Alaska Children’s Trust

Community Report

2015

START SMALL.
DREAM BIG.
Child development is at the core of community and economic development, as capable children become the foundation of a prosperous and sustainable society. Children have unlimited potential, if they grow up in safe, supportive and nurturing environments. However, this potential can greatly diminish when a child experiences trauma like abuse or neglect.

When we start small – when our children are young – our investments have a higher yield. And when we build resilience, we make it possible for our children to achieve their big dreams even in the face of adverse circumstances. Although Alaska has struggled for decades with some of the nation’s highest rates (per capita) of child maltreatment, Alaska Children’s Trust (ACT) has seen amazing signs of hope.

All across the state, more and more conversations are taking place at all levels about the impacts of trauma like child abuse and neglect, and strategies for building resilience in our children, families and communities. In communities like Homer and the Mat-Su Valley, community leaders have gathered to collectively tackle the issue of trauma and find ways to build resilience. A 26-member speaker’s bureau from six communities has trained nearly 2,000 individuals on brain architecture, impacts of trauma and building resilience. Effective programs, like the Nurse Parent Partnership home visiting program, have expanded. And ACT has invested in new pilot projects like the Triple P parenting program in Sitka.

ACT is committed to investing in sustainable and meaningful prevention efforts like these. Over the next several years, ACT will focus on four key areas: (1) programs focused on the prevention of child abuse and neglect; (2) collection of quality and reliable data; (3) building community capacity and advocacy; and (4) ensuring the values held by Alaskans promote safe, stable and nurturing environments for our children.

On behalf of the ACT board of directors, staff and volunteers, thank you for all your help and continued support. Together, we can make big dreams come true for all Alaska’s children.

Ramona Reeves
Board Chair

Trevor Storrs
Executive Director
OUR MISSION
The mission of the Alaska Children’s Trust is to improve the status of children in Alaska by generating funds and committing resources to eliminate child abuse and neglect.

OUR VALUES
Family focus
Effective solutions
Leveraging resources
Convene for solutions
Grassroots efforts
“Watching these people give back day after day really inspired me to do what I do.”
Jason Dolph’s father probably didn’t realize the impact he was having on his young son as he came home from the firehouse each night. But Jason was watching. He saw the satisfaction on his dad’s face – satisfaction that comes from knowing he had helped people and had made a difference. And Jason wanted that. So by the young age of 3, Jason knew what he wanted to do: be a firefighter, just like his dad. And while it wasn’t a short or easy road, Jason achieved his dream and is now a fire captain with the Anchorage Fire Department, setting an example for his own young family and making a positive difference for people in his community.

Learn more about Jason’s story – and small steps you can take to make a big difference – at alaskachildrenstrust.org.

Jason Dolph
Second Generation Firefighter
HOW TO BUILD A BRAIN

It all begins with brain architecture. The brain is the only organ that is not fully developed when we are born. Over the first three years of life, nearly 80 percent of our brain is developed. It is not until we are 25 that the brain is fully developed. This tells us that the experiences we have in the first years of life greatly impacts the architecture of the brain.

Brain architecture is built from the bottom up, with simple circuits and skills providing the scaffolding for more advanced circuits and skills over time. The quality of the architecture establishes the foundation for all of the development and behavior that follow. This concept is similar to building a house. Without a strong foundation, the sturdiness of the house will be greatly compromised.

The brain’s architecture is composed of social, emotional and cognitive strands that get woven together, strongly or weakly, to support subsequent development. What affects one affects all. By investing at the onset of life, our impact is likely to be more effective and less costly than trying to fix it later.

The process by which the brain gets built is much like the serve and return of a tennis game. When we exchange sounds, language, eye contact, facial expressions and gestures with a child, we are participating in serve and return behavior. These interactions are literally the building blocks of brain architecture.

What can derail the development of the brain? Frequent or prolonged stress – including child abuse and neglect – and the lack of adequate adult support can derail the development of the brain. But not all stress is bad. Stressors like when a child receives immunizations or encounters a new person for the first time are positive. It is usually short-term and buffered by supportive relationships with adults. In these instances, the brain and body recover from what might otherwise be damaging effects.

On the other hand, toxic stress literally gets built into the brain and the body, causing derailment of brain development. Society can work to prevent toxic stress by ensuring all children grow up in safe, stable and nurturing environments. These environments provide the buffer and resilience children need to grow into successful adults. To build better futures we need to build better brains.
Willie Hensley
Professor

We can all help the littlest Alaskans grow up to achieve their biggest dreams. For Willie, it was the family member who took him in and cared for him when his mother no longer could. For small steps you can take to make a big difference, visit alaskachildrenstrust.org.
“Students don’t always see they have potential. If you as an adult can see those characteristics and help to make them a little bit better, they’ll be successful.”
When Lakhita Banks’ 7th grade teacher encouraged her young student to enter an essay contest, she probably had no idea she was literally setting the course for Lakhita’s life. Lakhita went on to win that essay contest, beginning a lifelong love for reading and writing. Fast-forward to today and Lakhita, a BP Teacher of Excellence and an assistant principal, now shares that love of learning in her own classroom, inspiring a whole new generation of students.

