

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



The Resource Family Advisory Board will meet in Anchorage on October 28 and 29 to set new goals and look ahead to a new year and welcome new board members. Chair Brian Headdings spoke at the September Licensing Summit and shared information about the status of the board and encouraging licensing workers to spread the word amongst foster parents who might make good board members.

Got some ideas of what you'd like to see from the Resource Family Advisory Board? Send your ideas to [akresourcefamilyboard@yahoo.com](mailto:akresourcefamilyboard@yahoo.com).

## Building Families through Adoption Now Available on the Web!

**Building Families through Adoption Web Version** is a web-based class that aims to prepare potential adoptive parents for the realities and joys of adoption. All potential adoptive parents are welcomed but it is also particularly valuable for persons wanting to adopt from Alaska's foster care system. Topics covered *Introduction & Language of Adoption, Exploring Adoption, Getting to Know Birth Parents, Talking to Your Kids about Adoption, Identity and Adoption, Addressing Grief and Loss*. Courses start twice a month with a required "First Steps" telephonic orientation. Check our webpage calendars under "Alaska/Teleconference for First Steps" information or contact your local ACRF office.

## www.acrf.org

ACRF has updated its website and you can check it out at [www.acrf.org](http://www.acrf.org). We think you will like it! There is easy to find information about becoming a foster family, options in adoption, and resources such as online training and kinship care information. Check out our listing of ICWA and other Alaska Native cultural resources under the Resource tab. And of course, the calendars for the different regions of the state will let you know what training is going on where.



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# Training Calendar

## **Dates ACRF offices statewide will be closed**

October 17: Alaska Day  
November 27-28: Thanksgiving  
December 24-25: Christmas

## **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

Wed 10/8 from 6:00-8:00pm.

#### Motivations for Adoption

Sat 10/18 from 10:00am-Noon.

#### Emergency Shelter Home Orientation

Tues 10/21 from 5:30-7:30pm or  
Thurs 10/23 from 11:00am-1:00pm

#### Knowing Who You Are

Wed & Thurs 10/29 & 10/30 from 8:30am-5:00pm.

*(Pre-Training Required- KWYA is a 3-part process that must be completed in the following order: 1) Watch a 20 minute KWYA video; 2) Complete the web-based e-learning (4-8 hours); and 3) Attend this 2-day training. Links will be sent upon registration.)*

### ✦ **NOVEMBER:**

#### Building Families through Adoption

Wed & Thurs 11/5 & 11/6 from 6:00-9:00pm and Sat 11/8 from 9:00am-3:00pm.

#### Adoption Information Session - FCA

Wed 11/12 from 6:00-8:00pm. Held at the Noel Wien Auditorium.

#### Core Training for Resource Families

Mondays 11/17, 11/24, 12/1, 12/8 from 6:00-9:00pm. Must attend all 4 classes for training credit.

#### Adoptive Family Meet N Greet - OCS

Wed 11/19 from 10:30am-2:30pm. Light refreshments, Family Support, Make N Take Projects)

#### Adoption 101

Sat 11/22 from 11:00am-1:00pm.

### ✦ **DECEMBER:**

#### Adoption Through OCS

Wed 12/10 from 6:00-8:00pm.

#### Understanding Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES)

Sun 12/14 from 2:00-4:00pm

## **Fairbanks Support Groups:**

✦ **Grands Raising Great Children Support Group.** There are 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 26<sup>th</sup> AVE, Suite 2 in Fairbanks.** Call 456-2866 for more information.

✦ **Fairbanks Family to Family.** Held at Alaska Center for Resource Families **every 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday from 11am-12:30pm.**

✦ **Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Support & Discussion Group.** Please refer to <http://www.acca-ilp.org/fasd> 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.

### ✦ **OCTOBER:**

#### Preparing and Transitioning Children into Permanency: The 3-5-7 Model

Wed 10/22 from 6:30-8:30pm

#### Understanding Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES)

Thurs 10/30 from 6:00-8:00pm. Held at Tlingit & Haida Vocational Training and Resource Center, 3239 Hospital Drive. An informal meal will be provided.

### ✦ **NOVEMBER:**

#### Core Training for Resource Families

Thurs 11/6 from 6:00-9:00pm and Sat 11/8 from 9:00am-5:00pm. Must attend both classes for training credit.

