

TRAINING TRACKS

January-June 2018

Greetings from Alaska Center for Resource Families

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

UPDATE from the RESOURCE FAMILY ADVISORY BOARD



The Resource Family Advisory Board (RFAB) met in October face-to-face in Anchorage and faced a full agenda including meeting with OCS management, learning more from the assigned Alaska Assistant Attorney General for licensing about the process for investigating complaints against foster homes, and listening to an update from the Citizen's Review Panel. The Board brainstormed ideas to promote its six initiatives and wants to put emphasis on providing a channel of community between Alaska resource families and OCS management as well as provide input and change to provide more support to foster families who undergoing a licensing or CPS investigation. RFAB is also providing feedback to OCS regarding the upcoming Foster Parent Survey sent out by OCS.

The five initiatives of the RFAB include:

- 1) Establish a Bill of Rights for Resource Parents in Alaska (*Completed*)
- 2) Continue Starter Kits Project to Assist Resource Families with Emergency Placements (*Ongoing*)
- 3) Seek Resource Parent Feedback and Share with OCS Management (*Ongoing*)
- 4) Make Recommendations Regarding Licensed Foster Home Investigations (*Current Priority*)
- 5) Promote Regional Support Networks Amongst Resource Parents (*Current Project*)

The Board will be meeting face to face again in March in Juneau.

To communicate with the RFAB, email akresourcefamilyboard@yahoo.com or go to the RFAB Page at www.acrf.org → Support Tab and then choose Resource Family Advisory Board in the drop down menu. You'll see a link to RFAB members contact information.



REPORTING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT A reminder to licensed foster parents: You are a mandated reporter!

To protect children from abuse and neglect, *Alaska law (AS 47.17) requires certain persons to report suspected maltreatment of children.* Foster parents along with child care providers, teachers, social workers, doctors, law enforcement, school personnel, and health professionals are required to report. This means that if in the performance of your duties as a foster parent, you suspect a child has been abused (this also means the child placed in your foster home) you are mandated to report it to OCS. This include abuse that has happened in the past that has not yet been identified by OCS.

Foster parents should report any information they have of abuse of a child to the Office of Children's Services. A foster parent should report this information to the Intake Screener. Identify who you are or you can remain anonymous, state that you would like to make a report of harm. If the child is a foster child and has a social worker on the case let them know too. If you are not sure if it is worth reporting, report nonetheless!

Document your concerns in writing. If a child discloses abuse, write down the exact words they used. Memories often become faulty with time. Written records may also show patterns. Document when you make a report, who you talked to and what response you got. This helps if you need to follow up and document that you fulfilled your reporting responsibility.

If a child comes back from a visit and shows new signs of injury or **if you suspect that the child has been abused or molested after a visit, contact the OCS worker immediately!**

Any one in the community can report child abuse and neglect. In Alaska, there is statewide number to report abuse or neglect of a child. Call 1-800-478-4444 ReportChildAbuse@alaska.gov or Fax: 907-269-3939.

To Take Online Training on Reporting Child Abuse for Mandatory Reporters,
go to <http://training.dhss.alaska.gov/mandatoryreporter/training/>.

Don't forget to turn in your certificate to ACRF to receive training credit.

TOPIC: Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS)

December 2017

Micro Training Course Developed by
Kimberly Mouriquand, Alaska Center for Resource Families

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FOSTER PARENT TRAINING CREDIT:

**Read through this self-study.*

**Fill out the "CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING" Questionnaire*

**Return to ACRF for 1.0 hour of training credit.*

Neonatal abstinence syndrome, or NAS, is the name given to the symptoms an infant experiences when his body begins to withdrawal from a narcotic his mother used while pregnant. Almost every substance a mom ingests while pregnant can pass to her unborn baby. NAS is commonly associated with heroin or other opioid use, like prescription medications (oxycodone, Vicodin, Percocet, etc.), but can occur with other substance use as well. Other drugs whose withdrawal symptoms can be characterized as NAS include cocaine, methamphetamine, and ecstasy.

Withdrawal symptoms may present differently for each infant. Some babies experience symptoms hours after being born while others may have a much later onset, occurring several days after birth often after they have been discharged from the hospital. In addition, some babies might not experience withdrawal at all. Symptoms of withdrawal can last anywhere from several days to up to several months and doctors do not yet know why these unpredictable differences occur.

