

**Advisory Board on Alcoholism
and Drug Abuse**



Alaska Mental Health Board

ALASKA MENTAL HEALTH BOARD
ADVISORY BOARD ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG ABUSE
431 NORTH FRANKLIN STREET, SUITE 200
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801
(907) 465-8920

March 8, 2011

Representative Chris Tuck
Alaska State Capitol
Room 426
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Re: Support for HB 49, Parents as Teachers

Dear Representative Tuck,

On behalf of the Alaska Mental Health Board and Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, I express our support for the Parents as Teachers program and HB 69. The key to preventing the many individual, family, and community problems associated with mental health and substance use disorders is prevention and early intervention. Strengthening young families so that they raise strong and resilient children is an excellent form of prevention.

We support HB 49 because it would provide support to families as they raise their children and prepare them for academic success. Certified parent educators provide information and tools to parents to help them help their children reach their full potential. This program educates and empowers parents to engage with their children in everyday ways that will enhance their early development. It provides personalized family-oriented supports that help young parents provide a safe appropriate environment in which their children can grow. Parent educators can connect parents to appropriate community resources to help address risk factors for domestic violence and help parents learn healthy ways to communicate with their children and each other.

We appreciate your and your co-sponsors' work on behalf of Alaska's children, and encourage establishment of a Parents as Teachers program.

Sincerely,

J. Kate Burkhart
Executive Director

cc: Representative Kawasaki
Representative Gara
Representative Petersen
Representative Gruenberg
Representative Munoz



Upstream Learning - Copper River School District
P.O. Box 98, Glennallen, AK 99588
Ramona Henspeter, Contact Teacher
rhenspeter@crsd.k12.ak.us 907-822-8526

February 15, 2011

Senator Al Kookesh
State Capitol, Room 11
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Kookesh,

I am writing in support of the Parent as Teachers program. I have been familiar with the program for approximately 10 years, initially through my friend and neighbor, Jan Carlson, who is a long-time PAT parent educator in the Copper Valley and more recently a PAT trainer in Alaska. Jan is an extraordinary person, and any program she is affiliated with demonstrates 'quality' because of her involvement. I learned more about PAT when I was the Teacher/Director at Kluti-Kaah Head Start in Copper Center for two years (2007-2009), as both of our programs were administered by RurAL CAP in Anchorage. For the past two years I have been working as the teacher/coordinator of Upstream Learning, Copper River School District's home education program. Cynthia Buchanan, the Copper Center/Glennallen area PAT parent educator, has her office right across the hall from mine, so is my "neighbor". We share conversation, ideas, and even our space at times, and it's been fun to see her interacting with children and families as they sometimes drop in to visit during the week.

PAT and home-schooling share a common premise – that parents indeed are a child's first and most influential teachers. As a former home educator myself (I taught my own 3 children at home for 20 years), I believe in PAT's individualized, home-based support of parents. I am grateful that their program is well established in the Copper Valley, and I trust it will continue to thrive in this rural area of Alaska. Giving parents tools that will encourage and give them confidence in their very important role of training their young children is the primary purpose of PAT, and I am behind them 100%!

Thank you for learning more about PAT. I trust you will support funding requests that will give the program a firmer foundation for continuing their worthwhile service to Alaska's families in the future.

Sincerely,

Ramona Henspeter



P.O. Box 1045
302 Railway Avenue
Seward, Alaska 99664
Phone: 907.224.5257
Alaska toll free: 1.888.224.5257
Fax: 907.224.7081

February 22, 2011

Dear Representative Paul Seaton,

This letter is in support of RurAL CAP's Parents as Teachers (PAT) program to provide home-based services for families with children aged prenatal to five years old. Since the loss of our Head Start program, there continues to be a critical need in our community for an early childhood program that helps to build school readiness skills for our children and provides support for families, especially in the three to five year old populations. PAT's ability to work with families that are pregnant (particularly teen parents) has been such an asset to the community.

PAT, the Infant Learning Program, and Seward Community Library along with some funding from the Seward Community Foundation and the City of Seward collaborate together to provide a weekly play group for any family in Seward with children under the age of five. These groups offer an opportunity for parents to understand the growth and development of their children and to learn age-appropriate activities that they can do at home with their children to foster optimal development. PAT also provides health and developmental screenings of children, identifying children who may need additional support at an early age and makes appropriate referrals to our program as well as others in the community. I believe that RurAL CAP's PAT program provides families information and support that will be presented in a way that is appropriate for the variety of cultures in our area.

Not having the PAT program in Seward would be a great loss for this community. I would like to support the need for continued funding for PAT in Seward.

Sincerely,

Monica Luther
Infant Learning Program Coordinator



Soaring with Excellence!

Stacey Stansell, Principal

HC 60 Box 224

Copper Center, AK 99573

stacey.stansell@crsd.k12.ak.us

(907) 822-3870

(907) 822-3794 (fax)

Tuesday, February 16, 2011

To Sen. Al Kookesh and Rep. Alan Dick,

I am writing with great concern of the news that the funding for the "Parents as Teachers" program is being cut. As the principal in the small rural community of Kenny Lake, I am disappointed to know that this essential, early-developmental program is being taken from our families and toddlers.

"Parents as Teachers" has been a key piece for our school and community to reach out and come together, to help strengthen relationships with families, to get parents involved early in their children's education, and to help Pre-K students transition more smoothly into their first Kindergarten classroom setting. Parents bring their toddlers once a week to participating side-by-side in "Tot-Time" as well as visiting the K/1 classroom and participating in their "Circle-Time" for sharing and building friendships.

We have very limited resources out here and, realistically, we are around 35 miles away from the nearest Head Start facility. It's essentially the only weekly Pre-K experience that many of our toddlers have the benefit of attending. Research has proven that the earlier you have students involved in the education process, the more success you'll see in their future!

Thank you for your consideration in continuing this "Parents as Teachers" funding and continuing to help us increase student achievement here at Kenny Lake School.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Miss Stansell".

Miss Stansell
Principal

Excellence is the gradual result of always striving to do better.

