



Training Tracks

Quarterly Newsletter January, February & March 2008

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

NEW! **FINANCIAL GUIDE FOR NEWLY LICENSED FOSTER PARENTS IN ALASKA**

Navigating the world of foster care reimbursement, special request for funds, and Medicaid Coupons can be frustrating for newly licensed foster parents. The Alaska Center for Resource Families is putting together a financial guide that will highlight the basics of financial procedures through the Office of Children's Services and will be available in February. This guidebook covers the basics of foster care rates, what to do when your payment doesn't come, Medicaid coupons, child care and other issues related to financial support of foster parents. This handbook will be used in Core Training for Resource Families and can also be obtained by contacting your local Alaska Center for Resource Families office after February.

FEATURED ACRF SELF-STUDY COURSES

Some of the reasons children come into the foster care system are because of parental neglect, abuse, abandonment and sexual abuse. Neglect is the most common form of maltreatment reported in Alaska. Foster parents should have a good knowledge of how children are impacted by maltreatment, and the Alaska Center for Resource Families has developed a series of self-study and website trainings that can help you learn more.

Neglect: The Hole in the Middle *Web Based Course* (3.0 Hours) at www.acrf.org

Child Abuse and Neglect in the Young Child *Self-Study Course* (5.0 Hours)

The Physically Abused or Neglect Child in Foster Care *Self-Study Course* (3.0 Hours)

The Sexually Abused Child in Foster Care *Self-Study Course* (4.0 Hours)

Dealing with Sexually Acting Out Behavior in Foster Care *Self-Study Course* (4.0 Hours)

Domestic Violence and Its Impact on Children *Self-Study Course* (4.0 Hours)

Bonding and Attachment in Maltreated Children *Web Based Course* (3.0 Hours) at www.acrf.org

Reporting Child Abuse in Alaska *CD-Rom* (1.0 Hour)

To request any of the above self-studies, contact the ACRF at 1-800-478-7307. To take the web based Courses, go to www.acrf.org and click on the self-study tab to go to "On Line Courses."

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**If you live outside of these
local offices call toll-free
1-800-478-7307**

Self-Injury: What Resource Parents or Child Welfare Workers Should Know

By Michelle Rogers, M.A.

What is self-injury? Self-injury is generally defined as recurring self-inflicted injury that is not socially acceptable, is deliberate and non-lethal. Self injury is not tattooing or obtaining trendy piercings. These are seen as cool, sexy, or tough and are an attempt to fit with a group or rebel against their parents. With self-injury the child will cut, burn, or scratch themselves in an effort to deal with overwhelming emotions in an attempt to make themselves



feel better. Most of the time the self-injury will occur in secret and the teen will attempt to hide it from parents and friends. They will generally use razor blades, knives, broken glass, matches, lighters, cigarettes, erasers and other similar items. Even when these items are removed, they will find other objects to use in order to release their emotions.

Psychologists refer to this behavior as the Self-Harm Syndrome (Kahan & Pattison, 1984). It starts off with an incident that leads to a negative emotion, such as anger or hurt which leads to an irresistible impulse to harm themselves. The longer they are unable to go without hurting themselves, the stronger their emotions build up, and the more out of control they feel, until all they can think about is hurting themselves in order to release the emotion. Finally, they find a way to hurt themselves and they find relief. When the relief fades it is then replaced by shame and guilt over the behavior.

Although many parents automatically think that self-injury is the same as being suicidal, teenagers who self-injure are often offended at that idea because for them it is a coping mechanism that they use to get through the day. Most of the time those teens who deliberately self-harm know exactly where, and how deep to cut to avoid killing themselves. If they do push too far, they become scared and ask for help because they do not want to die. This is not to say that they are not at risk of suicidal behavior due to having similar risk factors or an inability to control their behavior.

