

Training Tracks

January, February and March 2009

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

ACRF OPENS TRIAL SERVICE IN FAIRBANKS

The Fairbanks Alaska Center for Resource Families is introducing a new trial service. The Family Support Specialist will be at the Office of Children's Services, 751 Old Richardson HWY., to provide individualized training and/or consultation for Resource Families on Mondays and Thursdays from 12:30 pm until 5:30 pm. They will be located on the second floor of the OCS office in a room across from room 204. It would help if you called and made an appointment but drop-ins are welcome.

Smoke Detector Reminder for Foster Parents!

The Alaska Division of Fire and Life Safety joins United States Fire Administrator Greg Cade in asking all residents in the nation to make sure that all homes have working smoke alarms. Eighteen Alaska residents lost their lives due to fire in 2008. The majority of these senseless deaths occurred in structures with no operating smoke alarms. Many of the structures had no smoke alarms installed and one had a smoke alarm that did not function. Many Alaskan's lived to see 2009 due to working smoke alarms in their homes. In 2008 fire departments around the state reported numerous cases in which families were alerted to a fire in the home by working smoke alarms allowing them time to escape without injury.

The Division of Fire and Life Safety offers a free monthly reminder by email to test your smoke alarms. This service is available by logging on to the Division of Fire and Life Safety's website <http://www.akburny.com/>, and under Quick Links click on Smoke Alarm Reminder. For more information, call Mahlon Greene at 907-746-5062 or email him at mahlon.green@alaska.gov.

ACRF OFFICE DIRECTORY Fairbanks ACRF Offices

Main Office: 815 Second Avenue, Suite 101
Fairbanks, AK 99701
Toll Free 1-800-478-7307
E-mail: acrf@nwresource.org

Trial Service: 751 Old Richardson HWY
Second floor across from Room 204
Open Mon & Tues 12:30-5:30pm
451-2010

Anchorage ACRF Office

840 K Street, Suite 101
Anchorage, AK 99501
Toll Free 1-866-478-7307
E-mail: acrfs@nwresource.org

Mat-Su ACRF Office

PO Box 876844
5050 Dunbar Street, Suite A2
Wasilla, AK 99687
376-4678
E-mail: acrfs@nwresource.org

Juneau ACRF Office

840 K Street, Suite 101
Anchorage, AK 99501
Toll Free 1-866-478-7307
E-mail: acrfs@nwresource.org

www.acrf.org

What Do You Know About the infection called MRSA? Get the Facts! And Get Our New Information Packet!

There's been an increase in requests about **MRSA** or **Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus** which is an infection inside of the body caused by bacteria. The Alaska Center for Resource Families has assembled an information packet on MRSA that features a booklet produced by the Tacoma/Pierce County Health Department in Washington State.

This new information packet will cover the following questions:

- What is MRSA?***
- Who can get MRSA?***
- What Does MRSA look like?***
- What to do to prevent MRSA from Spreading***
- How is MRSA Treated?***

To request the full information packet on MRSA, contact the ACRF office in your area. ACRF Office Directory listed on this page.

Mat-Su Training & Events

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 Betsy, at 376-4678 or call toll-free 1-800-478-7307.

Pre-Registration is Required for the following events by contacting 376-4678 or email Betsy at bwoodin@nwresource.org.

All training events on this page will be held at ACRF Mat-Su, 5050 Dunbar ST, STE A2 (off the Palmer/Wasilla HWY, Brentwood Plaza)

CORE TRAINING FOR RESOURCE FAMILIES:

Core training is required for all new foster parents or for foster parents who have not taken this training.

"Core Training for Relative Caregivers"-Saturday, January 17th from 9am-5pm

"Core Training for Resource Families"-Thursdays from 10am-1pm beginning March 26th through April 30th

ADOPTING THROUGH THE OFFICE OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES ORIENTATION:

Thursday, January 22nd from 6-9 pm

Thursday, May 7th from 10am-1pm

ACRF MAT-SU ON-SITE:

JANUARY 2009

Family Violence- Wednesday, January 28th Noon-1 pm

FEBRUARY 2009

Attachment- Tuesday, February 3rd Noon-1 pm

MARCH 2009

Working with Tribes- Tuesday, March 3rd Noon-1 pm

Strengthening Families through Adoption Part 1- Thursday, March 19th 6-9pm

Strengthening Families through Adoption Part 2- Saturday, March 21st 9am-5pm

Mat-Su News & Information

Adoption Wall of Fame

If you have recently finalized an adoption consider sending ACRF Mat-Su a picture of your adoption day or adoptive family with a few words of wisdom and encouragement for those still working through the process. Please send or email pictures to Betsy at bwoodin@nwresource.org.