8th March 2011

Dear Mr. Alan Dick,

I work for the Parent as Teachers program in Tok, Alaska. I also offer services to nearby villages such as Tanacross and Tetlin. This highly successful program has been implemented by RurALCap, the Rural Alaska Community Action program. Predominantly the population around Tok is Athabaskan and the program is very centered on traditional Athabaskan values that apply to raising a young child. There is little employment in the winter months and families rely on welfare and subsistence hunting to survive. As well as almost zero employment in the long winter there are also other problems with alcohol and substance abuse.

This vibrant program takes toys and activities to families in their own homes. I work with the parents to help them understand what the young child is learning, what to expect next and ways that they can enhance the development and positive interactions they have with the child. We have a strong literary component and I have been writing books in the Athabaskan language for our families to use. These have been well received and add another depth to the quality of our services.

My program is fully enrolled and I have a waiting list. Due to the high unemployment we have a high number of fathers attend the visits I conduct at in homes. Parents truly embrace the opportunity to learn more about their developing child and I can see them making life changing choices about their problems and perspective on life.

Fathers are stepping up to fulfill the parenting role so needed. My fathers are reading more to their children, getting involved in group activities and joining in with the sessions we have. This is a wonderful outcome for families in my region.

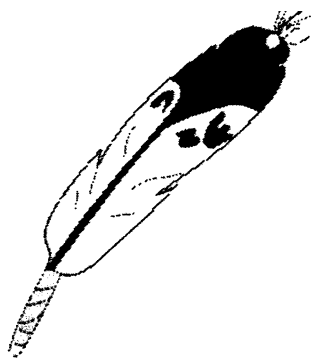
Not only fathers benefit, I see teenagers who are developing parenting skills, support a grandmother who is raising her small granddaughter, one of my younger mothers who is a convicted felon is changing her life around and volunteering in my program to clean toys. There are so many stories.

Please come to Tok/ Tanacross and Tetlin to see how my families are doing. I am sure you will see the wonderful benefits that I am seeing with the work I am doing to engage families of young children. Please support the vital work being carried out to assist all Alaskans in this remote area of the interior. Early childhood work is highly valued and well utilized in the Tok region of our state.

Yours sincerely

Jane Teague,

Parent Educator for Tok, Tanacross & Tetlin, PO Box 391 Tok AK 99780



Gerald Pickner
Principal Tukurngailnguq School
Box 129 Stebbins, Alaska 99671
Phone (907) 934-3021 Fax (907) 934-3031
gpickner@wbb.bssd.org

TO: Whom It May Concern
FROM: Gerald Pickner, Principal Stebbins School
DATE: 2/15/2011
RE: Parents as Teachers Program

It is my pleasure to be given an opportunity to show support for the Parents As Teachers program.

The program provides for a great deal of contact time with parents of our pre school age children and their parents. The work that they do in regards to the children of our community is developmentally appropriate activities and the support and direction they give to new parents is excellent.

Their efforts, to engage parents in the parenting process, is noted as a significant accomplishment. They have worked hand in hand with the school on several occasions to assist students that are about to have children prepare for the rigors of becoming a parent. Their effort in this regard has shown successes and continues to be a positive first steps approach to future parenting.

This program is needed in our village and is developing into a quality program more each day. I cannot speak highly enough of the program and the Tukurngailnguq School in Stebbins, Alaska is proud to be in partnership with the **"Parents As Teachers"** organization.

With Respect,

Gerald Pickner

"All of us working together for academic achievement to create respectful, lifelong learners and community members."

HYDABURG COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION



PO BOX 349
HYDABURG, ALASKA 99922
Phone: 907-285-3666, 3665, 3660 or 3662
Fax: 907-285-3541

February 23, 2011

Senator Al Kookesh
State Capitol, Room 11
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Senator Kookesh:

Hydaburg Cooperative Association would like to express our support for the PAT (Parents As Teachers) Program in Hydaburg, Alaska. This program has been very helpful and successful since there is no Head Start Program in Hydaburg. The students show how much they've learned at the end of their year and during programs for special occasions such as Thanksgiving/Hydaburg's Birthday.

The PAT Program has been a positive place for young children. The children are our future and deserve all the help they can be given. Your help to keep this program going will help greatly.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to call. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Doreen Witwer".

Doreen Witwer
Tribal Administrator

Kake City School District



P.O. Box 450
Kake, Alaska 99830
(907) 785-3741

To: Alaska State Legislatures

Fr: Corrina L. Guardipee ED. S. *CLG*
Superintendent

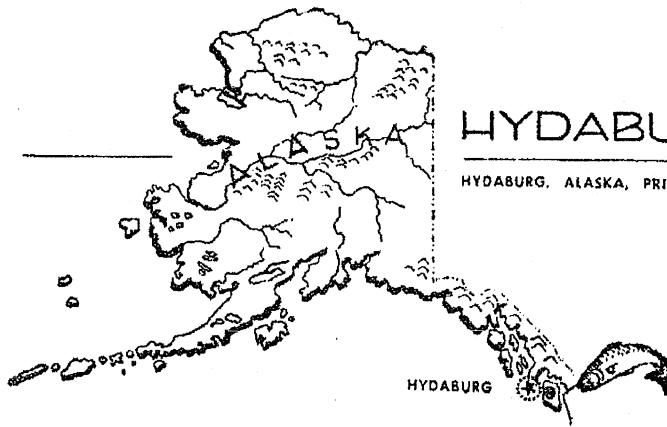
Re: Parents as teachers

Please accept this correspondence as a letter of support for future funding for the Parents as Teacher's program. In Kake, because of our high poverty we have a definite need to continue this program. The Parents as Teacher coordinator for the city of Kake has done an outstanding job educating parents in the importance of early childhood development. She has provided materials, specific outcomes for parents on recommended learning growth models and provides time for developmental games as well as giving parents real life examples for parents of meeting the needs of their children.

We have seen a difference in the student's academic achievement and are able to pin point individual student needs at an earlier age.

Again if there is anything you need from me for the support of this program don't hesitate to ask.

Kake City School District is an Equal Opportunity Employer



HYDABURG CITY SCHOOL

HYDABURG, ALASKA, PRINCE OF WALES ISLAND 99922

February 17, 2011

Dear Senator Albert Kookesh:

It is a pleasure to be writing a letter of support for the Parents As Teachers (PAT) program in Hydaburg. I have been involved with the program since its onset. It is an integral part of our community and an extremely valuable part of our educational system in Hydaburg.