There are myriad reasons why teens might turn to self-injury as a coping mechanism. They might use it to release tension or as a way to express anxiety. One teen said, "I walk around feeling so pent up. The minute I cut, it's like I can breathe again." Others might be depressed and feel like they deserve to be hurt or punished. They may also hurt themselves as a safe way to release anger. Rather than hurting someone else they would rather hurt themselves. In some cases, the cutting causes them to "zone out" and they are able to escape from reality and their worries. Other times the pain caused from cutting validates the pain

they are feeling in their own life. At the opposite end of the spectrum there are those who feel so numb on the inside that cutting helps them feel something. There are also those who feel their life is so out of control that cutting is the one thing they can control. Some teens use it as a way of communicating to family members or romantic partners when they feel hurt or rejected. Unfortunately, it often compounds the problem because the behavior pushes people away. A very small minority of teens may begin cutting for one of these reasons and then may continue to do it because of the attention they receive, whether positive in the form of extra nurturance or for the shock value.

What should you as a resource parent do when you discover that your child is engaging in cutting behaviors?

- ✓ Let the child's social worker know about the behavior.
- ✓ Realize that self-injury is a symptom of a larger problem and find a knowledgeable counselor for the child if they are not seeing one already.
- ✓ Do not give the child extra attention when they do cut. Rather give them the extra attention when they are not injuring themselves.
- ✓ Let them know that it is unacceptable behavior and you are concerned but do not show disgust or anger as this will trigger the negative emotions in the child which start the cycle of self-harm all over again.
- ✓ After an incident of self-injury, talk with the teen to find out what might have triggered the behavior. Help them, with the aid of a counselor, to find healthy coping mechanisms such as exercise, music, journaling or talking to friends or supportive adults.
- ✓ Do not focus exclusively on the cutting behavior but rather focus on "why" they cut.
- ✓ Do not threaten to punish the teen for cutting or use the stopping of the behavior as a condition for a reward for something else.
- ✓ Above all, don't give up!

Teenagers who cut have a lot of shame about the behavior and want to stop hurting themselves. Most teens who self-harm do not continue to hurt themselves as adults. After they have identified the triggers, obtained treatment for the underlying issues and learned healthy coping mechanisms, they are able to leave this behavior behind. ■

Information in this article was taken from a presentation by Lisa Boesky, Ph.D. at the International Conference on Violence, Abuse and Trauma in September 2007. For more information see www.drjisab.com.

Self-Injury: What Resource Parents or Child Welfare Workers Should Know

1.0 Hour Training Credit 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. If a teenager is engaging in self-harming behavior it means they are suicidal.

- ____ a. TRUE
- ____ b. FALSE

2. List three (3) items teens may use to harm themselves are

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____

3. A pierced nose or eyebrow is an example of self-harm.

- ____ a. TRUE
- ____ b. FALSE

4. Teens who self-injure see the behavior as a _____.

5. List three (3) reasons why teens might self-injure.

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____

Early & Periodic Screening Diagnostic & Treatment Program (EPSDT) What Resource Parents Need to Know

All children who are in the custody of the State of Alaska should be eligible for free health care, whether it is through Denali KidCare or Medicaid. In larger communities most children receive medical care and health evaluations (EPSDT) by a provider other than Public Health Nurses. In rural areas itinerant Public Health Nurses and Health Aides provide this service. The goal of EPSDT is to improve the health status of children by assuring provision of preventative services and follow-through care.

The EPSDT Exam should include:

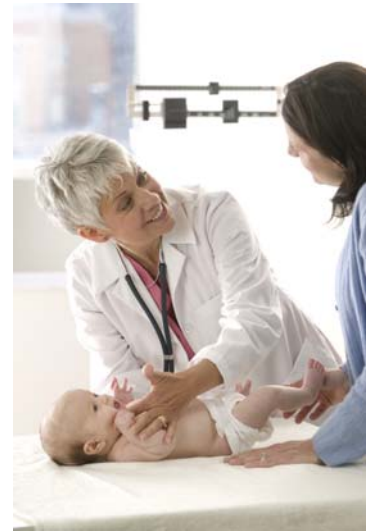


Photo courtesy of YKHC

- a health and developmental history; an unclothed physical examination, including a head-to-toe systemic review
- a dental screening and, beginning at age three or at an earlier age if medically necessary, referral to a dentist for a dental examination
- a vision screening and, beginning at age five or at an earlier age if medically necessary, referral to a vision care services provider for a vision examination
- a hearing screening and, if medically necessary, referral for diagnosis and treatment of defects in hearing
- a developmental assessment, including gross and fine motor development, communication skills or language development, self-help and self-care skills, and social-emotional development
- a review and administration of immunizations; a determination of nutritional status; health-related measurements, including height, weight, blood pressure, and other appropriate measures and indicators of health; hemoglobin or hematocrit testing at the ages of nine months, four years, eight years, and eighteen years unless more frequent testing is medically necessary; other tests and procedures that are age appropriate and medically necessary, including urinalysis, pap smears, and pelvic examinations
- a skin test for tuberculosis at the ages of one year, three years, five years, and 12 years
- a referral to the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program

This means there should be medical appointments:

- between birth and three weeks
- two months
- four months
- six months
- nine months
- 12 months
- 15 months
- 18 months
- 24 months
- Beginning at three years of age through six years of age, annual screenings
- Beginning at seven years of age through 20 years of age, biennial screenings



The schedule for dental examinations by a dentist is biannual examinations beginning at age 3, with earlier or more frequent examinations performed as medically necessary. The schedule for vision examinations by a vision care provider is an annual examination beginning at age five, with earlier or more frequent examinations performed as medically necessary. **Here is the important thing for Resource Parents to know:** make sure when you are scheduling the appointment that you let the provider know it is an EPSDT appointment. Even if the child is having a secondary problem, like an ear infection or cold, when the provider records the exam it needs to be recorded as an EPSDT appointment. An example, when scheduling, would be: I am calling to schedule a 12 month EPSDT appointment and I think Johnny may also have an ear infection. Notice of all Medicaid and Denali KidCare EPSDT appointments are forwarded to Public Health Nursing. You may be getting a call from Public Health asking you to take your child in for an EPSDT exam that has already occurred if the appointment was not recorded as an EPSDT appointment!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

ACRF services are made possible through a grant from the State of Alaska Office of Children's Services. Training/Support Groups are an opportunity for ADULT communication, partnership and empowerment, we cannot accommodate children. Auxiliary aids can be made available to persons with disabilities that are attending ACRF training. Please request these services at least 48 hours prior to training by calling 1-800-478-7307. Not all trainings listed are ACRF Trainings.

CORE TRAINING FOR RESOURCE FAMILIES – STATEWIDE

Core training is required for all new foster parents or for foster parents who have not taken this training. You must have had a home visit done before you can attend this required training. If you do not live in any of the following places call 1-800-478-7307 to receive a Core Workbook.

ANCHORAGE:

JANUARY 9TH – FEBRUARY 13TH This session will meet on Wednesday for 6 weeks, from 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm Trainer: Aileen McInnis.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 20TH: "ADOPTING THROUGH OCS": 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm. Trainers: Gail Stadig and Brenda Ursel.

FEBRUARY 21ST – MARCH 1ST This session will meet on Thursdays 2/21 and 2/28 from 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm and on Saturdays 2/23 and 3/1 from 9:00 am – 4:30 pm. Trainer: Tammy Keech.

THURSDAY, MARCH 6TH: "ADOPTING THROUGH OCS": 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm. Trainers: Gail Stadig and Brenda Ursel.

Anchorage Core held at the Office of Children's Services, 550 W 8th Avenue in Anchorage. Call ACRF at 279-1799 to pre-register.

FAIRBANKS:

FEBRUARY 7TH AND FEBRUARY 9TH This session will meet Thursday, 2/7 from 6:00 – 9:00 pm and Saturday, 2/9 from 9:00 am – 4:00 pm. Trainer: Susan Davis.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 12TH: "ADOPTING THROUGH OCS": 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm. Trainer: Bobby Redinius and Susan Davis

MARCH 25TH AND MARCH 29TH This session will meet Tuesday, 3/25 from 6:00 – 9:00 pm and Saturday, 3/29 from 9:00 am – 4:00 pm. Trainer: Susan Davis.