### ✦ **DECEMBER:**

#### Trauma Informed Care

Sat 12/6 from 9:00am-3:00pm.

#### Adopting through OCS

Wed 12/10 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.

## **Did You Know...**

The **Juneau Youth Services Early Childhood Program** offers **FREE consultation** to families and child care providers who have questions about the social and emotional development of children. A strong social and emotional foundation allows children to concentrate, complete tasks and to listen and follow directions. The early childhood consultant can provide on-site support to parents, caregivers, and children in care, at home, and in the community and participation will qualify towards your required training hours! **For more information call Kathleen Rhea at 523-6533 or email [kathleenr@jys.org](mailto:kathleenr@jys.org).**

## **Sitka Training**

#### Knowing Who You Are

October 28 & 29 from 8:30am-4:30pm

*(Pre-Training Required- KWYA is a 3-part process that must be completed in the following order: 1) Watch a 20-minute KWYA video; 2) Complete the web-based e-learning (4-8 hours); and 3) Attend this 2-day training. Links will be sent upon registration.)* **To register contact Lisa Tanga, at 786-6743 or [ltanga@uaa.alaska.edu](mailto:ltanga@uaa.alaska.edu).**

## **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](mailto:bwoodin@nwresource.org). You must pre-register as classes will be cancelled without notice if no one signs up.

### ✦ **OCTOBER:**

#### Core Training for Resource Families

**Saturdays 10/4 and 10/11** from 10:00am-3:00pm. Must attend both classes to receive training credit.

#### FASD 201

**Mon 10/6** from 9:00am-1:00pm.

#### Adopting through OCS

**Thurs 10/9** from 6:00pm-9:00pm. Held at OCS.

#### Building Families through Adoption

**Tuesdays 10/14, 10/21 & 10/28** from 6:00-9:00pm. Must attend all three classes to receive training credit.

#### Core Training for Relative Caregivers

**Sat 10/18** from 9:00am-5:00pm.

### ✦ **NOVEMBER:**

#### Adopting the Traumatized Child

**Mon 11/3** from 10:00am-Noon.

#### FASD 101

**Tues 11/4** from Noon-4:00pm. Held at LINKS on PW HWY in the Regan Building.

### ✦ **DECEMBER:**

#### Adverse Childhood Experiences Study (ACES)

**Thurs 12/4** from 10:00am-1:00pm.

## **Mat-Su Adoption Month Celebrations:**

On Saturday November 8<sup>th</sup>, ACRF, OCS and CSS will celebrate with the Mat-Su families that adopted children from the foster care system in 2014. The children will bowl, see a magician and a balloon twister and the whole family can enjoy pizza, tacos and cake. Each adopted child will get to pick either a quilt from Valley Quilters Guild, an afghan from Eagle River Senior Center or a fleece blanket tied by one of our fabulous volunteers. They will also receive a handmade pillow from Pillows for Kids and a new book. The parents will have a chance to learn about the value of making a Lifebook for each child and will also get to share their adoption stories.

On Wednesday December 10<sup>th</sup> ACRF, OCS, the GALs/CASAs will sponsor Adoption Day festivities at the Palmer Courthouse. All of the end of the year Mat-Su adoptions will be heard on that day and the collaborating agencies will provide gifts and refreshments for the families.

## **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 6-8pm 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](mailto: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](mailto:bwoodin@nwresource.org) or Linda Price 1-888-522-9866 or [grands@voaak.org](mailto:grands@voaak.org) or visit [www.voaak.org](http://www.voaak.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.

## **Rural Teleconference Training**

Families may participate by dialing 1-866-554-6142 and when asked enter the code: 2169378807#. For more information email Betsy at [bwoodin@nwresource.org](mailto:bwoodin@nwresource.org) or call 1-800-478-7307.