Most of our families with children from birth through age five are comprised of parents who are themselves very young. The skills that the PAT program teaches these young parents are critical to the development of the children, the family, and ultimately, to the development of the community. We are in desperate need of the early childhood parent education and family support program designed to empower parents to give their children the best start in life that the PAT program offers us. This quality program, both center and home-based, promotes activities and opportunities to train children and their parents in the areas of speech/language, fine and gross motor, social/emotional and cognitive skills. This wonderful training has helped our children and our families to thrive!

The PAT program has a powerful relationship with the Hydaburg City School District, both at the local and administrative levels. It is an integral part of a three-way partnership including the Early Learning program, (ages birth to three). These relationships enable effective early detection of developmental delays, assessment, and individual educational program planning. The goals and objectives for our children with developmental delays are implemented collaboratively. Our children are well served with this program and their individual needs met. They gain the readiness skills necessary to transition into the kindergarten program successfully.

We are very appreciative of your support thus far and ask that you would continue to sustain this vital program in Hydaburg. Together we can continue "living, learning and growing together" to form strong children, families and community.

Most Sincerely,

Pamala Penrose
Special Education Coordinator
Hydaburg City School District

Emmonak School

100 School Road
Emmonak, AK 99581
(907) 949-1248
Fax: (907) 949-1148

February 18, 2011

Senator Donald Olson
State Capitol, Room 508
Juneau, Ak 99801

Dear Senator Olson,

The Emmonak School is an enthusiastic supporter of Rural Cap's Parents As Teachers Program. This project is aimed at providing services for families with children aged prenatal to three years old..

The PAT program helps build school readiness skills for our children and provides support for families. Since conception in 2003, Emmonak's PAT coordinator has been able to organize childrens' families and perform referrals to address domains that are delayed.

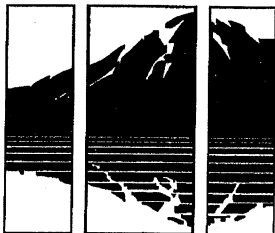
One of our schools main priorities is to prepare children for kindergarten with skills necessary for success. Research has proven (Kennewick School District, 2008) that children who are not at reading proficiency by the third grade will be challenged in school the remainder of their educational career. Students who are delayed in reading have a high correlation to "at risk behaviors" and high frequency of not completing high school.

Continued funding for this valuable program is highly recommended.

We look forward to collaborating on this project. Please contact us with any questions.



William Spratt, Instructional Leader



The Alaska Staff Development Network

Alaska Council of School Administrators
2204 Douglas Highway, Suite 100 • Douglas, Alaska 99824 • USA
Phone: (907) 364-3801 • Fax: (907) 364-3805

J. Kelly Tonsmeire, Director
Internet: asdn@ptialaska.net
Web Site: www.asdn.org

March 7, 2011

Representative Tuck
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol Bldg.
4th Floor, Room 426
Juneau, AK 99801

Greetings,

This letter is on behalf of the Alaska Staff Development Network, in support of establishing state funding and coordination for Parents As Teachers programs.

Alaska Staff Development Network provides professional development for teachers across the state. One of the major areas of need is positive behavioral and remediation support for children that enter school unprepared and with undeveloped social skills.

James Heckman, a Nobel Prize-winning economist from the University of Chicago makes the case that the most cost effective way to improve schools is to support early childhood programs in his February, 2011 report "*The American Family in Black and White*:"

Schools do little to reduce or enlarge the gaps in skills that are present when children enter school. Parenting matters, and the true measure of child advantage and disadvantage is the quality of parenting received. A growing fraction of American children across all race and ethnic groups is being raised in dysfunctional families.

Investment in the early lives of children in disadvantaged families will help close achievement gaps. America currently relies too much on schools and adolescent remediation strategies to solve problems that start in the preschool years. Policy should prevent rather than remediate. Voluntary, culturally sensitive support for parenting is a politically and economically palatable strategy that addresses problems common to all racial and ethnic groups.

We urge the Alaska State Legislature to invest in proven program such as Parents As Teachers to ensure more children are ready to succeed by the time they enter school.

Sincerely,

Kelly Tonsmeire, Director

"WORKING TOGETHER TO MAKE SCHOOLS BETTER"

AEYC

Association for the Education of
Young Children-Southeast Alaska
907.789.1235
888.785.1235
www.aeyc-sea.org

Juneau Public Health
3412 Glacier Hwy
465-3353

Communities in Schools
586-2806

Bartlett Beginnings
Bartlett Regional Hospital
907.796.8900
www.bartletthospital.org

Juneau Family Health & Birth Center
907.586.1203
www.juneaubirthcenter.org

Juneau School District
907.523-1704
www.jsd.k12.ak.us

Juneau Youth Services
907.789.7610
www.jys.org

AWARE.
907.586-6623
www.awareak.org

OCS—Office of Children's Services
907.465.1650
www.hss.state.ak.us/ocs/default.htm

REACH Infant Learning.
907.586.8228
www.reachak.org

SEARHC
Southeast Alaska Regional
Health Consortium
907.463.4040
www.searhc.org

SERRC
Southeast Regional
Resource Center
907.586.6806
www.serrc.org

T&H Central Council Headstart
907.463.7127
www.ccthita.org/headstart.html

United Way –Southeast
907.463.5530
www.unitedwayseak.org

USCG Work / Life Office
907.463.2225
<http://www.uscg.mil/D17/>



March 2, 2011

Representative Tuck,

This letter is in support of establishing funding and state coordination for existing and new Parents As Teachers programs in communities throughout Alaska.

Partnerships for Families and Children is a Best Beginnings Partnership. The coalition of over 16 organizations meets throughout the year to coordinate outreach to families, address gaps in services, and increase public awareness and support of young children and families.

We conducted a comprehensive needs assessment and strategic planning process to increase kindergarten readiness, strengthen families, and increase the healthy development of young children. One of the top priorities identified during this two year community wide process is to establish a Parents As Teachers option for Juneau families.

We strongly believe this "gold standard" heavily evaluated program will move us toward all three of our goals. The Parents As Teachers program is effective in increased school readiness, reducing stress and isolation in families, and connecting families to resources to support healthy development such as vision, hearing, and developmental screenings.

