

Welcome to ACRF Marla Adams!



Marla Adams has joined the ACRF Fairbanks office as the Family Support Specialist and Trainer. She brings a wealth of information, insight and experience to her position. Marla is a graduate of Juneau Douglas High school, and holds a Certificate in Developmental Disabilities from Prince William Sound Community College, and BS in Social Science / Psychology from Western Oregon University. Living in Alaska for over 30 years, she has been employed as a social worker for the State of Alaska OCS with many tasks including; Intake, Investigation, Permanency/On-going Unit; Northern Region Adoption Specialist, and Southeast Region Independent Living Specialist. Marla understands foster parenting from inside and out as she was a foster parent both in Oregon and Alaska. She is also the mother of a 28 year old special needs child, Melanie who has Down Syndrome. Marla is also a Glass & Jewelry Artist who loves the outdoors, camping, fishing, exploring. She is perfect for her position helping families because she loves teaching, training, and sharing her life experiences and information with others. Marla, welcome to our team!

ACRF is offering training in Ketchikan and Sitka this quarter

Ketchikan Training:

Held in the OCS Conference Room in Ketchikan. Pre-registration is REQUIRED, call toll free 1-800-478-7307 to register

- ◆ **Core Training for Resource Families**
Friday, January 7th from 6pm - 9pm and Saturday, January 8th from 9am - 5pm
- ◆ **Building Families Through Adoption**
Sunday, January 9th from 9am - 5pm and Monday, January 10th from 6pm - 9pm

Sitka Training:

Held at 310 Price Street (blue house), Sitka. Pre-registration is REQUIRED, call toll free 1-800-478-7307 to register

- ◆ **Introduction to Attachment Disorder**
Friday, January 21st from 5:00pm - 6:30pm
- ◆ **Rejecting Behaviors of Children in Care**
Friday, January 21st from 6:30pm - 8:00pm
- ◆ **Core Training for Resource Families**
Saturday, January 22nd from 9am - 4pm
Note: This Core Training includes additional self-study to help participants fulfill the complete training requirement.

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

◆ **JANUARY:**

Core Training for Resource Families

Thursday, January 27th from 6pm – 9pm and Saturday, January 29th from 9am – 4pm (lunch provided)

◆ **FEBRUARY:**

Building Families Through Adoption

Thursday, February 3rd from 6pm - 9pm and Saturday, February 5th from 9am – 4pm (Lunch provided)

Core Training for Seasoned Foster Parents

Tuesday, February 8th from 5:30pm – 9:30pm

Movie Day featuring Temple Grandin

Saturday, February 12th from 10am – Noon and again from Noon – 2pm. We encourage you to bring your children, especially teens. You will receive 2 hours training credit for watching the movie, stay a little longer and write down 3 things you learned from the movie, and you can earn one more hour credit!

◆ **MARCH:**

Core Training for Relative Placements

Saturday, March 5th from 10am - 4pm (lunch provided)

FASD 101

Saturday, March 19th from 9am - 5pm (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 26th AVE, Suite 2 in Fairbanks.** Call 456-2866 for more information.

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

◆ **FEBRUARY:**

Dealing with Difficult Behaviors from Your Foster or Adopted Child

Thursday, February 3rd from 6:30pm – 8:30pm

FASD 101

Tuesday, February 22nd and Thursday, February 24th from 6pm – 9pm

◆ **MARCH:**

Dealing with Grief – Yours, Your Child's

Wednesday, March 16th from 6:30pm – 8:30pm and Saturday, December 4th from 9am – 5pm

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 or bwoodin@nwresource.org.

✦ **JANUARY:**

Video Day: Special Needs

Thursday: Jan 6th from 9am – 3pm. Stop by anytime, refreshments will be served.

Core Training for Resource Families

Fridays: Jan 7, 14, 21, 28, Feb 4 & 11 from 9am – Noon. Must attend all 6 classes for a total of 18 hours.

✦ **FEBRUARY:**

Video Day: Parenting

Thursday: Feb 3rd from 9am – 2pm. Stop by anytime, refreshments will be served.