HomeTown Hero

If there is a foster parent, adoptive family, social worker or individual who has gone above and beyond and helping your family, please tell us about it. Email a short paragraph about your "Hero" to Betsy at bwoodin@nwresource.org.

All above entries will be listed in our mini Mat-Su Newsletter.

Featured Web Training

ACRF features training you can do online. Go to our web page www.acrf.org and go to the bottom of the page to click on the Featured Course. Upcoming courses include:

JANUARY/FEBRUARY: Helping Your Foster Child Transition to Your Adopted Child (2.0 Hrs)

MARCH/APRIL: Understanding the Team Decision Making Meeting (1.0 Hr)

Fairbanks, Juneau and Rural Training

FAIRBANKS:

CORE TRAINING FOR RESOURCE FAMILIES:

Core training is required for all new foster parents or for foster parents who have not taken this training.

“Core Training for Relative Caregivers”-Saturday, March 14th from 9am-5pm

“Core Training for Resource Families”-Thursday, April 2nd from 6-9pm and Saturday, April 4th from 9am to 5pm.

ADOPTING THROUGH THE OFFICE OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES ORIENTATION:

JANUARY: Evening: 27th from 6-8 pm

FEBRUARY: Daytime: 10th from 11:30-1:30; Evening: 24th from 6-8pm

MARCH: Daytime: 10th from 11:30am-1:30pm; Evening: 24th from 6-8pm

FASD 101: Saturday, February 14th from 9am-1pm

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES THROUGH ADOPTION:

Thursday, February 26th from 6-9pm and Saturday, February 28th from 9am-5pm

Above training held at ACRF in Fairbanks: 815 Second Ave, STE 101

Pre-registration is REQUIRED please call 479-7307

COMMUNITY CARES CONFERENCE

April 22-23, 2009

8:30am-4:30pm

Carlson Convention Center

Watch for details

LIGHT OF HOPE CELEBRATION AND LUNCHEON

April 22, 2009

Noon-1:30pm

Carlson Convention Center



JUNEAU:

CORE TRAINING FOR RESOURCE FAMILIES:

Core training is required for all new foster parents or for foster parents who have not taken this training.

“Core Training for Resource Families”

Thursday, February 19th from 6-9pm and

Saturday, February 21st from 9am-5pm.

Juneau training held at ACRF in Juneau: 9109 Mendenhall Mall RD, STE 6A.

PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED please call 1-800-478-7307.

Juneau families are invited to attend our Rural Teleconference trainings until we hire a new Family Support Specialist/Trainer. Please see listing at the right

Rural ACRF TELECONFERENCE TRAINING

Tuesday, January 6th Noon-1pm:

- Culture and Connections

Wednesday, January 14th 7-8pm:

- Administering Medication

Tuesday, February 3rd, Noon-1pm

- Attachment

Wednesday, February 11th, 7-8pm

- Reunification and Transition

Tuesday, March 3rd, Noon-1pm

- Working with Tribes

Wednesday, March 4th, 7-8pm

- Infant Development

Tuesday, April 7th Noon-1pm

- Physical Abuse

Wednesday, April 8th, 7-8pm

- Child Sexual Abuse

Tuesday, May 5th, Noon -1pm

- Foster Parent Adoption

Wednesday, May 13th, 7-8pm

- Kinship Care

The monthly Rural Teleconference is intended for anyone living outside of Anchorage, Fairbanks, Wasilla, or Palmer although we can allow others to participate. Families may participate by dialing 1-866-348-8715 and when asked enter the code: 3721355#. If you phone in before the group leader you will hear music, please stay on the line. For more information contact bwoodin@nwresource.org or call 1-800-478-7307.

Watch for ACRF
On-site training
coming up this
spring in Ketchikan
and Sitka!

Self-Study Course:

Autism Spectrum Disorder: An Overview

Written by Deborah Hayes, M.Ed., and Susan Davis, MSW, Alaska Center for Resource Families

Autism is a pervasive developmental disorder appearing in the first three years of life. Autism is characterized by impairments in communication, language and reciprocal social interaction and by patterns of restricted and repetitive interests or behaviors. These behavioral indicators and problems are the result of a neurological disorder that affects the normal functioning of the brain, impacting development in the areas of social interaction and communication skills; typically there are difficulties and delays in verbal and non-verbal communication, social interactions, and leisure or play activities. Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a broader category characterized by the same set of core symptoms, with a lesser degree of severity, inclusive of pervasive developmental disorder, not otherwise specified and Asperger's Syndrome.