Thank you for your foresight and vision in supporting implementation of Parents As Teachers in Alaska.

Carolyn Garcia
Program Associate
Partnership for Families and Children

Mission Statement: Partnerships for families and children works collaboratively to promote shared broad-based community support for young children and their families.

3100 Channel Drive, Suite 215 ♦ Juneau, Alaska 99801 ♦ www.southeastfamilies.org ♦ 907.789.1235 ♦ juneaupartnships@gmail.com

March 2, 2011

Representative Tuck
Alaska State Legislature

March 2, 2011

Representative Tuck,

We have been talking about the need for a Parents as Teachers program in Juneau for over ten years. Though we are experienced grant writers, in order to start a program, there needs to be some level of sustainability beyond a two year foundation grant cycle that will then be looking to fund another new innovative project, rather than continuation funds for a proven program. Support from the State of Alaska would allow us to proceed with confidence in securing additional funds to administer a long term successful high impact program.

This letter is in support of establishing funding and state coordination for existing and new Parents as Teachers programs in communities throughout Alaska.

AEYC Southeast Alaska is part of the thread Child Care Resource and Referral Network, serving early care and learning programs and assisting parents in finding child care in order to work. We are also the lead agency in our Best Beginnings Partnership, and coordinate the Dolly Parton Imagination Library in Southeast Alaska.

AEYC Southeast Alaska offers parent education and family literacy events throughout the year, and we produce a monthly bulletin which is distributed to over 1,000 families with young children in Juneau. We have the structure in place to further engage parents in serving as the first and most important teachers for their children.

We were encouraged that the Alaska House of Representatives passed legislation last year to implement a Parents as Teachers program in Alaska, and appreciate your continued support in working toward this highly effective approach to strengthening families and promoting kindergarten readiness.

Joy Lyon, M.A.

Executive Director





Parents as Teachers

March 9, 2011

Dear Members of the Alaska State Legislature,

On behalf of the national office of Parents as Teachers, I would like to encourage you to support HB 49 which would establish a statewide network of Parents as Teachers programs throughout Alaska. HB 49 is a critical investment in the long-term benefits of the individuals and communities that you represent.

Parents as Teachers is a research-based, family support and parent education program serving families throughout pregnancy until their child enters kindergarten. Research has clearly shown that the early years of life are critical in a child's development and lay the foundation for success in school and in life. We believe that parents are their children's first and most important teachers.

Independent research shows that at age 3, Parents as Teachers children are more advanced in language, social development, problem solving and other cognitive abilities. Children who participate in Parents as Teachers score higher on kindergarten readiness tests and on standardized measures of reading, math and language in first through fourth grades. Furthermore, parents who participate in Parents as Teachers are more confident about their parenting and are more involved in their children's schooling...a key component of a child's success in school.

Few investments have the rate of return of early childhood programs and Parents as Teachers is critical to high-quality preschool programs. Please invest in your most important resource – Alaska's children and families by supporting HB 49. Thank you for the important work that you do. Please let me know of any other way that we can be of support.

Sincerely,

Susan S. Stepleton
President and CEO
Parents as Teachers
314-432-4330 x 279
sue.stepleton@parentsasteachers.org

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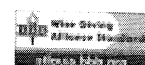
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Founding Director

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Our Vision: All children will learn, grow and develop to reach their full potential.

2228 Ball Drive St Louis MO 63146 p 314.432.4330 f 314.432.8963 www.ParentsAsTeachers.org





PO Box 22870 · Juneau, AK 99802
907.789.1235 · www.akaeyc.org

To lead, facilitate, and support the efforts of those working in the Early Care and Education profession throughout Alaska.

March 5, 2011

Representative Les Gara
Alaska State Capitol, Room 500
Juneau AK 99801

Greetings,

This letter is to inform the legislative body of the widespread support across the state to establish a voluntary Parents As Teachers home visiting program for families with children ages birth to kindergarten entry. Our membership represents nearly a thousand early childhood educators across the state, devoted to increasing the quality of early learning experiences for young children in order to prepare them for success in school and life.

Parents are their children's first and most influential teachers. Voluntary family visiting programs serving families with children prenatal up to kindergarten entry provide the information, support, and encouragement parents need to help their children develop optimally during the crucial early years of life. Such programs increase parent knowledge of early childhood development, improve parenting practices, promote early literacy experiences, provide early detection of developmental delays and health issues, and increase children's school readiness and school success. Through these preventative programs, future costs such as special education and remedial education, have been shown to be reduced.

- In Alaska, 40% of children entering kindergarten are not ready for school. Children who begin school behind rarely catch up later on and are less likely to graduate from high school, attend college, or acquire the skills necessary to obtain a job that pays a living wage.
- Alaska's graduation rate according to the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development is around 60%. The lack of school readiness at kindergarten leads to low graduation rates.
- The best outcomes for children occur when quality pre-kindergarten experiences include research based home visiting programs that involve parents.
- Families involved with home visitation programs such as Parents as Teachers are more involved in their children's later school experiences, leading to more positive outcomes for their children's education.

Establishment of such programs is an investment in the young children of Alaska and their families, with positive outcomes for years to come.

Gara Bridwell, M.A.
Alaska AEYC Chair



The Honorable Chris Tuck
House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 426
Juneau, AK. 99801

March 7, 2011

Dear Representative Tuck,

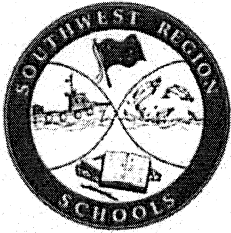
During our recent Legislative Fly-in, AASB members expressed unanimous support for additional state investment in early childhood development programs, including Parents As Teachers. Education leaders know that far too many children enter kindergarten lagging behind in skills necessary to be proficient in reading and math. And far too many of those children never catch up.

AASB believes that initiatives such as Parents As Teachers are essential to raising student achievement in Alaska school children without adding to the cost and size of government. Money invested in our youngest Alaskans is returned many times over again in improved earning power and lower rates of social problems.

I would like to thank you for your efforts on HB 49 and would encourage the Alaska Legislature to enact and fund this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Carl Rose
Executive Director



**Southwest
Region
School
District**

March 3, 2011

Representative Chris Tuck
State Capital Building, Room 426
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representative Tuck,

As members of the Southwest Region School District team, we are writing in support of the legislation in HB 49 supporting the Parents as Teachers program. This bill would support funding for Parents as Teachers programs in the communities that our school district serves.