**Tues Oct. 7<sup>th</sup>, 7-8pm**

- **Connecting While Correcting, Session 3, Olivia Shears & Brenda Ursel, ACRF**

**Wed Oct. 8<sup>th</sup>, Noon-1pm**

- **Adoption Subsidies, Ruth Post, ACRF**

**Wed Nov. 12<sup>th</sup>, Noon-1pm**

- **Disclosure in Adoption, Brenda Ursel, ACRF**

**Tues Nov 18<sup>th</sup>, 7-8pm**

- **Parenting the Sexually Abuse Child, Aileen McInnis, ACRF**

**Tues Dec 9<sup>th</sup>, 7-8pm**

- **Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) Part 1, Betsy Woodin, ACRF**

**Wed Dec. 10<sup>th</sup>, Noon-1pm**

- **OCS Forum: Topic TBA, Aileen McInnis, ACRF**



## **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#



## 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 it to the Alaska Center for Resource Families.

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# Confidentiality and the Right to Privacy

Betsy Woodin, Alaska Center for Resource Families

**What is confidentiality?** Confidentiality refers to not sharing information you have about the children in your care unless you are legally bound to do so or if you need to share it to ensure the best care for the child.

**Why are foster parents required to respect confidentiality?** OCS is responsible for maintaining confidentiality of all information concerning the people it serves. This is demanded by both state and federal laws and is written into OCS policy. Because OCS has access to very personal information about families and is given strong powers to intervene to protect children, it also has an obligation to take strict care with this information. This obligation extends to you as a foster parent. The placement worker will be sharing all necessary information with you about the child that enables you to care for the child. You are expected to respect the privacy of the child and the child's family by keeping this information confidential.

**What can I share?** You can share: information about a child with the caseworker or in a court hearing; information about background and daily behaviors with the child's counselor; information about daily behaviors with the GAL or during a court hearing; or basic information about the child's behavior and medical conditions with a substitute caregiver that would help in caring for the child.

**What shouldn't you share?** You should not identify a child as a foster child whenever possible. (For example, don't introduce a child as "my foster daughter." Just say "this is my daughter" or "this is Sally." Do not identify a child as a child in care, or a foster child. When speaking about the child in the child's presence, it is important to be sensitive to the child's feelings so he or she cannot be embarrassed or singled out as being different. It is also important to talk to your own children and other household members about the foster child's privacy and confidentiality.

You should not share any background information, family history, or information about parents with any extended family member, relative, neighbors or friends, or acquaintance who ask. You should not allow photographs or videos, or media interviews to take place with the child without the permission of the caseworker and the birth parent or guardian.

As a resource family and member of a team, you must keep the child's and the family's personal information confidential. State regulations protect the privacy rights of parents and children in care. OCS is responsible for maintaining confidentiality of all families it serves. This responsibility extends to you in the performance of your duties as a resource parent. The assigned worker will be sharing necessary information with you about the child that will enable you to care for the child. The standard for sharing information is a "need-to-know" to provide appropriate care and safety for the child and other children in your home. Pertinent information about children in your care should only be shared with the child's parents, treating physicians, therapists, GAL/CASA, attorney, teachers and some of the child's caretakers, as necessary, to meet the needs of the child.

All personal information about the child, his family and his situation (*reason for entering out-of-home care*) that has been shared with you is to be treated in a confidential manner. This helps to insure the child and his family's privacy. This includes making sure that the records of a child in your care are kept in a safe place.

Resource parents who use social networking sites, including but not limited to Facebook, MySpace, Instagram, and Twitter must never include the names, or any personal information about the children in the custody of the state in information they post, nor should they ever post a photo of a child in care on any internet site.

**Situations you may encounter:** Resource parents and their children need to be prepared to answer questions from curious friends, neighbors, relatives and co-workers when they see they are new children in your home. You can say that the children will be staying with you for a while. If asked for more details simply state that you respect their right to privacy. Sometimes groups like churches, clubs, and fraternal organizations are aware that you are foster parents and may want to recognize your family in a newsletter, on Facebook or on their website. While it is OK to share information and pictures about you and your family members, it is not OK to include any personal information about foster children or their birth parents and they should not be included in any pictures. However, you can take pictures of the foster children doing activities with your family as long as they are not shared with others. You can make photo albums or memory books, some to keep for your family to remember the time the foster children were with you and make others to send with them when they leave your home. ■

**1.0 HOUR SELF-STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Confidentiality and the Right to Privacy**

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) Since my group/club/church already knows I am a foster parent, is it OK for them to post pictures of the foster child(ren) with an article about foster care for our newsletter?

- \_\_\_ a) TRUE
- \_\_\_ b) FALSE

2) List three (3) examples of people (like OCS worker) you can share information about foster children with.