Withdrawal symptoms can include the following:

- High pitched cry
- Difficult to comfort
- Tremors or shaking, even while sleeping
- Seizures
- Tight muscle tone, especially in the neck and extremities
- Sneezing a lot
- Yawning a lot
- Sensitivity to touch, light, sounds
- Difficulty eating
- Excessive sucking
- Gastro-intestinal distress, like vomiting and diarrhea
- Fever or difficulty maintaining body temperature

How do we support an infant who has neonatal abstinence syndrome?

Depending on the severity of symptoms, some infants only require a short monitoring period in the hospital before they are able to be discharged. Others, however, may require continued observation and in some cases, medication assistance is used to help ease the withdrawal symptoms. In these cases, doctors administer methadone or morphine in small doses and slowly wean the baby from these drugs to decrease withdrawal symptoms. Foster parents who are identified at this early stage may be asked to visit or stay with an infant in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) to help comfort the baby.

Other things foster parents can do both while visiting in the NICU as well as at home include:

- ⓐ Keeping a quiet and calm environment. Babies with NAS don't have the ability to tune out external stimuli, so keeping lights dim, noises to a minimum, less visitors, and sometimes providing care with as little touch or movement as possible helps ease a baby's discomfort.
- ⓐ On demand feeding. Because of the poor sucking reflex, when babies with NAS are hungry, being able to feed them quickly so they do not become frustrated or tired and give up.
- ⓐ Skin to Skin holding, also called *Kangaroo Care*. Withdrawal makes it difficult for an infant to regulate his body temperature. Holding a baby close to your skin helps keep him warm. Researchers have also found it helps with deeper sleep, less crying, and weight gain.
- ⓐ Swaddling. Here are several short videos that demonstrate several ways to swaddle. <https://youtu.be/Pj1rhcqQz3Q>
- ⓐ Try the elevator rock. Hold the baby in an upright position and gently rock in an up and down motion (instead of side to side).
- ⓐ Try the crescent moon position or C position. Place the infant on his side, and gently tuck his chin towards his chest, arms should be forward and legs should be slightly bent and in the forward position. His back will have a slight curve like the letter C.

The NICU (Neo-Natal Intensive Care Unit) in the hospital is for newborns who need specialized treatment. Babies cared for in a NICU can be premature, born with an infection, stressed during the birth process, experiencing NAS, or born with a congenital anomaly. NICUs in Alaska include Providence, Regional, and ANMC in Anchorage, and Fairbanks Memorial in Fairbanks.

Myths around Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome

Myth: Babies are born addicted to the substance that mom ingested while pregnant.

- **Truth:** Doctors are quick to clarify, babies are not born addicted. They are born withdrawing from a substance they were exposed to. Addiction is deliberately seeking out a substance; a baby does not have the ability to seek out a substance.

Myth: Birth moms should stop using opioids when they find out they are pregnant so that the baby doesn't experience NAS upon birth.

- **Truth:** Abruptly stopping the use of an opioid can cause significant distress to a mom's body and potentially cause significant health issues for the unborn baby or loss of the pregnancy. Doctors recommend birth moms begin a methadone or buprenorphine maintenance program to decrease the risks of withdrawal symptoms, to keep birth mom away from unhealthy street drugs/lifestyle, and to encourage mothers to seek out prenatal care for their babies. Many doctors believe the withdrawal symptoms associated with NAS are less detrimental to the infant than the long term effects of premature birth, low birth weight, and poor or no prenatal care.

Myth: Birth moms should not be allowed to breast feed if their baby was born positive with an opioid.

- **Truth:** While each situation is different, most doctors recommend that birth moms who are part of a methadone maintenance program, breast feed their child. The benefits from breast feeding outweigh the risks associated with the small amounts of methadone/buprenorphine that can enter breast milk. Some doctors believe the small amounts may also decrease symptoms of NAS.

EARN 1.0 HOUR TRAINING CREDIT IF YOU READ...

Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome



If you went to www.acrf.org and watched the above entitled Tiny Training Byte 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 202, Fairbanks, AK 99701 or email to acrf@nwresource.org.