P.O. Box 90
574 Kenny Wren Road
Dillingham, AK 99576

(907) 842-5287 • Phone
(907) 842-5428 • Fax

The district knows the importance of the development of young children's minds during the first few years of life and the priorities of the state need to support that development. The Parents as Teachers program has had a positive impact on the children in the communities of Southwest Region School District in previous years. The program increased the school readiness component of the children's early education, which had a positive effect on improving school success in later years and increasing parents' involvement in their child's education. This legislation would bring this program back to our communities and allow children to start school ready to learn.

We urge the state legislature to support this legislation. The investment of educational resources into the early years of children's lives and parental involvement will benefit those parents and children for a lifetime.

Cordially,

Aleknagik

Clark's Point

Ekwok

Koliganek

Manokotak

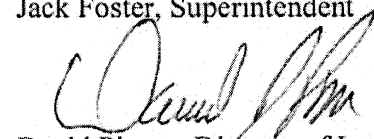
New Stuyahok

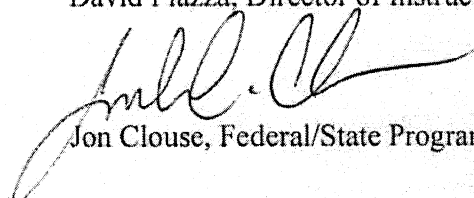
Portage Creek

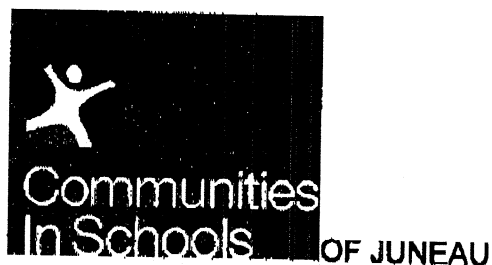
Togiak

Twin Hills


Jack Foster, Superintendent


David Piazza, Director of Instruction & Information Services


Jon Clouse, Federal/State Programs Director



Representative Chris Tuck
State Capitol Room 426
Juneau AK, 99801

March 7, 2011

Dear Representative Tuck:

This letter is written on behalf of the board for the Communities In Schools of Juneau in support of establishing state funding and coordination for Parents As Teachers programs. Communities In Schools of Juneau works to increase graduation rates of students, and reduce teenage drug and alcohol use. The State of Alaska can not afford to continue the high costs associated with high school drop outs.

Because our organization sees the value in early learning to leverage greater success for students, we devote considerable resources and attention to services that connect young children and families to literacy and health resources. We ask that the State of Alaska do the same. As a state, we need to reduce the heavy remediation costs, along with drug, alcohol treatment programs, crime, teen pregnancy, and learning disabilities. The solution lies in programs to strengthen families and help parents become engaged in their child's learning right from birth.

As Nobel Laureate Economist James Heckman states: "Voluntary, culturally sensitive support for parenting is a politically and economically palatable strategy that addresses problems common to all racial and ethnic groups."

The Parents As Teachers program has a proven track record. We urge the State of Alaska to invest in this effective program so children will be ready to succeed by the time they enter school.

Sincerely,


Elsa Demeksa, Executive Director
Communities In Schools, Juneau

Nancy J. Wells
P O Box 1814
Kodiak, Alaska 99615
907-487-2415
907-942-4600

March 9, 2011

Representative Chris Tuck
State Capitol Bldg. Room 426
Juneau, AK 99801
Fax: 907-465-3810

Re: HB 49 – Parents as Teachers Act

Dear Representative Tuck,

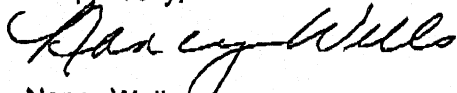
Thank you for recognizing that Alaska's children are our most valuable resource and once again sponsoring the Alaska Parents as Teachers (PAT) Act. PAT is a nationally recognized evidence based program which supports parents and families as they strive to enhance their child's development. PAT is a voluntary program, with families actively choosing to participate because they understand the significance of parenting. They want their child to have an early childhood that builds a secure and loving foundation from which to grow, learn and ultimately to be a well balanced and productive citizen. These children are the people who hold the future of our country in their tiny hands. It only makes sense to provide their parents with access to every valuable tool we can. Here in Kodiak the local PAT program is considered a valued resource. The number of families wanting to participate greatly exceeds the number of funded openings.

Nationally we have devoted countless amounts of time, energy and money into researching how the brains of infants and toddlers grow and develop. We know what they need and what we should be doing. We also have extensive documentation related to the costs of not doing or providing those things that infants and young children need. Unfortunately those costs are never aggregated. They are scattered across a broad range of programs, special education, mental health, juvenile justice, adult incarceration, substance abuse, unemployment, etc. These sums are truly astronomical in comparison to the cost of "early childhood" services.

I have spent the past 20 years of my life working with families whose children were born with conditions that cause developmental delays. Some things are like lightning strikes, unpreventable and a reality of life and we will always have a few children born with unpreventable developmental issues. As a state and as a country we do have limited resources. Fiscal reality means we need to think about our resources, what are they, and how do we prioritize them for the maximum long term outcome. I submit that our first, foremost and number one priority is our young children. We cannot afford to allow any child's potential to be limited or destroyed. I applaud you and your fellow legislators for recognizing that our future is our children and taking action to make Alaska's future secure.

I support HB 49. Please feel free to share this letter with your constituents, legislators and any others you choose.

Respectfully,


Nancy Wells

Dear Senators

It is important that the state of Alaska continue to fund the Parents as Teachers Program because our children is our future. Parents are childrens first teachers and this education to our children is important them and us. My child has been enjoying these visits and learning from these home visits.

Thank you
Shane & Tim
Stanislaus

2-22-11

Dear Senators:

We would like to hope that the State of Alaska would continue to fund the home visits with the Parents as Teachers Program because the children learn first at home and they are important to start early education. Our kids do learn from these vital first years of visits.