- a) \_\_\_\_\_
- b) \_\_\_\_\_
- c) \_\_\_\_\_

3) List three (3) examples of people (like employer) you cannot share information about foster children with.

- a) \_\_\_\_\_
- b) \_\_\_\_\_
- c) \_\_\_\_\_

4) In your own words please describe what a "need-to-know" basis means and why it is important.

5) "I feel bad not sharing pictures of my foster children with others and don't want them to feel left out. "Give an example of something you can do to show a child you cherish your time together and help them remember the time they spent with your family.

# You May Be Raising the Next Superman

By Brenda Ursel, Adoption Support Specialist

In Honor of November as National Adoption Month, we promote the idea that kids (and adults) who were adopted are pretty special.

Did you know almost all the major superheroes were adopted?  
*Superman, Batman-- Spiderman, even the Ninja Turtles, just to name a few!*

They were all were raised by someone other than their birth parents. They all had tough beginnings. They experienced loss, grief and hurt. They faced hard truths. Sometimes they felt alone, isolated, ashamed and misunderstood. Some days they pushed away the ones who the loved the most. They struggled with belonging. Sometimes, they felt hopeless and wanted to give up, but they didn't, they persevered.

They found their way and became stronger, and more powerful than ever! They found peace, purpose and learned the power of family and relationships. Despite tough beginnings, they changed the world. They had family who recognized their unique gifts and gave them a vision for what they could do. They helped them move forward to accomplish amazing things. Their families knew they were destined for greatness and helped them achieve it.

*“Everyone seems to think that foster kids and orphans are nothing but troublemakers who will grow up to be criminals. But maybe one of us will be the next SUPERMAN!”*

*-Quote from a Young Foster Child.*

## What Lessons Can We Learn from the Super Heroes?

### Families Stick Together



Splinter is the Ninja Turtles' dad. He is nurturing, firm, encouraging, selfless, and wise. Splinter explains that he had to show the Turtles how to be safe, "So I became their father and they became my sons." Splinter believes in the Turtles, telling them that they are destined to protect New York, and that they will be able to accomplish "amazing things." He also reminds them that, as his sons, the Turtles must trust him. When they reach a certain age, he entrusts them with their trademark weapons in a ritual of aging. The Turtles' calling card is an ancient Japanese symbol for "family." It feels very meaningful. Later, one character notes that they stuck together because "that's what family is for." *Quotes from Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.*

### Action Activity

- If we were to design a "calling card" for our family (like the Turtles' use of the symbol for "family"), what would our symbol be
- What "aging rituals" can your family develop to honor the increased responsibilities and capabilities that come at certain ages (or at certain developmental milestones).

<http://www.adoptionlcsw.com/2014/08/splinter-as-great-adoptive-dad-teenage-mutant-ninja-turtles-movie-review-adoption-tmnt.html> Post by Addison Cooper

### Destined for Greatness



**Uncle Ben's voicemail message:** "Peter, I know things have been difficult lately and I'm sorry about that. I think I know what you're feeling. Ever since you were a little boy, you've been living with so many unresolved things. Well, take it from an old man. Those things send us down a road...they make us who we are. And if anyone's destined for greatness, it's you, son. You owe the world your gifts. You just have to figure out how to use them and know that wherever they take you, we'll always be here. So, come on home, Peter. You're my hero... and I love you!" *Quote from The Amazing Spider Man.*

### Action Activity:

- Make a lifebook page about your child's gifts and potential. Go to IFAPA.org for examples
- Give your child a hug and tell them how much you love them every day!
- Make a list of things your child has accomplished and celebrate it!
- Invest time and energy into cultivating their gifts and talents whatever they may be!

## Face the Truth

**Aunt May:** "I once told you that secrets have a cost. The truth does too. Secrets usually do get broken, its best when truth is told by trusted, trustworthy people. The past does not define you, but it makes you part of who you are today." *Quote from The Amazing Spider Man 2.*

## Action Activity:

- Always speak the truth in love and gentleness in a way your child can understand.
- Create an adoption narrative with the child explaining their journey from foster care to adoption.
- With the youth, create a way to honor/remember their birth family on Adoption Day.



## Ultimately, You Have a Choice

**Jonathan Kent:** "You're not just anyone. One day, you're going to have to make a choice. You have to decide what kind of man you want to grow up to be. Whoever that man is, good character or bad, is going to change the world." *Quote from Man of Steel!*



**How many superheroes of adoption can you identify? Check your knowledge by playing these games.**

Go to <http://www.examiner.com/article/famous-people-throughout-history-that-have-been-adopted-part-1> for hints.

