

# Resources For Families

Books and More  
Programs  
Legislation





*If you bungle raising your children, I don't think whatever else you do well matters much.*

*Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis,  
U.S. First Lady, 1961-1963*

# Books and More

## Books

- Thomas Armstrong, *In Their Own Way*. Jemery P. Tarcher, Inc.: Los Angeles, 1987. Strategies to help "underachievers" learn.
- Geoffrey Caine and Renate Nummela Caine, *Making Connections: Teaching and The Human Brain*. ASCD: Alexandria, VA, 1991. Implications of recent brain research for teaching and learning.
- Marian Diamond, *Enriching Heredity: The Impact of the Environment on the Anatomy of the Brain*. Free Press: New York, 1988. Diamond's research described.
- Howard Gardner, *The Unschooled Mind: How Children Think and How Schools Should Teach*. Basic Books: New York, 1991. Practical advice for school reformers.
- Jane Healy, *Your Child's Growing Mind*. Doubleday: New York, 1987. Age-specific learning activities.
- J. Pierce, *The Owner's Manual for the Brain: Everyday Applications from Mind-Brain Research*. Bard Productions: Austin, TX 1994. General application of neuropsychological research.
- Ronald Kotulak, *Inside the Brain: Revolutionary Discoveries of how the Mind Works*. Kansas City: Andrews and McMeel, 1996. How the brain develops, gets damaged, and heals itself.

## Phone

- Child Care Aware, 800-424-2246. Refers parents to licensed and accredited child care centers nationwide. Weekdays, 9 a.m.-5 p.m, Central Standard Time (CST).
- ChildHelp National Hotline 800-4-A-CHILD. 24-hour-a-day advice from counselors with graduate degrees.
- National Parent Information Network, 800-583-4135. Answers, at no charge, from the country's largest parenting database. Weekdays, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., CST.

## The Internet

- <http://www.youthtreeusa.com>  
Directory of youth programs and resources.
- <http://www.singleparents.org>  
Single Parents Association. An international, nonprofit organization.
- <http://www.iamyourchild.org/start.html>  
A national campaign to inform the public about the critical first few years of life.
- <http://www.familiesandwork.org>  
Site of the Families and Work Institute
- <http://www.glef.org>  
The George Lucas Foundation focuses on how children learn.
- <http://www.childabuse.org>  
The official Home Page of the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse.
- <http://www.naeyc.org/>  
Site of the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

- <http://www.babycenter.com>  
BabyCenter features articles, answers to questions, name finder, and more.
- <http://www.parenttime.com>  
ParentTime includes advice from experts and more, for children of different ages.
- <http://www.kidshealth.org>  
The Nemours Foundation provides information on children's health issues.
- <http://www.family.com>  
A magazine format, with articles, bulletin boards, and discussion groups.
- <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/children>  
Site of Harvard Center for Children's Health.
- <http://www.zerotothree.org>  
Site dedicated to healthy development of infants and toddlers.
- <http://ericps.ed.uiuc.edu/npin/>  
Information from the federally funded Educational Resource Information Center.
- <http://www.totalbabycare.com>  
This is the home of "House Calls," where noted pediatrician T. Berry Brazelton offers advice and answers questions.



# Programs

## Dena A Coy

The Dena A Coy Program is a voluntary residential substance abuse and mental health treatment program for pregnant women using alcohol or other drugs—or who previously used drugs and feel at risk of doing so again. It is part of the Southcentral Foundation and is funded by Indian Health Services and the State of Alaska.

The program offers individual treatment that includes education, support, counseling, and therapy. Women can be admitted anytime during their pregnancy. Six weeks after their babies are born, they transfer to an aftercare program providing case management and support as they return to the community.

Between June 1991 and January 1999, 148 infants were born to women in the program. Infants born through the program tend to be healthier than the women's previous children. Also, only 2 percent of those babies showed complications due to their mothers' alcohol or drug use, compared with a rate of 9.6 percent of fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS) among children previously born to the same women.

The Alaska Native Health Board has estimated that the lifetime cost of care for a child with FAS is \$1.4 million. So the Dena A Coy Program may have already saved Alaskans approximately \$9.8 million, by reducing the FAS rate among children born to women in the program from 9.6 percent to 2 percent.