Thank you,

Mary T Damman

2-16-11

Dear Senators: ^{Mr.}Hoffman + ^{Mr.}Foster

My child has been enrolled in the PAT program since May 2010 and is enjoying the home visits here in Alakanuk. She has learned so much at home as well as me. Please continue to fund the Parents as Teachers Program here so that my child can continue to receive the visits that she likes.

Thank you,

Eleanor Phillip

Concetta Phillip

Feb. 10, 2011

Dear Senators,

Beginning in 2004 I've had my children enrolled in the Pat Program here in Alakanuk. With my oldest daughter, who is developmentally delayed, the program was very helpful. Also ~~my~~ I, myself have been in the program. My youngest child is now in the program and she loves it. She is learning more and likes to "go to school". I think this program is very helpful because it helped catch all the delays my daughter has and helped us get her the help she needed.

Please help fund the Alakanuk Pat Program for our future children.

Renal Black

February 10, 2011

Dear State Senators
Please help Fund the Alaskanuk parents As
teachers program which I have two children
En-rolled In and are learning at home to
give them a head Start in there early lifes.
My children enjoy the activites.

Janet H. Beans

I Jimmy D. Droane Sr. am a
Parent to two children, Keianne Carmine Droane
and Jimmy D. Droane Jr. We do not want
the Parents as teachers program to quit. Never
know if one of these kids become a
scientist or a leader for the great country of
United States of America. Having our children learn
things at a young age. So you who ever is
in charge think about the possibilities that
our children can do to change our country in the
future.

— Jimmy D. Droane Sr.
2/10/11

Dear State Senators

2-10-11

Please fund the Parents as Teachers
program here in ALAKANUK,

Since 2009 my son has been attending
PAT program and visit has been learning.
He has ^{been} ~~is~~ enjoying his group socials.

Ruth Swopold

February 23, 2011

From: Nellie Edmund, Teacher Director, PAT ON Site Supervisor Alakanuk Head Start

P.O. Box 189

Alakanuk, AK 99554 (907) 238-3917

To: State of Alaska Senators Hoffman and Foster M's

RE: Support Letter for PAT Program's Grant

This letter is to support the Parents as Teachers Program here in the village of Alakanuk. The children that are enrolled into the program are a lot more involved everyday at school which is a big change and we get different reactions from them that are enrolled compared to the peers that are not enrolled, there's an extensive knowledge in the home visit group. I would like to see the PAT program continue to be funded by the State of Alaska. This makes a big difference when they are better prepared to come to school and what to expect when they are at school.

Please continue to fund this program here in Alakanuk so that our children will be educated at the home and the parents will learn how better to help their child learn great new opportunities that are developed at the home.

They do a lot of work with the parents and children with a lot of activities that supports early educations and this is great. They do great in having the monthly group socials, the children and parents like the program and we would not like to lose this very important program that the Senators should support.

Thank you for your time,

Nellie Edmund

**Alakanuk Schools
Lower Yukon School District**

P. O. Box 9

Alakanuk, AK 99554

Phone: (907) 238-3312, Fax: (907) 238-3417

**Diane E. Reed
Instructional Leader**

**Keri St. Jeor
Asst. Instructional Leader**

February 21, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter as requested by Hilda Stern. I strongly believe in the program that Hilda is involved in. Here in our village we have young ladies who find themselves pregnant and ready to take on parenthood without very much support or education as to how they can effectively parent this new baby. That is where this program comes in, offering support in the way of advice, education, as well as other types of help. Please understand that in a somewhat isolated location, this program is often the only way to give young parents any help. Without financial support his program will have to be discontinued. That would be a shame.

By acquiring stronger parenting skills, these young people will better be able to have children that will be contributing citizens of the community. Please support this program ensuring that Alakanuk's young parents will continue to have this support in their lives.

Sincerely,

Diane Reed



February 23, 2011

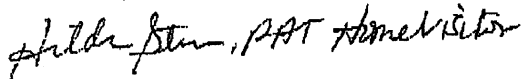
Dear Senators of this great State of Alaska: Neal and Hoffman

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you first of all for supporting the state of Alaska with your time and commitment in your duties in the Office of the Senate. I am the Home Visitor for the Parents as Teachers Program for Rural CAP in Anchorage, Alaska. I really do enjoy my job as it entails many hats to wear such as social service work, educator, advisor, listener, companionship, friend in need. In this line of work we service prenatal to three years of age and provide age appropriate activities to bring to the home and helpful handouts that the parents can learn through information about what is going on in the brain at this critical time in their early lives, where the 'window of opportunity' is open to receive vital educational handouts that will form and stay with the child as he/she is learning from the important activities that is done with each child and parents that are age appropriate. I serve 24 families in the village of Alakanuk and the families that are served are very grateful of this program and many have learned information that otherwise would not have known about like when their newborn is first able to see, write, walk, run, preparation to write, stimulation of the brain, memory skills, fine motor and gross motor development, language and social-emotional development. This program also offers at least one group social a month to where all children and their families can come and have a snack or dinner do an activity, and they get to see where other children are at, how their child can play with other children their age, and share information about resources that are working for them and what isn't working. We also assist in the process of preparation for Head Start (or Preschool). With PAT we do screenings for development in vision, hearing, and for any delays that the child may have. With this in place we work with Family Infant Toddler Program in referrals so that the child can get the extra help that they may need in the future. We also supervise the Reading is Fundamental book distribution which the children so love to get their own books which are hard to get out here in the rural delta villages because it is very expensive to live out here and are just surviving on the basic necessities. Resources are gathered into one and offered to the families that do request of it whether it be educational, training, crisis, immunization support, transition, health, home, etc.

So with all this information it is our hope that many parents do share in this village and state that you will help to support the continuance of funding this program for our families that we would love to continue to serve. Many that are enrolled really do love this program and would like to see it continually happen for years to come because education really does start at home with the parents and they are learning how to better educate their child so they too can become a leader as well.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Hilda Stern, Parents as Teachers, Home Visitor-P.O. Box 189 Alakanuk, AK 99554 (907)238-3918



2-23-11

Dear State of Alaska Senators:

my children (2) ~~to~~ are enrolled in the parents as teachers program and was able to detect early interventions and ~~to~~ were able to get the help that one child would need to see a delay developmentally. I would like to continue the program in Alaska since ever expecting another child and will enroll into the program. Please help to continue to fund in the State of Alaska. I just hope they keep it going.