## Famous Adoptees Word Scramble

1. **South African President:** oenlsn edaelmn \_\_\_\_\_
2. **U.S. President:** libl oitnlcn \_\_\_\_\_
3. **Athlete:** gmaci hojonsn \_\_\_\_\_
4. **Producer:** nevset lpiesrgeb \_\_\_\_\_
5. **Inventor:** lwat eisynd \_\_\_\_\_
6. **Inventor:** ntseev bjsj \_\_\_\_\_

## November is Adoption Awareness Month and hosts National Adoption Day

"We must work tirelessly to make sure that every boy and girl in America who is up for adoption has a family waiting to reach him or her. This is a season of miracles, and perhaps there is no greater miracle than finding a loving home for a child who needs one."

-Adopted Child Bill Clinton, Former U.S. President

## Famous Adoptee Challenge:

1. Name the child actor famous for the line "what you talking 'bout Willis?"
2. This child actress was referred to as "half pint" by her TV dad.
3. This Blondie lead singer has a "Heart of Glass"
4. Country pop singer famous for "This Kiss".
5. This man created all of your favorite electronic "I" toys.
6. "I can never stand still, I must explore and experiment". This adoptee's creative genius birthed one of the most popular vacation spots in the world.
7. This adoptee married an American actor and politician. Her husband was 40th President of the United States. She is famous for the line "Just say no."
8. This actress and adoptive parent has played in, Maleficent and Kung Fu Panda. She is the mom to six children.
9. Author of the Adventures of Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn
10. This adoptee married the King of Rock and Roll.

Answers to Word Scramble :1.Nelson Mandela 2. Bill Clinton 3. Magic Johnson 4. Steven Spielberg 5. Walt Disney 6. Steven Jobs

Answers to Challenge: 1. Gary Coleman 2. Melissa Gilbert 3. Debra Harry 4. Faith Hill 5. Steve Jobs 6. Walt Disney 7. Nancy Reagan 8. Angelina Jolie 9. Mark Twain 10. Priscilla Presley

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## SPOTLIGHT ON ACRF ONLINE AUDIO SERIES SELF-STUDY

ACRF has a wide variety of self-study available online. We have been adding new self-studies to our Audio section monthly. Go to <http://www.acrf.org/resources-self-study-audio.php> to take any of the courses below.

### **Connecting While Correcting: Strategies to Work with Children with Attachment Difficulties and Behavior Challenges Series:**

- Session 1: Complex Trauma, Compassion and Keeping Calm (1.0 Hour)*
- Session 2: Empowering and Connecting Principles (1.0 Hour)*
- Session 3: Connecting vs. Distancing Methods (1.0 Hour available sometime in October)*

### **Trauma Informed Caregiving for Resource Families Series:**

- Session 1: Understanding Trauma's Effects (4 hours available if "My Child Exercise" and the Information Packets are completed).*
- Session 2: Building a Safe Place (3 hours available if "My Child Exercise" and the Information Packet are completed).*
- Session 3: Dealing with Feelings and Behaviors (3 hours available if "My Child Exercise" and the Information Packet are completed).*
- Session 4: Connections and Healing (3 hours available if "My Child Exercise" and the Information Packet are completed).*
- Session 5: Becoming an Advocate (3 hours available if "My Child Exercise" and the Information Packet are completed).*
- Session 6: Taking Care of Yourself (3 hours available if "My Child Exercise" and the Information Packet are completed).*

### **Special Education Series for Resource Families:**

- Session 1: The Basics of Special Education (2.0 Hours available if additional homework assignment is completed).*
- Session 2: Evaluation and Eligibility (2.0 Hours available if additional homework assignment is completed).*
- Session 3: The Individual Education Plan (2.0 Hours available if additional homework assignment is completed).*

### **Adoption Referral Webcast Series**

- Mental Health Issues in Adopted Children (1.0 Hour)*
- Attachment (1.0 Hour)*
- Race and Culture (1.0 Hour)*
- Self-Care for Caregivers Raising Challenging Children (1.0 Hour)*
- Talking to Your Child about Adoption (1.0 Hour)*