improve the services for children and families that we serve. Based on these recommendations, new requirements have been set out for foster families licensed for the placement of children in the custody of OCS.

Effective May 31, 2010, the Office of Children's Services is now requiring that all licensed foster families complete the OCS Orientation and the pre-services training (commonly called **Core**) as a part of the initial licensing requirements.

Many of our foster families have already completed the Core training through the Alaska Center for Resource Families (ACRF). If you are a foster family that has completed this training, please make sure that your OCS licensing worker has a record of your completion of the Core classes as a part of your licensing record.

If you are currently licensed and have not or are not sure you have completed the Core classes, contact ACRF at 1-800-478-7307. ACRF will assist you with completing these training components, or will assist you with documentation for your OCS licensing worker. ACRF offers 3 types of Core Training: 1) for Experienced Foster Parents; 2) for New Foster Parents; and 3) for Kinship or Relative Care Providers.

Please remember that all foster parents continue to be required to complete annual foster parent training to be in compliance with foster care licensing requirements. For 2-parent foster families, families must complete a total of 15 hours of training, with each foster parent completing a minimum of 5 hours of training. For 1-parent foster families, the foster parent must complete a total of 10 hours of training. Core training can count towards your required training hours.

Thank you for all of the hard work and dedication that each of you shows toward the children in foster care each and every day. We appreciate the commitment and dedication that you provide to a child who is in need of care. Your efforts at meeting the required training of foster care licensure, is one way in which foster parents are better prepared to meet the needs of children in care.

## ***OCS LICENSING REQUIREMENT FOR RESOURCE FAMILIES...***

*Licensed foster homes are required to have 15 hours of training **per licensing year** for a two-parent home and 10 hours for a single parent home. Report all your training to ACRF. To find out how many hours you've completed or to find out ways to complete your training hours, contact your local ACRF office or call toll-free 1-800-478-7307.*

## **FAIRBANKS TRAINING:**

*Unless otherwise noted, the below trainings are held at ACRF in Fairbanks: 815 Second Ave, STE 101 **Pre-registration is REQUIRED** for Core and Strengthening Families, call 479-7307 to register*

### ◆ **AUGUST:**

**Core for Experienced Resource Families**

Tuesday, August 3<sup>rd</sup> from 5:30pm–9pm (dinner sandwiches provided)

### ◆ **SEPTEMBER:**

**Adopting Through the Office of Children's Services**

Wednesday, September 8<sup>th</sup> from 6-7:30pm

**Core for New Resource Families**

Thursday, September 9<sup>th</sup> from 6-9pm, and Saturday, September 11<sup>th</sup> from 9am-4pm (Lunch provided)

**Core for Kinship Caregivers**

Saturday, September 25<sup>th</sup> from 10-4pm (lunch provided) *Note Location: Noel Wien Library, 1215 Cowles St, Fairbanks.*

### ◆ **OCTOBER:**

**Building Families through Adoption (Formerly called Strengthening Families)**

Thursday, October 14<sup>th</sup> from 6-9pm and Saturday, October 16<sup>th</sup> from 9am-4pm (lunch provided)

## **FAIRBANKS SUPPORT GROUPS:**

### ◆ **"Grands Raising Great Children" Support Group:**

Meet others who are raising children for the second time, receive information on available resources and process your feelings in a safe supportive environment. Participation is FREE. Limited supervised children's activities are available during the group – please pre-register if you are bringing your children. **Group meets the second Monday of every month from 6:30pm–8pm, at RCPC, 726 26<sup>th</sup> AVE, Suite 2 in Fairbanks.** Call 456-2866 for more information.

## **NOME TRAINING:**

*For more information on where this training will be held call 1-800-478-7307.*

### ◆ **Nome Resource Family Training**

Monday, August 23<sup>rd</sup> thru Thursday, August 26<sup>th</sup>

## JUNEAU TRAINING:

Training in Juneau will be held at the OCS office, 3025 Clinton Drive. Pre-registration is REQUIRED, call John at 790-4246 to register.