Thank you,

Eric Kozel

February-15-2011

Senator Bettye Davis
To whom it may concern:

I have been involved in the Rural Cap Parents As Teachers' Program for 3 years now. I have been with the program all this time, because I have received the help and the needed tools to work with my daughters. I have been enabled to make them ready to go to school, the material provided by the program is very useful, as well as the help received. I really like the kind attention my daughters and I have received from Sara.

Branda Fragoso
participant.

February 15, 2011

Senator Bettye Davis
To: Who may concern.

I been enroll at Parents as Teachers
at Rural Cap 2 program year. I like
the ideas of this program because
all the activities have to do with
materials that are not expensive.
They always bring books that
are amazing to read to my child.
This program helps me to know
my child's development and offer
ideas of things I can do at home
with her.

Darcy Camarena

To: Representative Mia Costello
State Capitol Room 412
Juneau, Alaska 99801

From: Beverly Johnson, Parents as Teachers Parent
3500 West 80th Avenue, Apt #3
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Date: February 22, 2011

Re: Support for Rural Cap's Parents As Teacher (PAT) Program

Hello. My name is Beverly Johnson. I am a Parents As Teachers (PAT) parent. I am writing this letter to support the Rural Cap's PAT program and am asking for your support of the PAT program as well.

I am a single parent on unemployment and public assistance. I have a 2 year old daughter enrolled in the PAT program. My daughter has medical issues, which prevents me from working at this time. I go to the food bank several times a month, just to make ends meet.

Every parent wants the best for their child, and wants to provide the best opportunities for them. Rural Cap's PAT program is an invaluable community resource that has helped my family and my daughter. PAT program has provided me with information, encouragement and support to better my daughter's learning environment.

Our PAT family visitor has provided me with easy and inexpensive developmentally-appropriate teaching activities to do with my child. The PAT family visitor also assessed what my daughter knows and tailored these teaching activities so that my daughter can be challenged a little. Our family visitor has provided me with examples of how I can make teachable moments in my everyday life. As a single low-income parent, I am often more worried about putting food on the table and paying the bills than my

daughter's learning environment. The PAT family visitor makes my task of teaching my child much easier as she gives me examples of how I can show my daughter new concepts and activities.

Our family visitor is very knowledgeable and resourceful. My family has benefited many times when she gave me information about other community resources, such as Denali Kid Care's Early Screening program and other pamphlets on parenting workshops. Each time our family visitor comes to our home, she provides me with information on helpful community resources that I am usually un-aware of.

I know that many low-income families have much more things, such as finances, to worry about than their child's early years of development and learning. The Rural Cap's PAT program is an invaluable asset to these families and to our community. The PAT program helps parents and their children, by providing encouragement and support to people who otherwise would probably would not value or do these learning activities.

So, please, I am asking you to support the Rural Cap's PAT program. It is a huge asset and powerful resource for my family, our community and will make a difference in the future of many disadvantaged children. Thank you for your time and support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Beverly Johnson".

Beverly Johnson

Representative Chris Tuck

State Capitol Building
4th Floor, Room 426
Juneau, AK 99801
Phone: (907) 465-2095

Dear Representative Chris Tuck,

I am writing to ask you to support continued funding for the RurAL CAP Parents as Teachers (PAT) Program. My daughters and I are participants in the Anchorage PAT Program and I want to share with you some of the ways the program has impacted our lives.

Our PAT Family Visitor provides home visits every other week. At each visit she shares information on brain development and how I can foster the growth and development of my daughters. We always learn a new activity that is specific to each of my daughters and their individual milestones. Each visit also includes a book or literacy activity and often we get a book to keep and add to our own collection. We enjoy each visit and the fun activities our PAT Family Visitor shares with us.

The PAT Program holds group socializations every month. These provide opportunities for children and parents to get together, play, learn something new and have fun! We especially enjoyed a group social that was held at our public library. We learned about all of the activities the library provides for young children and were encouraged to sign up for a library card if we didn't already have one.

Our PAT Family Visitor offers me resources and a chance to discuss any concerns I have about my daughters development. I appreciate the opportunity to ask questions and learn new things in my home; having two young doesn't always lend itself well to getting out in the community to participate in similar activities.

The PAT Program has taught me that I am my daughters first and best teacher. My oldest daughter was born 10 weeks premature and is flourishing; I am certain that our participation in the PAT Program has given her an advantage and has given me the tools and resources I need to better support her growth and development. The PAT Program has empowered me to be an advocate for both of my daughters.

I hope that you will share this with your colleagues and please encourage them to also support funding for the RurAL CAP PAT Program.

Sincerely,

Alicia Notti

RurAL CAP PAT Parent

2-23-11

My son Sheldon was enrolled into the PAT Program since September of 2007. Betty was his PAT Family Visitor from 2007 until he transitioned into the Cheval Head Start this school year. I

think that having Sheldon involved in the PAT Program was not only rewarding and beneficial for him, but for our whole family as well! The PAT Program encouraged parents to become involved w/ their children and family. We even received helpful tips on parenting and also had Sheldon practice his fine motor skills. Although Sheldon was diagnosed with MLD later on, Betty still provided services for him and also referred us to the Family Infant Toddler Program in Bethel.

I am so thankful for your programs! It makes me happy to know that even though any child is facing any type of challenges, the Parents as Teachers Program is there to help! I really appreciate your services and will gladly refer any parents to your program!

Charles Lingzok
Family Advocate
Cheval Head Start

As a first time father I appreciate
the PAT program, for providing such
good program for my son. I believe what
the PAT workers are doing is very
important to the children to prepare
for school.

Clifford Paniyak

Feb. 23, 2011

PAT program provides my babies exposure to the world, thru books, ~~and~~ toys and interaction. Plus the babies faces light up when we tell them that its time for a home visit by the PAT program. Thank you for providing the positive exposure to the world!

Paula Attherian
For Liliauna and
Ina Attherian and
the rest of the Edwin
Attherian Sr. clan.

To whom it may concern;

Getting Toddlers and Preschoolers Ready for School

Both toddlers and preschoolers can face the same issues when transitioning to another phase of life. From home to a preschool, and then from a preschool to grade school, this change in a child's routine can effect him in a negative way if he is not prepared for it. It is the responsibility of every parent to make sure that their child is ready for preschooling or regular schooling. However, teachers also play an important role in preparing a child for these two levels of education.