Name: _____

Provider#: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

1. Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome in the name given to the _____ an infant experiences when their body begins to _____ from a narcotic.
2. All babies who were exposed to a narcotic during pregnancy will suffer from NAS.
 a. TRUE
 b. FALSE
3. Which of the following are identical from the self-study as withdrawal symptoms (choose all that apply).
 a. Tremors
 b. High pitched cry
 c. Diarrhea
 d. Baby acne
 e. Sensitivity to touch
4. List two (2) ways from the self-study a foster parent can support an infant with NAS.
a) _____
b) _____
5. Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome means that a baby is born addicted to the drug their mom used while pregnant.
 a. TRUE
 b. FALSE



IRON DOG COUNTDOWN...FUN WITH KIDS TIPS!

ACRF has fun activity tips for you to do with your family go to www.acrf.org and click on Training Calendar → Across Alaska/ Teleconferences.

The fun tips start on January 15th!



Share photos of your winter time fun!

Tag ACRF in your photo/video for a chance to WIN a \$25 gift certificate!

All families are invited to participate and confidentiality of children is important to us, so please be aware when taking photos or videos for our photo contest.

<https://www.facebook.com/AKCenterforResourceFamilies/>
Use the hashtag #33irondogfamily



SPOTLIGHT ON CONFIDENTIALITY NEW ACRF SELF-STUDY:

As partners in the provision of child welfare services, foster parents are bound to protecting confidential information (7 AAC 50.130(d) and Alaska Statute 47.32.180.) This means that no information learned as a result of your work as foster parents is to be shared outside of that professional service, even if identities are “disguised.” Especially in small communities, it is fairly easy for community members to put the pieces of the puzzle together and identify the family or children. Casual conversations about client information with friends, other foster parents, and others not involved with direct services to the client are prohibited.

In light of our IRON DOG HASHTAG COMPETITION this quarter. We wanted to point out the importance of confidentiality. When it comes to the confidentiality demanded of foster parents, the challenges are huge and the restrictions are many. Foster parents are entrusted with confidential information about children in their care, this doesn't only include their personal information or situation it also includes pictures and videos on social media.

To learn more about confidentiality in foster care call us at 1-800-478-7307 to order the new self-study: *Kids Confidential: What Foster Parents Should Remember About Confidentiality (worth 1.0 hour)*. Or go to our website: www.acrf.org and click on the new written course under the self-study tab: *Secretes Revealed! Confidentiality in Foster Care (worth 1.5 hours training credit)*. Also available: *Understanding the Regulation Series: Confidentiality (worth 1.0 hour)*

Featured Online Teleconference/Audio Training:

How to Recognize Addictive Behaviors and Set Boundaries when Living with Heroin (1.0 hour credit)

Featured Online Tiny Training Bytes:

Boundaries and Touch in Foster Care (1.0 Hour)

The Power of Touch with Jane Anderson (.5 hour)

How to Set Quick Boundaries without Upsetting Your Children (.5 hour)

How Do I Handle Manipulation and Control (.5 hour)

Ask the Teacher Why and Felt Safety (.5 hour)

Health Touch Kids/Good Boundaries (.5 hour)

It's Tax Time!

Time to think about Taxes as we file for 2017! Foster and adoptive families always have a lot of questions about taxes this time of year. For the best answers for your particular situation, it is best to consult a tax professional or accountant, but here are two resources that might help you educate yourself about what is out there. First, there is a useful, concise overview on the web, type in the address bar: <https://www.acrf.org/assets/docs/Handouts%20for%20Teleconference/claiming-dependent-exemption-foster-care.pdf>



This form can help you determine if a child in your foster home is a qualifying child for an exemption. Remember that the OCS foster care reimbursement is not considered income for tax purposes.

Secondly, if you have adopted a child, you can learn about the most recent guidelines about claiming the adoption tax credit type in the address bar: <https://www.nacac.org/help/adoption-tax-credit/adoption-tax-credit-2017/>

FAIRBANKS AREA TRAINING CALENDAR

**Unless otherwise noted, All classes held at
ACRF, 815 Second AVE, STE 202
Call 479-7307 to register**

FEBRUARY:

Core Training for Resource Families: **Becoming a Healthy Family:** Feb 8, 15 & 22 from 6-9pm

Alaska Gatekeepers: **Suicide Prevention with QPR:** Feb 13 from 11am-12:30pm

Adopting through OCS: Feb 20 from 1:15-2:45pm

Little Buggers: **Lice and Bed Bug Prevention:** Feb 22 from 10-11am

Knowing Who You Are: Feb 26-27 from 8:30am-4:30pm (OCS Room 100)