Learn more about Lakhita’s story – and small steps you can take to make a big difference – at alaskachildrenstrust.org.
COMMUNITY INVESTMENTS

In the past year, ACT granted nearly $255,650 to organizations across Alaska to support efforts to prevent child abuse and neglect and strengthen families.

ALASKA RESILIENCY COACHES PROJECT ($20,000)
The Alaska Resiliency Initiative

The Alaska Resiliency Initiative is a partnership of nonprofit, private, tribal and government organizations that promotes community empowerment to support and respond to the needs of individual families and children. Their goal is to advance the dialogue in our state on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), toxic stress in childhood and how communities can prevent ACEs and build resilience. To build community awareness across the state, the Initiative partnered with ACE Interface to build a robust and knowledgeable speakers bureau across the state. Twenty-six individuals from six communities were trained.

ALASKA PARENT LINE/ALASKA 2-1-1 ($25,000)
United Way of Anchorage

Parenting a child brings so many joys – as well as many questions and challenges. ACT partnered with Alaska 2-1-1 to offer comprehensive support to anyone raising a child.

PICK CLICK GIVE ($12,500)
Alaska Community Foundation

Funding supported the statewide awareness and marketing campaign for the Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD) Charitable Contributions Program.

REPEAT MALTREATMENT RESEARCH ($10,000)
Institute of Social & Economic Research (ISER)

In the interest of identifying and helping resolve specific issues of concern related to child protection and safety in Alaska, ACT partnered with ISER to examine the level and types of repeat maltreatment within the Office of Children’s Services (OCS) system.

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM SUPPORT ($11,700)
Alaska Afterschool Network

Alaska Afterschool Network is a coalition of nonprofit, private, tribal and government organizations that promote high-quality afterschool programs as a critical component in the positive development of Alaska’s youth.
COMMUNITY-BASED CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MINI-GRA NTS ($176,450)

ACT recognizes there is no single solution to resolve the complex issue of child abuse and neglect. Communities need to be empowered to find their own solutions that lead to positive change. The goal of the mini-grant program is to support organizations and communities in their efforts to implement the Strengthening Families framework, reduce trauma like child abuse and neglect, and build resiliency.

**STATEWIDE**

**Media Outreach**
- Recover Alaska $2,500
- Lead On $1,000
- Spirit of Youth $1,000
- Raising of America Outreach thread $1,000
- Conference Sponsorship $1,000
- Foster Care Awareness Outreach $100
- Alaska Center for Resource Families $100
- Youth Summit $500
- Economic Summit thread $2,000

**SOUTHCENTRAL**

**Student Activities**
- Wasilla High School $600
- Interpersonal Violence Prevention Fair $750

**The Road to Resilience**
- CCS Early Learning $5,000
- Supporting Primary Prevention/Education $10,000
- Alaska CARES/Providence Health Services $10,000
- IMPACT Family Literacy $10,000
- Alaska Literacy Program $10,000
- Parenting Classes & Peer Events $9,900
- Alaska Youth and Family Network $10,000
- Safe Families for Children $10,000
- Beacon Hill $10,000
- Parenting With Love and Limits $7,500
- Co-Occurring Disorders Insti. $10,000

**Parenting Support Services**
- Cordova Family Resource Ctr. $10,000
- Passage House $5,000
- Covenant House $5,000
- Early Childhood Development Media Campaign $5,000
- Sprout Family Services $10,000
- Anchorage School District Child Abuse Prevention Awareness $10,000
- Standing Together Against Rape (STAR) $10,000

**SOUTHEAST**

**In-home Education & Support**
- Juneau Family Health and Birth Center $5,000
- Family Learning Center $5,000
- Southeast Regional Resource Center (SERRC) $10,000

**INTERIOR**

**Community-Based Education and Support**
- Resource Center for Parents and Children $10,000
- Child Mental Health Summit $10,000
- The Greater Fairbanks Community Hospital Foundation $10,000

**SOUTHWEST**

**Lifting Our Youth to Success**
- Old Harbor Alliance $10,000
- Strengthening Family Bonds $5,000
- Tundra Women’s Coalition $5,000

Nick Mazzolini
Pro Hockey Player

Sometimes it’s the smallest things that can make the biggest difference. For Nick, it was the family friend who first got him on skates, and his parents’ support despite their unfamiliarity with hockey. For small steps you can take to make a big difference, visit alaskachildrenstrust.org.
"When you tell a little kid that they are an artist, they believe it."
Apayo Moore didn’t consider herself an artist. But those around her recognized her talent and said, “We believe in you” – way before she believed in herself. One summer, when all she wanted to do was work in a coffee shop, community leaders came to her with a mural project. While she wasn’t sure she could do it, they gave her the supplies, the funds and, most importantly, the confidence to try. The result was a beautiful painting – and the start of a very successful career for the Dillingham artist. Today, Apayo is paying it forward by working on painting projects with youth, offering them the same encouragement and support that made such a big difference in her own life.