### ✦ AUGUST:

Video Night: Catfish in Black Bean Sauce

Wednesday, August 18<sup>th</sup> from 6-9pm (popcorn provided)

### ✦ SEPTEMBER:

Video Night: Movie to be announced

Wednesday, September 15<sup>th</sup> from 6-9pm (popcorn provided)

## MAT-SU TRAINING:

Pre-Registration is Required for the following events by contacting Betsy in Wasilla at 376-4678 or email at [bwoodin@nwresource.org](mailto:bwoodin@nwresource.org). Training events will be held at ACRF Mat-Su, 5050 Dunbar ST, STE A2 (off the Palmer/Wasilla HWY, Brentwood Plaza)

### ✦ AUGUST:

FASD and Children

Tuesday, August 3<sup>rd</sup> from Noon-1pm

Core Training for New Resource Families

Every Thursday, beginning August 26<sup>th</sup> from 6-9pm thru September 30<sup>th</sup>.

Must attend all 6 sessions.

Video Day: Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

Friday, August, 27<sup>th</sup> from 9am-3pm, may attend any part of this event.

### ✦ SEPTEMBER:

Keeping Native Children Connected to their Culture

Tuesday, September 7<sup>th</sup> from Noon-1pm

Video Day: Culture and Identity

Friday, September 10<sup>th</sup> from 9am-3pm, may attend any part of this event.

### ✦ OCTOBER:

Video Day: Childhood Trauma

Friday, October 1<sup>st</sup> from 9am-3pm, may attend any part of this event.

Core for Kinship Caregivers

Every Wednesday, beginning October, 6<sup>th</sup> from 9am-Noon thru October 20th. Must attend all 3 sessions.

Adopting through the Office of Children's Services

Thursday, October 7<sup>th</sup> from 6-9pm.

## MAT-SU SUPPORT GROUPS:

For information on the Mat-Su support groups call Danita at LINKS 373-3632, email [ddodge@linksprc.org](mailto:ddodge@linksprc.org) or visit [www.linksprc.org](http://www.linksprc.org). You may also call Betsy Woodin at ACRF, 376-4678 or email [bwoodin@nwresoure.org](mailto:bwoodin@nwresoure.org). Or go to our website at <http://www.acrf.org/calendar.php?l=southcentral>

## **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](mailto:bwoodin@nwresource.org) or call 1-800-478-7307.

Tuesday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, Noon-1pm

- FASD and Children, Betsy Woodin

Wednesday, August 11<sup>th</sup>, 7-8pm

- OCS 101: The Basics from PSR to Finalized Adoption, Aileen McInnis

Tuesday, September 7<sup>th</sup>, Noon-1pm

- Keeping Native Children Connected to their Culture, Betsy Woodin

Wednesday, September 8<sup>th</sup>, 7-8pm

- Cross Cultural Childcare, Betsy Woodin

Tuesday, July 6<sup>th</sup>, Noon-1pm

- Parenting the Adopted Adolescent, Betsy Woodin

## **STATEWIDE AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER SUPPORT GROUP BY TELECONFERENCE**

- Meet other parents who went through what you are going through
- Share resources
- Ask other parents for suggestions or resources
- Offer support to families new to this subject

To call in to the group: Dial 1-800-315-6338, follow voice prompts, then enter code 2272#. First Tuesday of every month from Noon-1pm.

# *Building Resilience in Foster and Adopted Children*

*By: Linden Staciokas*

Resilience is the ability to live through and bounce back from adversity. Some of the characteristics common to resilient children and adults include, among others, the ability to have trusting relationships, having the belief that they are competent and able to solve problems, having a sense of humor, and having a variety of self-soothing behaviors to deal with anxiety.

As Edith H. Grotberg, Ph.D. of The International Resilience Project puts it, "Parents and other care givers promote resilience in children through their words, actions, and the environment they provide. Adults who promote resilience make family and institutional supports available to children. They encourage children to become increasingly autonomous, independent, responsible, empathic, and altruistic and to approach people and situations with hope, faith, and trust. They teach them how to communicate with others, solve problems, and successfully handle negative thoughts, feelings, and behaviors."