*For more information on Dena A Coy, please call (907) 333-6677 or write to 3916 East 9<sup>th</sup> Ave., Anchorage, AK 99508.*

## Smart Start for Alaska's Children

Smart Start for Alaska's Children aims to help all Alaska's children grow up healthy and safe in strong families. Governor Tony Knowles proposed the program in 1997, and the Alaska Legislature approved it in 1998.

The program works by expanding or improving programs that have already been proven to help children. It is funded by a combination of \$31

million from federal Medicaid payments and \$1 million from Alaska's 1997 tobacco tax increase.

Of that \$32 million, \$7 million will be spent for health care for children and pregnant women who lack health coverage; \$11 million for programs to prevent family violence; and \$14 million to protect children from abuse.

By reducing child abuse and neglect and giving kids a healthy start in life, Smart Start better prepares children to succeed in school and in later life. And over the long run, Smart Start should save the state money—by reducing future costs for health care, welfare, and criminal justice.

*For more information on Smart Start, call 1-800-643-KIDS or e-mail [Mthomas@comregaf.state.ak.us](mailto:Mthomas@comregaf.state.ak.us)*

*If you want to volunteer to help Smart Start, call 1-907-465-3520, send an e-mail to [volunteer@gov.state.ak.us](mailto:volunteer@gov.state.ak.us) or visit the Web site <http://www.gov.state.ak.us/ltgov/volhome.htm>*

**To report child abuse and neglect in Alaska, call 1-800-478-4444.**

## Denali Kidcare

Denali KidCare is a new State of Alaska program to ensure that children, teenagers, and pregnant women have the health insurance they need—whether they are from families with working adults or without working adults. Coverage began for eligible applicants on March 1, 1999. Officials project that the program will be serving about 5,000 people by October 2000.

Under the program, qualifying children (under age 18) and pregnant women receive, at no cost, prevention and treatment services such as office calls, health checkups, vision exams and glasses, dental checkups, cleanings and fillings, and many others. Those who have existing coverage from another insurance provider may still be eligible for coverage through Denali KidCare. Teenagers who are 18 may be required to share some costs for services.

Denali KidCare is Alaska's version of Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), which was created by the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 and a Medicaid expansion. That Medicaid expansion was an integral part of the Smart Start proposal, also described on this page.

One incentive for participating in the CHIP/Medicaid expansion is that the state receives enhanced federal match money for Medicaid expenditures for implementing the program and providing coverage to additional children.

The estimated cost of the program for one year is about \$10 million in federal money and almost \$4 million in state funds. The state is also receiving a \$1 million grant through the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, to help ensure that eligible children are enrolled.

*For more information or an application, call 1-888-318-8890 (outside Anchorage) or 269-6529 (in Anchorage). You can also visit the Denali KidCare Web site at [www.hss.state.ak.us/dma/denali.htm](http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dma/denali.htm) Or you can write to the program at P.O. Box 240047, Anchorage, AK 99524-0047.*

## Focus on Prevention: Building Assets for Kids

*Helping Kids Succeed—Alaskan Style* is a new book developed by the Association of Alaska School Boards and several divisions of the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, including the Division of Public Health, Section of Maternal, Child, and Family Health; and the Division of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, Rural and Native Services.

Produced with funding from many Alaskan companies and organizations, this book describes 40 protective factors (or assets) that kids need to be successful.

The descriptions of assets are based on the model developed by the Search Institute, which studied students from seventh through twelfth grade nationwide. The institute's research spanned nine years and included more than 500,000 participants.



# Programs (continued)

The research divides assets into “external” and “internal” assets. External assets are those provided by the family, school, and community. Internal assets are the skills, values, and motivation within each child.

The Search Institute found that the more assets children have, the more likely they are to resist danger, maintain good health, help others, and succeed in school. Children with few assets (20 or fewer) are more likely to use alcohol and drugs, have more sexual relations, be more violent, have more problems in school, and be more likely to be depressed or attempt suicide.

A large portion of the Alaska assets book is dedicated to asset building ideas gathered in 114 communities across the state. Each asset explains what families, schools, community institutions, and community members can do to encourage asset growth in children. It also includes ideas that may be helpful for traditional Alaska Native communities.

*For more information or copies of the book (\$4 each, including shipping), get in touch with Derek Peterson by phone at (907) 586-1083, by e-mail [peterson@ptialaska.net](mailto:peterson@ptialaska.net), or by letter at Association of Alaska School Boards, 316 W. 11th Street, Juneau, AK 99801*

## Healthy Families Alaska

### Program Description

Healthy Families Alaska is a voluntary home visitation program aimed at reducing Alaska's high rates of child abuse. It's a program of the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, begun in 1995.