THURSDAY, APRIL 17TH: "ADOPTING THROUGH OCS": 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm. Trainer: Bobby Redinius and Susan Davis

Fairbanks Core held at ACRF, 815 Second Avenue, Suite 101. Call ACRF at 479-7307 to pre-register.

***Cold Weather Policy:** If the outside temperature is -40 or colder at the Fairbanks International Airport the training is cancelled.*

JUNEAU:

JANUARY 24TH AND JANUARY 26TH: This session will meet Thursday, 1/24 from 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm and Saturday, 1/26 from 9:00 am – 4:00 pm, Lunch provided on Saturday. Trainer: Michelle Rogers.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 29TH: "ADOPTING THROUGH OCS": 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm. Trainer: Karilee Pietz and Michelle Rogers.

MARCH 6TH AND MARCH 8TH: This session will meet Thursday, 3/6 from 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm and Saturday, 3/8 from 9:00 am – 4:00 pm, Lunch provided on Saturday. Trainer: Michelle Rogers.

TUESDAY, MARCH 11TH: "ADOPTING THROUGH OCS": 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm. Trainer: Karilee Pietz and Michelle Rogers.

Held at ACRF, 9109 Mendenhall Mall Road, Suite 6A in Juneau. Call ACRF at 790-4246 to pre-register or email Michelle at mrogers@nwresource.org.

MAT-SU:

JANUARY 17TH AND JANUARY 19TH This session will meet Thursday, 1/17 from 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm and Saturday, 1/19 from 9:00 am – 5:00 pm. This is a 10 hour version designed for relative care and child specific placements although it is open to all resource families. Trainer: Betsy Woodin.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 24TH: "ADOPTING THROUGH OCS": 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm.

These classes will be held in the MTA Building, downstairs conference room in Palmer. Call Betsy at 376-4678 or email bwoodin@nwresource.org to pre-register. YOU **MUST** PRE-REGISTER FOR THESE CLASSES AS LOCATION MAY BE CHANGED TO WASILLA IF NEEDED.

ANCHORAGE ACRF ON-SITE TRAINING

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 4: Noon – 1:30 pm	<u>THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN CARE – WHAT DO THEY NEED TO SUCCEED?</u> Trainer: Barb Dexter and Beth Snyder, Anchorage School District Child In Transition/Homeless Program. Held at ACRF, 840 K Street, Suite 101. Call 279-1799 for more information.
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9: 9:00 am – 5:00 pm	<u>DEALING WITH ANGRY AND AGGRESSIVE CHILDREN</u> Trainer: Aileen McInnis. Held at ACRF, 840 K Street, Suite 101.
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 20: Noon - 1:30 pm	<u>HANDLING ALLEGATIONS IN THE FOSTER HOME</u> Trainer: Phil Kaufman. Held at OCS, 550 W 8 th Avenue, first floor conference room. Call 279-1799 for more information
APRIL 24 and 25: Thursday: 9:00 am – 5:00 pm Friday: 9:00 am – 5:00 pm	<u>CONFERENCE FOR PARENTS RAISING TEENAGERS</u> Some of the topics will be Building Your Youth's Self-Esteem; Gang Violence; Truama and Adolescents; Supporting the Youth in the School, Master Hitchcock will be presenting: The Importance of the Resource Parent and the Youth Attending the Court Hearings. Co-Sponsored with Facing Foster Care in Alaska. Held in the new OCS conference room. Call 279-1799 for more information.
APRIL 25 and 26: Friday: 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm Saturday: 9:00 am – 5:00 pm	<u>STRENGTHENING FAMILIES THROUGH ADOPTION</u> Trainer: Brenda Ursel. Held at ACRF, 840 K Street, Suite 101. Call 279-1799 to register. Lunch will be on your own.