Core Training for Seasoned Foster Parents

Monday, February 7th and Wednesday, February 9th from 9am – 1pm. Must attend both classes for a total of 8 hours.

Core Training for Relative Placement

Monday, February 14th and Wednesday, February 16th from 9am – 1pm. Must attend both classes for a total of 8 hours.

Adopting Through the Office of Children's Services

Friday, February 18th from 9am – Noon.

✦ **MARCH:**

Video Day: Attachment

Thursday: March 3rd from 9am – 3pm. Stop by anytime, refreshments will be served.

Building Families Through Adoption

Thursday, March 3rd from 6pm – 9pm and Saturday, March 5th from 9am – 5pm.

Core Training for Seasoned Foster Parents

Monday, March 28th and Thursday, March 31st from 9am – 1pm. Must attend both classes for a total of 8 hours.

Core Training for Resource Families

Thursday: March 31 from 6pm – 9pm and Saturday, April 2nd 4 from 9am – 5pm. Must attend both classes for a total of 11 hours.

✦ **APRIL:**

Core Training for Relative Placement

Monday, April 4th and Wednesday, April 6th from 9am – 1pm. Must attend both classes for a total of 8 hours.

Adopting Through the Office of Children's Services

Thursday, April 7th from 6pm – 9pm.

Mat-Su Support Groups:

For information on the Mat-Su support groups call Danita at LINKS 373-3632, email ddodge@linksprc.org or visit www.linksprc.org. You may also call Betsy Woodin at ACRF, 376-4678 or email bwoodin@nwresource.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 or call 1-800-478-7307.

Tuesday, January 11th, Noon-1pm

- *Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, Betsy Woodin*

Wednesday, January 12th, 7-8pm

- *Family Violence, Betsy Woodin*

Tuesday, February 8th, Noon-1pm

- *Cultural Continuity, Dennis Swain, ICWA Coordinator, OCS*

Wednesday, February 9th, 7-8pm

- *Emergency Response Plans for Foster Families, Aileen McInnis*

Tuesday, March 8th, Noon-1pm

- *The Process for Investigating Complaints Against Foster Families, Kim Ford, OCS*

Wednesday, March 9th, 7-8pm

- *Issues in Infant and Toddler Mental Health, Aileen McInnis*

Parent-Sharing Teleconference

First Tuesday of each month from Noon-1pm. Dial 1-800-315-6338, enter code 2272#

Next one: Tuesday, January 4, Noon-1pm

All participants will be entered into a drawing to win a free book.

Caseworker Visits with Resource Families and Children in Custody

(Reference OCS Policies and Procedures 3.2.1)

By: Aileen McInnis, Training Coordinator, Alaska Center for Resource Families

OCS has clarified and refined their policies regarding caseworker visits with resource families and children in custody. The reasons for these changes are to provide clarification about caseworker visits with an emphasis on encouraging quality visits. Caseworkers need to visit all children with an open case and the child's parents and resource families at least once a month. Here are the highlights that you need to know:

Caseworker Visits with Resource Families:

The caseworker should meet with you, the foster parent, at least once a month and the majority of these visits should happen in your home. If there are two parents in the home, both need to be seen regularly and at least one parent must be seen monthly. (The frequency of visits with the second parent is still being determined.) Involving both parents in visits may be a change from your past experience with caseworker visits. These visits should focus on discussing and assessing your needs as resource families to be able to care for the children placed in your home. This is a time to talk about how the children are doing, how you are doing with the children and discuss any issues or possible supports that are needed. Caseworkers will be asking specifically about the needs and wellbeing of the child. This is a good time to answer any questions that you have. Use your home visit time to report any problems with foster care payments, Medicaid stickers, to talk about travel plans and get permissions. With the caseworker right there and focusing on your child, if you can plan ahead, you can be more efficient than calling the caseworker several times a month for things you need.

Visits with resource parents can take place at the same time the children you are fostering are visited by their social worker or may be separate from that visit. Some visits will be scheduled and some will be unannounced. Based on the OCS role of ensuring safety for children, caseworkers may do an unannounced visit to see a child.