Program staff works with pregnant women and families with newborns who are under high stress from social isolation, alcohol or substance abuse, mental illness, unemployment, or other factors. As of mid-1998, the program had served nearly 500 families in 8 Alaska communities, at an estimated cost of about \$4,000 per family per year. Preventing abuse is much less expensive than placing children in foster homes.

The program uses methods proven effective in other states—including frequent visits, long-term assistance, limited caseloads for staff, and coordination with other services. As of early 1999, an evaluation of families participating in the program found:

- Of the families that had received visits from Healthy Families Alaska, 94 percent had no substantiated abuse and neglect.
- Of the families served in 1998, 31 percent were Alaska Native, 50 percent White, 7 percent Black, and 12 percent of unknown race.
- Of the primary care givers who enrolled in 1998 with concerns about domestic violence, 54 percent (or 120) had obtained support by February 1999.
- Of the primary caregivers who had not received their GEDs or high-school diplomas and were not enrolled in educational programs in 1998, 26 percent were either enrolled or had completed one of these programs by February 1999.

### Need for Program

Children living in homes with marital violence and substance abuse are at high risk of being abused. Children in homes where women are abused have a 40 to 60 percent chance of being physically abused also. The correlation is so high that professionals are beginning to recommend routine child abuse screening for children of battered women.<sup>1</sup>

A recent study concludes that substance abuse and addiction severely compromise or destroy the ability of parents to provide safe homes for children. But the study also found that treatment for substance-abusing parents can reduce child abuse and it is cost effective.<sup>2</sup>

But neither substance abuse nor domestic violence are easily resolved. Violence in the home tends to be cyclical. Women who depend financially on men who abuse them may stay in or return to dangerous situations—for them and their children.

Among those who abuse alcohol and drugs, denial, lack of motivation for seeking treatment, and lack of funding for treatment services are significant barriers to halting substance abuse. It's also common for people to relapse after treatment.

Professionals working with families with young children are in a good position to help find ways to stop domestic violence, substance abuse, and other family problems that contribute to child abuse. To do this important work, service providers must be knowledgeable about family circumstances, have skills that help motivate families to get help, and have the means to support families through relapses and recurring cycles of violence. Families also benefit from integrated family service and treatment systems.

Healthy Families Alaska programs can provide the help families and children need.

<sup>1</sup> *Family Violence Across the Lifespan: An Introduction*. O. Barnett and C.R. Miller-Perrin. Safe Publications, Inc.; 1997, page 143.

<sup>2</sup> *No Safe Haven: Children of Substance-Abusing Parents*. January 1999, The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, PRIMERICA Financial Services, Inc., and the Samuel M. Soref and Helene Soref Foundation.



# Legislation

Indicator	Effective Date of Law	Legislative Session	Bill ID	Title
Children in Danger	8/6/94	18	SB 45	An act relating to persons under 21 years of age; relating to programs for runaway minors; providing for designation of shelters for runaway minors; and relating to the detention and incarceration of minors
Children in Danger	8/8/95	19	SB 106	An act prohibiting minors from patronizing businesses that offer adult entertainment and prohibiting the employment of minors at businesses offering adult entertainment
Children in Danger	4/11/97	20	HB 45	An act relating to runaway and missing minors
Children in Danger	9/14/98	20	HB 375	An act relating to children-in-need-of-aid matters and proceedings relating to child abuse and neglect
Children in Danger	In Committee	20	HB 333	An act relating to the crime of endangering the welfare of minors
Early Childhood	6/18/98	20	SB 117	An act relating to an infant care curriculum in the public school system
✧ Early Childhood	SD 6-11-97	20	HCR	Relating to Alcohol-Related Birth Defects Awareness Week
✧ Economic Well-Being	7/31/97	20	SB 24	An act relating to a requirement that a parent, guardian, or custodian consent before certain minors receive abortions
✧ Economic Well-Being	In Committee	20	HB 372	An act placing limits on prescribing and providing a contraceptive drug or device to minors
✧ Health Risks	9/24/98	20	HB 189	An act relating to sale, gift, exchange, or distribution of tobacco and tobacco products to minors
Juvenile Justice	9/25/96	19	HB 2	An act providing for incarceration of certain nonviolent offenders in boot camps operated by the Department of Corrections
Juvenile Justice	7/7/98	20	SB 63	An act providing for automatic waiver of juvenile jurisdiction and prosecution of minors as adults for certain violations of laws by minors who use deadly weapons to commit offenses against persons
Juvenile Justice	9/15/98	20	HB 7	An act authorizing establishment of community dispute resolution centers to foster the resolution of disputes between juvenile offenders and their victims