FAIRBANKS ACRF & COMMUNITY ON-SITE TRAINING

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16: 11:30 am – 1:30 pm	<u>WHY WELL CHILD CARE: RECOMMENDATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS</u> Presented by Lindy Henry, PHN. This training includes EPSDT INFORMATION. Held at ACRF, 815 Second Avenue, Suite 101. Call 479-7307 for questions.
THURSDAY, JANUARY 31: 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 2: 9:00 am – 4:00 pm	<u>STRENGTHENING FAMILIES THROUGH ADOPTION</u> Presented by Lisa Carr and Susan Davis. This training is for all families interested in adoption. It explores adoption issues including adoption basics, birthparent relationships, grief and loss in the adoption triad, attachment, talking to kids about adoption and transracial adoption. Held at ACRF, 815 Second Avenue, Suite 101. Pre-Register by calling 479-7307.
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6: 11:30 am – 1:30 pm	<u>PREVENTING ILLNESS IN YOUR HOME AND FAMILY</u> Presented by Sally Levengood, PHN. This training includes information on blood borne pathogens. Held at ACRF, 815 Second Avenue, Suite 101. Call 479-7307 for questions.
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 20: 11:30 am – 1:30 pm	<u>ARE YOU READY? PREPARING FOR A FLU EPIDEMIC AND OTHER DISASTERS</u> Presented by Susan O'Toole, PHN. Held at ACRF, 815 Second Avenue, Suite 101. Call 479-7307 for questions.
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12: 11:30 am – 1:30 pm	<u>FEEDING BABY IN THE FIRST 6 MONTHS</u> Presented by Joanne Spears, PHN and Laura Henspeter, PHN. Held at ACRF, 815 Second Avenue, Suite 101. Call 479-7307 for questions.
TUESDAY, APRIL 8: 11:30 am – 1:30 pm	<u>WHAT RESOURCES PARENTS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM</u> Presented by Nora Skow, NRO Independent Living Specialist. Held at ACRF, 815 Second Avenue, Suite 101. Call 479-7307 for questions.

JUNEAU ACRF ON-SITE TRAINING

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 20: 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm	<u>HOW TO REACH YOUR TEENAGER</u> Trainer: Kristina Weltzin, MSW. Kristina is currently the Mental Health Clinician for OCS and was formerly a Clinician for Juneau Youth Services. Held at ACRF, 9109 Mendenhall Mall Rd, Suite 6A. Pre-register by calling 790-4246 or email mrogers@nwresource.org .
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 23: 10:00 am – 4:00 pm	<u>THE EFFECTS OF TRAUMA ON CHILDREN</u> Trainer: Michelle Rogers. Held at ACRF, 9109 Mendenhall Mall Rd, Suite 6A. Pre-register by calling 790-4246 or email mrogers@nwresource.org . Lunch will be provided.
DATE TO BE ANNOUNCED: 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	<u>ATTACHMENT DISORDERS</u> Trainer: Sylvia Kidd, M.A., L.P.C. Do you have foster children in your home that have been in different placements? Does the child have difficulty with social relationships? Perhaps your foster child will go up to anyone and aren't afraid of strangers. Then this workshop may be for you. We know that early life experiences and multiple moves impact the ability to securely attach to others. Come and learn what influences attachment and ways you can improve your foster child's attachment. Held at ACRF, 9109 Mendenhall Mall Rd, Suite 6A. Pre-register by calling 790-4246 or email mrogers@nwresource.org .