Building Families through Adoption: Feb 27 & Mar 1 from 6-9pm and Mar 3 from 9am-3pm

MARCH:

SIDS Prevention for Caregivers: Mar 8 from 10-11am

Core Training for Resource Families: **Role of the Resource Family and Fostering Connections:** Mar 10 from 9am-4pm

Adopting through OCS: Mar 20 from 1:15-2:45pm

APRIL:

Fostering the Child with Medical Needs: Apr 13 from 9am-3pm (Location TBA)

Adopting through OCS: Apr 17 from 1:15-2:45pm

Child Immunizations: Apr 19 from 1-2pm

Building Families through Adoption: Apr 24-26 from 6-9pm and Apr 28 from 9am-3pm

MAY:

Core Training for Resource Families: **Becoming a Healthy Family:** May 3, 10 & 17 from 6-9pm

How Public Health Can be a Resource to Foster Families: May 12 from 10-11am

Adopting through OCS: May 15 from 1:15-2:45pm

JUNE:

Core Training for Resource Families: **Role of the Resource Family and Fostering Connections:** Jun 7 from 9am-4pm

Teen Sexual Health: Jun 7 from 1-2pm

**FOSTER
PALOZA**

DATES:

February 17 from 11am-12:30pm

March 17 from 11am-12:30pm

April 21 from 11am-12:30pm


May 19 from 11am-12:30pm

June 16 from 11am-12:30pm



**FAIRBANKS
CHILDREN'S
museum**

**Present your Foster
Parent Card to receive
\$3 Admission!**



Parent Play Group

*Group meets on Thursdays from 11am-1pm at
RCPC, 726 26th Avenue, Suite 2 in Fairbanks.
Call 456-2866 for more information.*

**NORTHERN REGION
OCS VACATION TRAVEL DEADLINE**

The following dates are vacation travel request deadlines for the 2018-2019 calendar year (this does not include visitation travel)

May 18, 2018 for Summer Travel
September 14, 2018 for Thanksgiving Travel
October 5, 2018 for Christmas Travel
January 4, 2019 for 2019 Spring Break Travel



STATEWIDE RURAL TELECONFERENCE TRAINING

The monthly Rural Teleconference is designed for anyone living outside of Anchorage, although anyone can participate. Family may participate by dialing 1-800-944-8766 and when asked enter the code: 26867#. If you phone in before the group leader you will hear music, please stay on the line.

Please call in 5 minutes early to give us your contact information so we can record your attendance, or stay on the line and speak to the facilitator after the teleconference ends. Check the www.acrf.org teleconference training calendar prior to the teleconference for posted handouts or PowerPoints.

FEB 20, 7-8pm:

QPR (Questions, Persuade, Refer) Basic Suicide Prevention Strategies for Everyone

Rachel Hanft, ACRF

FEB 21, Noon-1pm:

Dealing with Lice

Becca Watcher, Fairbanks Regional Public Health

MAR 6, 7-8pm:

Establishing Boundaries when you are a Relative Foster Parent

Betsy Woodin, ACRF

MAR 21, Noon-1pm:

5 Questions a Child asks when Moving into Permanency

Brenda Ursel, ACRF

APR 17, 7-8pm:

TBA

APR 25, Noon-1pm:

Investigation of Complaints or Allegations Against Foster Home

Providence Hospital Staff

MAY 16, Noon-1pm:

Understanding Extended Foster Care: Staying in Foster Care Until 21

Carla Burns, ILS, OCS

MAY 22, 7-8pm:

Negotiating Social Media and Teens: What Parents Need to Know

Kimberly Mouriquand, ACRF

MAT-SU TRAINING CALENDAR

Unless otherwise noted, Classes are held in the Brentwood Plaza, Suite A2
Pre-register by calling 376-4678

Core Training for Resource Families

March 13 & 15 from 6-9pm and March 17 from 9am-5pm *OR*

June 12 & 14 from 6-9pm and June 16 from 9am-5pm

Core Training for Relative Caregivers

February 20 & 22 from 9am-1pm *OR*

April 19, 24, & 26 from 6-9pm

Adopting through OCS

March 8 from 6-9pm

Thank You



MAT-SU THANK YOU'S FROM LAST QUARTER!

for your Kindness

Sunday November 12th Alaska Center for Resource Families, Office of Children's Services, Catholic Social Services, Denali Family Services, Beacon Hill, Safe Families, Heart Gallery of Alaska and others had information about foster care and adoption for Orphan Sunday at Church on the Rock in Wasilla. The event was well attended and there were lots of requests for additional information about foster care and adoption.