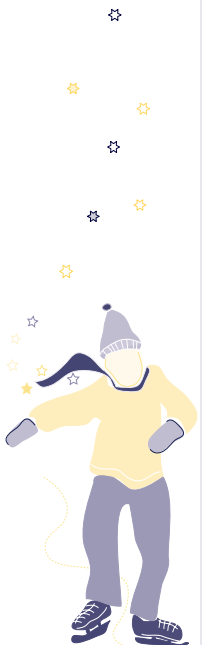




# Documentation of Indicators

Indicator	What Indicator Measures	Source	Years Available	Geographic Breakdown	Gender Breakdown	Race Breakdown	Age Breakdown
<b>Prenatal Care</b>	Share of mothers in Alaska receiving inadequate prenatal care	Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics	80-96	*	All years	All years	89-96 only
<b>Babies with Low Birth Weight</b>	Percentage of babies weighing less than 5.5 pounds at birth	Casey Foundation; Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics	80-96	*	All years	All years	89-96 only
<b>Infant Mortality</b>	Deaths among infants under age 1	Casey Foundation; Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics	77-96	*	All years	All years	All years
<b>Children Living in Poverty</b>	Children in families with incomes below the federal poverty threshold	Bureau of Vital Statistics; Applied Population Laboratories	80-96	Regional 80 and 90	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available
<b>Families Headed by Single Parents</b>	Percentage of families headed by single parents with children	Casey Foundation; U.S. Bureau of the Census	80-96	Regional 80 and 90	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available
<b>Births to Teens</b>	Births among teenage girls 15 to 19	Casey Foundation; Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics	80-97	*	All years	All years	89-97
<b>Students with Disabilities</b>	Children with disabilities in school and regular classrooms	Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education	1996	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not available
<b>High School Dropouts</b>	Teens (16-19) who are not in school and who have not graduated	Casey Foundation; Alaska Department of Education and Early Development	80-96	School Districts	80,90	80,90	80,90
<b>Teens Not in School and Not Working</b>	Teens (16-19) not in school and without jobs	Casey Foundation	80-96	Not Available	All years	All years	All years
<b>Child Death</b>	Deaths among children ages 1-14	Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics	77-96	*	All years	All years	89-96 only

\* Indicator is available for Kids Count regions, boroughs, and census areas—although sometimes census area figures are too small to be meaningful.



## Documentation of Indicators (continued)

Indicator	What Indicator Measures	Source	Years Available	Geographic Breakdown	Gender Breakdown	Race Breakdown	Age Breakdown
<b>Teen Violent Death</b>	Death from homicides, suicides, and accidents among teens 15-19	Casey Foundation; Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics	77-96	*	All years	All years	89-96 only
<b>Child Abuse and Neglect</b>	Reported and substantiated cases of child abuse and neglect among Alaska children under age 18	Alaska Division of Family and Youth Services	92-99	Not Available for Kids Count Regions	All years	All years	All years
<b>Juvenile Violent Crime</b>	Arrests for violent crimes among youths 10-17	Casey Foundation; U.S. Bureau of the Census	87-95	80 and 90, Anchorage, Fairbanks	87-95	88-95	Some age groups
<b>Juvenile Crime in Alaska</b>	Police referrals to juvenile corrections system	Alaska Divisions of Family and Youth Services and Juvenile Justice	92-99	*	All years	All years	All years
<b>Health Risks</b>	Prevalence of health risks among high-school and middle-school students	Youth Risk Behavior Survey; Alaska Division of Public Health, Section of Epidemiology	95	Not Available	95	95	By grades

\* Indicator is available for Kids Count regions, boroughs, and census areas-although sometimes census area figures are too small to be meaningful.

Note: The Alaska Department of Labor provided statewide and regional population figures that we used as the basis for calculating 5-year average rates of indicators for Alaska and regions.





*Nothing you do for children is ever wasted.  
They seem not to notice us . . . and  
they seldom offer thanks, but what we  
do for them is never wasted.*

*Garrison Keillor  
American writer*