Autism is characterized by what is clinically described as "deficits in social reciprocity;" this may include a range of back-and-forth actions, such as gestures, sounds, play, attention, and conversation. As an example, when a mother looks into a child's eyes and speaks softly, that child would likely reciprocate the eye contact and also gesture with delight. Autistic children may appear blank or expressionless, gazing in other directions. Further, ritualistic and obsessive behaviors are often present and children with autism. They are often socially withdrawn and unable to engage in reciprocal play. For example, a child may insist on lining up objects rather than playing with them. They appear to be in their own world and unaware of other children around them.

In addition, a child with an Autism/ASD may have uncontrollable temper tantrums, an extreme resistance to change, and over- or under-sensitivity to sights and sounds. The signs may be obvious, or subtle: for example, a three year old child can read, but can't play peek-a-boo. Another child may never utter a spoken word, but rather uses pictures or signing to be understood. The symptoms are varied, but one thing is clear: the earlier a child is diagnosed and begins receiving services, the better the prognosis for the child.

Children with Autism are known to have larger head circumferences than their peers and can also have greater weights. They generally follow a normal physical sexual development path, however, the normal emergence of emotional changes and increasing sexual urges are often delayed. Since sexual knowledge and behavior are connected to social interactions, there is a need for specialized sex education for individuals with Autism.

Autism/ASD occurs along a continuum, therefore treatment approaches can vary greatly. Typically, clinicians utilize a combination of medication management and therapeutic interventions. Therapeutic interventions include speech and language therapy, behavior therapy, play therapy, cognitive behavioral therapy and social skills training. Since the condition is pervasive and continues throughout the life span, interventions focus on improving behavioral, social and cognitive functioning. Foster parents who care for children with Autism should work directly with the social worker in seeking medication management and therapeutic interventions for autistic children in their care, and should never give their consent for antipsychotic or psycho-stimulant medications. ■

This article is a very brief overview of Autism Spectrum Disorder. For additional information order our new "Autism Spectrum Disorders" self-study course by contacting the Alaska Center for Resource Families at 1-800-478-7307.

Autism Spectrum Disorder: An Overview

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. Autism is characterized by impairments in communication, _____, reciprocal social interaction and by patterns of restricted and repetitive interests or behaviors. (FILL IN THE BLANK.)
2. Social reciprocity may include a range of back and forth actions such as gestures, sounds plan, attention and _____.(FILL IN THE BLANK.)
3. Children with Autism may have uncontrollable _____.(FILL IN THE BLANK.)
4. Children with Autism may have an over or under sensitivity to _____ and _____.(FILL IN THE BLANK.)
5. Treatment of Autistic individuals varies. Typically, clinicians utilize a combination of medication management and _____ interventions. (FILL IN THE BLANK.)
6. Foster parents should never give their consent for antipsychotic or psycho-stimulant medications.
____ a. True
____ b. False

Adoption: First Steps to Finalization

A new handbook for pre-adoptive families

Are you in the process of adoption through the Office of Children's Services? Make sure you download and read "**Adoption: First Steps to Finalization**" which can be found at our website at: <http://www.acrf.org/adoption/services/FinalizationGuide.pdf>.

It is filled with lots of valuable information to help you through the process of adopting from the foster care system.

New Materials Available from the ACRF Library

The following new materials are available. Visit or call your local ACRF office in Anchorage at 279-1799 or email acrf@nwresource.org to order. Our Self-Study Catalog is also available online at www.acrf.org, if you do not have internet access call your local ACRF office or 1-800-478-7307 for your copy today!

DVD: *Grandparents Raising Grandchildren: You Are Not Alone!* (1.0 Hour)

DVD: *The New Face of Drugs* (1.0 Hour)

Information Packet: *Administering Medication to Foster Children* (1.0 Hour)

Information Packet: *Adoption: The Value of Adoption Subsidies: Helping Children Find Permanent Families* (1.0 Hour)

Information Packet: *Bullying and Children* (1.0 Hour)

Information Packet: *Cyber Bullying* (1.0 Hour)

Information Packet: *Head Lice* (1.0 Hour)

Information Packet: *Helping Children Cope with Disaster and Trauma* (1.0 Hour)

Information Packet: *MRSA* (1.0 Hour)

Self Study Course: *Autism Spectrum Disorder: An Overview* (1.0 Hour)

Self Study Course: *Rebuilding Children's Lives* (6.0 Hour Skill Course)

Self Study Course: *Understanding the Effects of Maltreatment on Brain Development* (1.0 Hour)

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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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