MAT-SU ACRF ON-SITE & COMMUNITY TRAINING

You must pre-register to attend these classes as they will be cancelled without notice if no one pre-registers.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 8 TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 5 TUESDAY, MARCH 4 Noon – 1:00 pm	You are invited to attend an on-site training that will function as a Rural Teleconference as well, see Rural Teleconference Training and Support below for topics. Held at ACRF, 5050 Dunbar ST STE A2 in the back of Brentwood Plaza on Palmer-Wasilla HWY. Call Betsy at 376-4678 or email bwoodin@nwresource.org to pre-register or if you have any questions.
TUESDAY, JANUARY 8: 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm	<u>OCS FOSTER PARENT WORKSHOP: MEDICAL ISSUES</u> Held at the OCS Office in the Carr's Mall in Wasilla. Call Betsy at 376-4678 or email bwoodin@nwresource.org to pre-register.
MONDAY, JANUARY 14: Noon – 1:00 pm	<u>MANAGING AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR</u> Held at ACRF, 5050 Dunbar DR, Suite A2 in Wasilla. Call Betsy at 376-4678 or email bwoodin@nwresource.org to pre-register.
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 12: 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm	<u>OCS FOSTER PARENT WORKSHOP: CHILDCARE</u> Held at the OCS Office in the Carr's Mall in Wasilla. Call Betsy at 376-4678 or email bwoodin@nwresource.org to pre-register.
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 26: 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm	<u>CAR SEAT SAFETY</u> Held at ACRF, 5050 Dunbar DR, Suite A2 in Wasilla. Call Betsy at 376-4678 or email bwoodin@nwresource.org to pre-register.
THURSDAY, MARCH 6 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm SATURDAY, MARCH 8 9:00 am - 5:00 pm	<u>STRENGTHENING FAMILIES THROUGH ADOPTION</u> Explore adoption issues including birth parent relationships, attachment, talking to kids about adoption, transracial adoption and grief and loss. This class is for all pre and post adoptive families. Held in the MTA Building, downstairs conference room, in Palmer. Call Betsy at 376-4678 or email bwoodin@nwresource.org to pre-register.
TUESDAY, MARCH 11: 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm	<u>OCS FOSTER PARENT WORKSHOP: REUNIFICATION</u> Held at the OCS Office in the Carr's Mall in Wasilla. Call Betsy at 376-4678 or email bwoodin@nwresource.org to pre-register.

RURAL TELECONFERENCE TRAINING AND SUPPORT

ACRF offers monthly teleconference training and support (schedule follows) to anyone outside of Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau. Rural families may participate by dialing 1-800-478-7307 for the telephone number to call. If you phone in before the group leader, you will hear music, stay on the line! For more information contact bwoodin@nwresource.org or call 1-800-478-7307.

******NEW: If you live in WASILLA/PALMER you may attend the starred teleconferences at our onsite location at ACRF, 5050 Dunbar ST, STE A2 in the back of Brentwood Plaza on the Palmer-Wasilla HWY. For more information call Betsy at 376-4678.***

******TUESDAY, JANUARY 8TH from Noon – 1:00 pm: SUBSTANCE ABUSE***

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 9TH from 7:00 – 8:00 pm: FOCUS ON THE FAMILY

******TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 5TH from Noon – 1:00 pm: ATTACHMENT***

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 13TH from 7:00 – 8:00 pm: REUNIFICATION AND TRANSITION

******TUESDAY, MARCH 4TH from Noon – 1:00 pm: ADOPTION AND IDENTITY***

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12TH from 7:00 – 8:00 pm: DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES

Upcoming On-Line Self-Study Courses

Each month, we feature a new on-line training opportunity on our ACRF website under the "Self-Study" tab. The course may be a new ACRF original course, or a self-study currently in our catalog, or links to another web course that has been approved for foster parent training by ACRF. For complete instructions on how to earn credit visit www.acrf.org/education/featured.php. If you are currently not on our email list email acrf@nwresource.org to request our email notifications. For more information about any of these courses, contact Aileen McInnis in Anchorage at 279-1799 or toll-free 1-866-478-7307.

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2008:

Drugs of Abuse: What Every Parent Should Know (Worth 3.0 Hours)

MARCH/APRIL 2008:

Animal Cruelty (3.0 Hours)

MAY/JUNE 2008:

Emergency Preparedness Course for Foster Parents (3.0 Hours)



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

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