The November/December 2009 issue of *Fostering Families Today* contained an article called "Uncovering the Mysterious: The Bounce Back Factor." The author, Dr. Noelle Hause, listed 14 things foster, adoptive and guardianship parents can do to teach children resilience, and we have added some suggestions or cautions in parentheses:

- Help young children maintain positive relationships (if they don't know how to interact with other children or adults, role play with them and make sure they are being introduced to helpful people by taking them to church with you or enrolling them in sports or craft activities where they will meet others with similar interests).
- Create opportunities for children to contribute to the family (years ago, children were essential to the maintenance of the farm or family business, and they grew up knowing their value to the world. Find ways for your children to make real contributions to how the family functions by teaching them a skill and then depending on them to get it done so the family can operate smoothly -- cooking one meal a week, for example).
- Talk about feelings (avoid saying, "You shouldn't feel that way" when a child discloses fears or hurt feelings. No one can help what they feel, only how they channel those feelings. Acknowledge a child's feelings and then ask the child what he or she can do to deal with the situation).
- Accept the child and celebrate his or her temperament and personality (a strong-willed, independent minded child may be challenging, but channeled correctly and appreciated by the parent, as an adult these may be expressed as qualities of leadership and creativity).
- Respect and value children.
- Give undivided attention (meaning, sit and make eye contact and concentrate solely on the child. Talking to them while you are trying to email, watch the end of your TV program or open the bills you just took out of the mailbox is not really listening and children know it).
- Be reliable (what seems like a minor incident of not following through on your word can assume gigantic proportions to a youngster who always has experienced adults as unreliable and undependable).
- Show your unconditional love (remember to distinguish between not liking a behavior and not liking the child).
- Help your child learn from his or her mistakes (when things have calmed down after a crisis, go back and help the child figure out what he or she could have done instead and practice what will be done in the future.)
- Facilitate problem-solving.
- Provide clear expectations.
- Allow the child to have control by giving the opportunity to make choices.
- Help your child set realistic goals (and help him or her figure out the smaller steps needed to reach those goals).
- Be flexible (sometimes it is easy to forget your way is not the only way, and different is not necessarily wrong). ■

# *Building Resilience in Foster and Adopted Children*

## *1.0 Hour Self-Study Questionnaire*

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](mailto:acrf@nwresource.org).

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

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Provider#: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Define resilience.

2. List three (3) qualities that resilient individuals have.

a) \_\_\_\_\_

b) \_\_\_\_\_

c) \_\_\_\_\_

3. Parents and other caregivers promote resilience in children through their \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. (FILL IN THE BLANKS)

4. The November/December 2009 issue of Fostering Families Today contained an article called "Uncovering the Mysterious: The Bounce Back Factor." The author, Dr. Noelle Hause, listed 14 things foster, adoptive and guardianship parents can do to teach children resilience. List any 8 of the 14 mentioned.

a) \_\_\_\_\_

b) \_\_\_\_\_

c) \_\_\_\_\_

d) \_\_\_\_\_

e) \_\_\_\_\_

f) \_\_\_\_\_

g) \_\_\_\_\_

h) \_\_\_\_\_

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## **SPOTLIGHT ON A NEW DVD**

### **Children's Oral Health Care**

New DVD addition to the ACRF library! Entitled *Children's Oral Health Care*, it is targeted to caretakers of children with special needs. The presenters are a mixture of dental professionals and families of children who, due to a variety of disabilities, need assistance or adaptive devices to care for and keep their teeth and gums healthy. The techniques are not just listed, they are demonstrated by the families. In addition, a dentist discusses ways to make visits more successful and less painful for both child and (sometimes inadvertently bitten) dentist. Even if you think you know how to care for the dental needs of your youngster with special needs, this is a video well worth watching.

*(This DVD is brought to you by the Stone Soup Group, the Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors, the Alaska Department of Health and Human Services and Progressive Media Alaska.)*

**Available at the Fairbanks ACRF Library!**

**Call 479-7307 or 1-800-478-7307 to check it out**

*Check-out period is two weeks*