Thursday November 16th we celebrated National Adoption Day with 33 adoptions at the Palmer courthouse! 21 families adopted 33 children between the ages of 1 and 18. ACRF, OCS, the CASAs and GALs collaborated on a wonderful event thanks to generous donations from the community! Children received teddy bears and balloons from OCS, quilts from Valley Quilters' Guild or afghans from the Chugiak-Eagle River Senior Center Knit Witz, and special kid-sized pillows from the Pillows for Kids Foundation. Parents were given flowers and lovely gift bags. There were refreshments and activities for the families throughout the day as the adoption hearings were scheduled from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM. Thank you to everyone that helped make this a special day for our families!

Saturday November 18th ACRF, OCS, and CSS sponsored the Annual Adoption Celebration at North Bowl for the families that adopted in 2017. Over 60 people came plus 30 staff/volunteers were there to make sure they all had a wonderful time! We had a magician, a balloon artist, face painting, quilts and afghans, books, pizza and a gigantic chocolate cake. North Bowl gave us 6 lanes for 6 people for 2 hours so everyone got a chance to bowl. Thanks to ACRF, OCS, & Catholic Social Services staff, donations from the community and some of the most amazing volunteers around including the following families: Lackeys, Wordens, Lanes, Kimptons, Watsons, Websters, Hubbards, Bergamos, & Cayman.

These adoption events were supported with donations from the following people and organizations: Turkey Red, Dianne Olsen, JBER Spouses organization, Tara's Paint Night, Valley Arts and Crafts Guild, CASA, Pet Co, the Jockey Foundation, H2Oasis, Alaska SeaLife Center, Alaska Railroad, Moose's Tooth, & Shane Lamb.

Amazing Grace Academy is a Seventh-day Adventist K-12th grade school located in Palmer. Every year the students collect money to shop for holiday gifts for Mat-Su children in foster care. They bought \$1100 worth of toys, Target donated an additional \$250 gift card, in addition, we had several other local organizations that provided/collected/made holiday gifts these include: Mari Jo Parks and the Special Santa at Alaska Family Services; Pump Up the Kids; The Chugiak-Eagle River Senior Center Knit Witz donated beautiful handmade scarves, gloves, hats and afghans; Valley Business Machines on the PW Hwy; and Krazy Moose Sandwich Shop in Wasilla. Thanks to the generosity of our community. ACRF and OCS were able to support resource families and the children in their care for the holidays.



STATEWIDE: Let's Talk ICWA

FEBRUARY 1ST, 4-5PM

(Held, first Thursday of every month from 4-5pm)

This telephonic event is designed specifically for foster and pre-adoptive parents across Alaska to learn about ICWA (Indian Child Welfare Act) and to have a chance to get your questions answered. Led by April Stahl, OCS ICWA Specialist in the Anchorage Region, and Danielle Holt, GAL. Each session will start with a brief discussion of a specific topic related to ICWA and then be opened up for questions or concerns about what ICWA means and does in Alaska. Foster and pre-adoptive parents are encouraged to call in and participate.

TO PARTICIPATE: Call 1-800-944-8766 Participant Code: 22460#. You may hear silence or music before the teleconference begins. Resource parents can receive credit for attending.

To Pre-Register email amcinnis@nwresource.org or for information call 1-866-478-7307.

Co-Sponsored by the Office of Children's Services and ACRF

WATCH FOR MORE INFORMATION ON UPCOMING WESTERN REGION TRAINING:

KENAI: Out-of-Home Care Conference tentative dates: May 3rd and 4th

BETHEL: Out-of-Home Care Conference tentative dates: May 11th and 12th

Northwest Resource Associates
Alaska Center for Resource Families
815 Second Avenue Suite 202
Fairbanks, AK 99701

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Link your Fred Meyer Rewards Card to [Alaska Center for Resource Families](#) and you still earn reward points and ACRF receives a donation!

Shop at [smile.amazon.com](#) and when you choose [Northwest Resource Associates](#) as your charity, ACRF will earn while you shop, at no additional cost to you!



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