Learn more about Apayo’s story – and small steps you can take to make a big difference – at alaskachildrenstrust.org.
FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Investment Allocation by Purpose

- Growth: 57%
- Risk Reduction: 34%
- Inflation Protection: 9%

Statement of Investment Assets

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<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Growth</td>
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<td>Inflation Protection</td>
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<td>Risk Reduction</td>
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Statement of Investment Income Change

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<td>Gifts</td>
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<td>Realized Gains/Losses</td>
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<td>Unrealized Gains/Losses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Management/Custodial Fee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Invested Assets (8/31/2015)</td>
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The Alaska Community Foundation manages ACT's endowment.
MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Champion for Kids
We honored our 2015 Champion for Kids, Cynthia Erickson of Tanana, Alaska, at a special event in Fairbanks in August. Cynthia was instrumental in starting the Tanana 4-H club and founding the nonprofit youth group “Setsoo Yeh, My Grandma’s House,” which was created to battle youth suicide and encourage healthy activity.

Community support systems like these are an important factor in promoting resilience in children, and Cynthia has exemplified community support in all aspects of her life. While 4-H clubs have traditionally focused on leadership and life skills, Cynthia created hers to double as a safe space for Tanana children to discuss the harder aspects of village life, including child abuse. By refusing to stay silent about these issues, she has empowered her club members to utilize their own voices to bring awareness to these issues.

Cynthia is also very active in her community through her church, organizing healing ceremonies to deal with tragedies and opening up her home to youth who need a safe place. She is an incredible example of the power of community, and we are honored to recognize her as our 2015 Champion for Kids.

Jackie Purcell
KTUU Meteorologist

One small moment has the power to make a life-changing difference. For Jackie, it was the words of a classmate who inspired her career choice by saying, “You should try it. You’d be good.” For small steps you can take to make a big difference, visit alaskachildrenstrust.org.
Bad stuff happens to good people sometimes. We have to figure out how we continue on and live a normal, happy life."
When pro snowmachiner Paul Thacker lost the use of his legs in an accident, it didn’t take him long to get back on a sled again. He credits his strength and determination to the way he was raised – watching the example his parents set as hard workers and problem solvers. Now, the X Games medalist and world record distance jumper continues to ride and compete with some of the best athletes in the world. As for his injury, Paul says he wouldn’t trade it for anything because it gives him the opportunity to inspire others to overcome their own challenges and come out stronger on the other side.

Paul Thacker
Pro Snowmachiner

Learn more about Paul’s story – and small steps you can take to make a big difference – at alaskachildrenstrust.org.
We are deeply grateful to the individuals, organizations and businesses that support ACT’s mission to eliminate child abuse and neglect in Alaska.

$35,000 +
Charles Steward Mott Foundation
Rasmuson Foundation

$20,000 - $34,999
Anchorage Robert Burns Appreciation Society
Trevor McCabe

$10,000 - $19,999
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Sumitomo Metal Mining Pogo
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$5,000 - $9,999
Alaska Association for Community Education

Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority
BP Exploration
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Saltchuk Resources
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Alaska Community Share Bauer/Clifton Interiors
Heller Ehrman Attorneys Holland America
International Union of Operating Engineers Local 302
Old Harbor Native Corporation
Premera Blue Cross
Prevent Child Abuse America
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Jodee & Marcus Trivette
John & Dawn Walsh
Reecia Wilson

$500 - $999
Alaska Airlines
Alaska Laborers Political & Ed Com Local 942
ASEA/AFSCME Local 52 FNSB Chapter
Aurora Animal Clinic
Eielson Officers’ Spouses Club
Fairbanks Golden Heart Rotary Club
FBX Central Labor
Gillespie & Associates
Knauss Group
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Saltchuk
The Every Child Matters Education Fund
The Usibelli Foundation
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Bradley Cruz
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$250 - $499
Agnew::Beck Consulting
Alaska Oil and Gas Association
Anchorage Women’s Club
Anderson Group
Celestial Sweets Boutique
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Dewitt & Dewitt
First Alaskans
Jensen Yorba Lott
We account for, acknowledge and steward our donors from October 1, 2014 to September 30, 2015. Although every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, we acknowledge that errors may have occurred. If we have omitted, misplaced or misspelled your name, please contact Trevor Storrs at (907) 248-7676 or tstorrs@alaskachildrenstrust.org.

* ACT Board Member
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