Ideas to Help with Visits: Think about what you want to talk about ahead of time. If you have a scheduled visit with a caseworker, email them ahead of time to let them know if you have specific issues to discuss. Keep notes about the visit in your own records so you can follow up with any expectations of you or any issues the caseworker was going to work on. Use your time wisely! Plan ahead! Also, if you can, coordinate with your spouse or partner so that you can both be at the same visit. This makes things easier for the caseworker to make regular contact with both parents in the household.

Caseworker Visits with the Child:

Visits with the child in custody should be at least monthly and should be scheduled ahead of time with the caregiver. The majority of these visits should happen in your home. The purpose of these visits is to have purposeful and meaningful contact with the child meaning that the caseworker needs to observe the child interacting with the family and needs to spend some time alone with the child for part of the visit. Caseworkers will also want to see where the child is sleeping and may ask the child about feelings of safety, discipline and interaction with family members and ability to maintain contact with parents and ability to keep connected with siblings. Caseworkers need to observe the child as well for cleanliness, safety and well being, and appropriateness of dress and appearance.

During the child visit, the caseworker will discuss with you such topics as cultural continuity, the activities in the case plan regarding the child, the safety and permanency goals for the child, the child's safety and wellbeing including any services you may need to help the child, and your role and interaction with the birth parent. The caseworker will record their visit in ORCA and will note the issues that were identified, discussed or assessed at the visit. If the visit does not take place, caseworkers need to document the reason why it did not take place.

If a child is moved into a new placement, the caseworker should visit child within one week of transition into a new placement to help the child with the transition and ensure his needs are being met.

Try to schedule visits with the caseworker at the time that he or she will be able to have some private time and space with a child. The caseworker is required to ask the child about contact with birth parents and discipline in the household, so don't see these actions as the caseworker being nosy – that's her job! She or he will also want to observe the child interacting with you and other members of the household. ■

Caseworker Visits with Resource Families and Children in Custody

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.

Name: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____ Provider#: _____

1. The caseworker should meet with your family at least _____ a month and the majority of these visits should happen in _____.
2. Both foster parents in the home need to be seen by the caseworker regularly.
 a) True
 b) False
3. Some visits with the foster parents will be scheduled and some visits will be unannounced.
 a) True
 b) False
4. When a caseworker visits a child in the resource family's home, he or she will want to do which of the following things with the child?
 a) View the place where the child sleeps.
 b) Go on an outing in the community.
 c) Talk to the child about why he is in care.
 d) Talk about parent contact.
 e) All of the above.
5. What is one (1) way that you can help visits by caseworkers go better or be more successful?

FEATURED LINK OF INTEREST TO RESOURCE FAMILIES

ACRF will start featuring links of interest for resource families. These are links to interesting information on the web that we think will be informative and interesting to foster and adoptive families. Currently, our Featured Link features a New York Times article addressing "cyber bullying" that ran on December 13. Good information for all parents! Go to our web page at www.acrf.org and look in the scrolling announcement sections. Links will be changed regularly.

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

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

New Courses Available from ACRF

Book: Another Place at the Table (1.5 Hours)

Book: Beyond Consequences, Logic and Control (1.5 Hours)

Book: Bodily Harm: The Breakthrough Healing Program for Self-Injurers (1.5 Hours)

Book: Wounded Children, Healing Homes: How Traumatized Children Impact Adoptive and Foster Families (1.5 Hours)

Children's DVD: The Boy Who Ate Too Much (NO Hours)

DVD: A Child with Special Needs (1 Hour) – *also available in Spanish*

DVD: Child Safety & Supervision (2 Hours)

DVD: Culturally Competent Parenting (2 Hours)

DVD: Discipline: Teaching Limits with Love (1 Hour) – *also available in Spanish*

DVD: Grief and Loss in the Care System (2 Hours)

DVD: Substance-Exposed Infants (2 Hours)

Information Packet: Family Contact Standards (1 Hour)

Information Packet: Talking to Children about Adoption (1 Hour)

Available at the Fairbanks ACRF Library!

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

Check-out period for DVD's is two weeks