The Parent as Teachers (PAT) Parents are of course the most influential being to their children they have the most access for them to be taught. They have formulated the idea to expose the children to education with their parents, for them to become a lot prepared to their formal school challenges. 'Parents as Teachers' or PAT Program is an effective tool in shaping the minds of these young toddlers. I support the PAT Program 100% and that they keep continuing the PAT Program in our community and other communities as well.


Cecelia Atchak
P.O. Box 157
Chevak, Alaska 99803
February 23, 2011

Also, when im working on trying to finish highschool it really gives us a great "sit down" time an just have a fun time together learning!

-We love the great things she has already helped us accomplish!

Thank you very much for having this program, it will and always has been great!

~~Dear Sonya,~~

Hello PAT!

2011

Im Sonya Johns, an cassidy my daughter. we both really enjoy having our family visitor over! Every since cassidy was born she has came over and we always learn an play together! The best thing about our visits is when she comes over an Shows me how to teach my daughter easier ways of learning! Her father and I really appreciate the visits that she takes time in.

Sincerely,
Sonya, Paul

-N-lil Cassidy



From: Tamara Hamby (tehamby@hotmail.com)
To: arctic_alaska@yahoo.com;
Date: Thu, February 17, 2011 3:58:30 PM
Cc:
Subject: PAT blurb

I hadn't slept much the night before a family visit from Parents As Teachers because we were trying to take the pacifier away from my 14 month old. I had just made the decision about an hour before bedtime and thought "there's no time like the present!" My visit started out normal and then Cynthia handed me the Pacifiers Are Not Forever book. What a whamoooo moment. It was encouraging and supportive and just told me, in my gut, that I was doing the right thing; it made the bags under my eyes worthwhile.

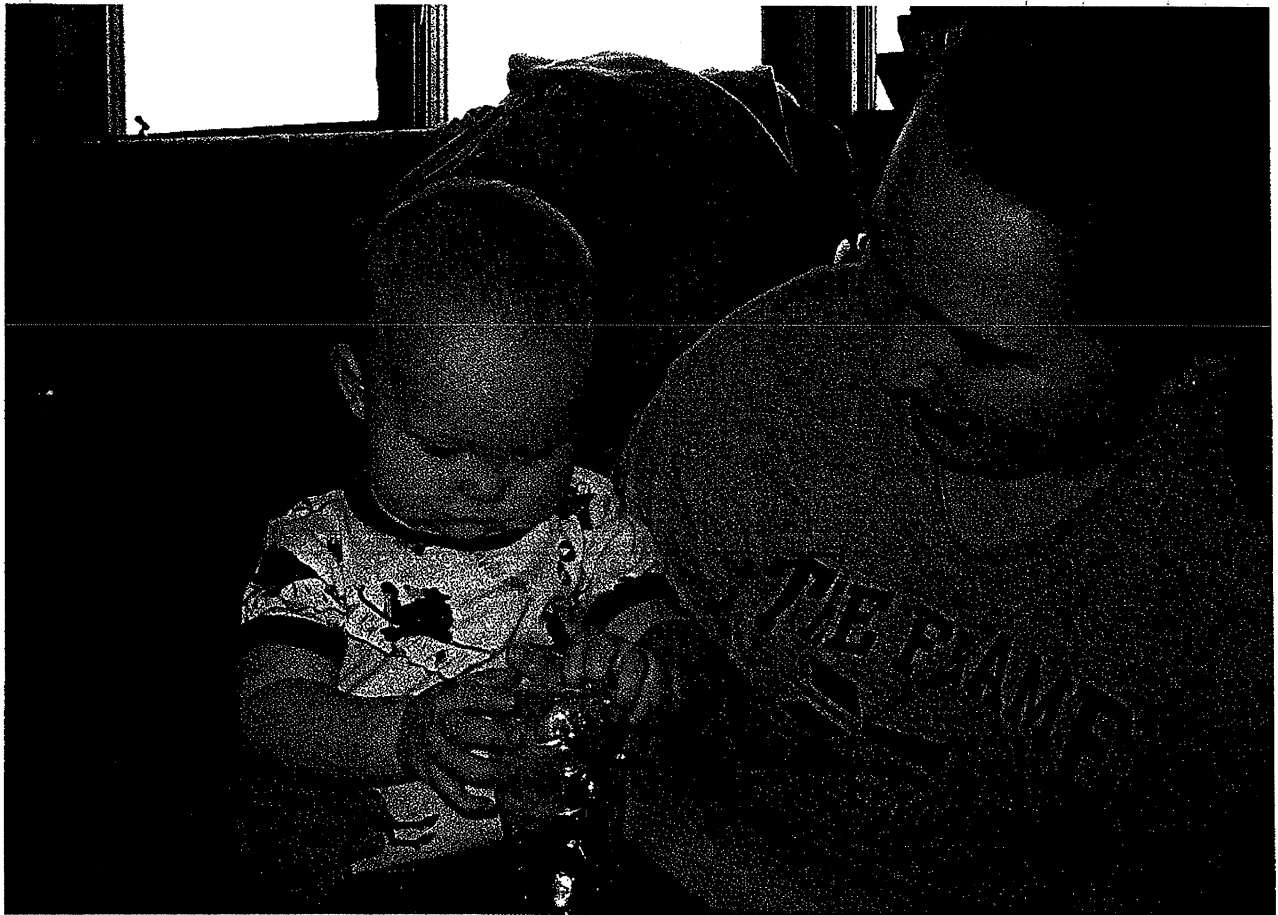
With each visit I am able to take a deep breath and step back from the act of parenting to learn about the art of parenting from a learning perspective. I may not absorb everything presented to me in that hour, but later as I re-read the material there are many whamooo moments. The Parents As Teachers program allows me, a stay at home mom, opportunities for continuing education. It offers an open forum to talk about my problems, ask my questions, and rejoice in successes.

The Tot Time is another extremely important part of our weekly routine that we all look forward to all week long. I reason to get out of the house, get the kids running around in a gym, talk with other parents, and, if nothing else, just know there are other people in our community who are going through the same things on a daily basis as I am.

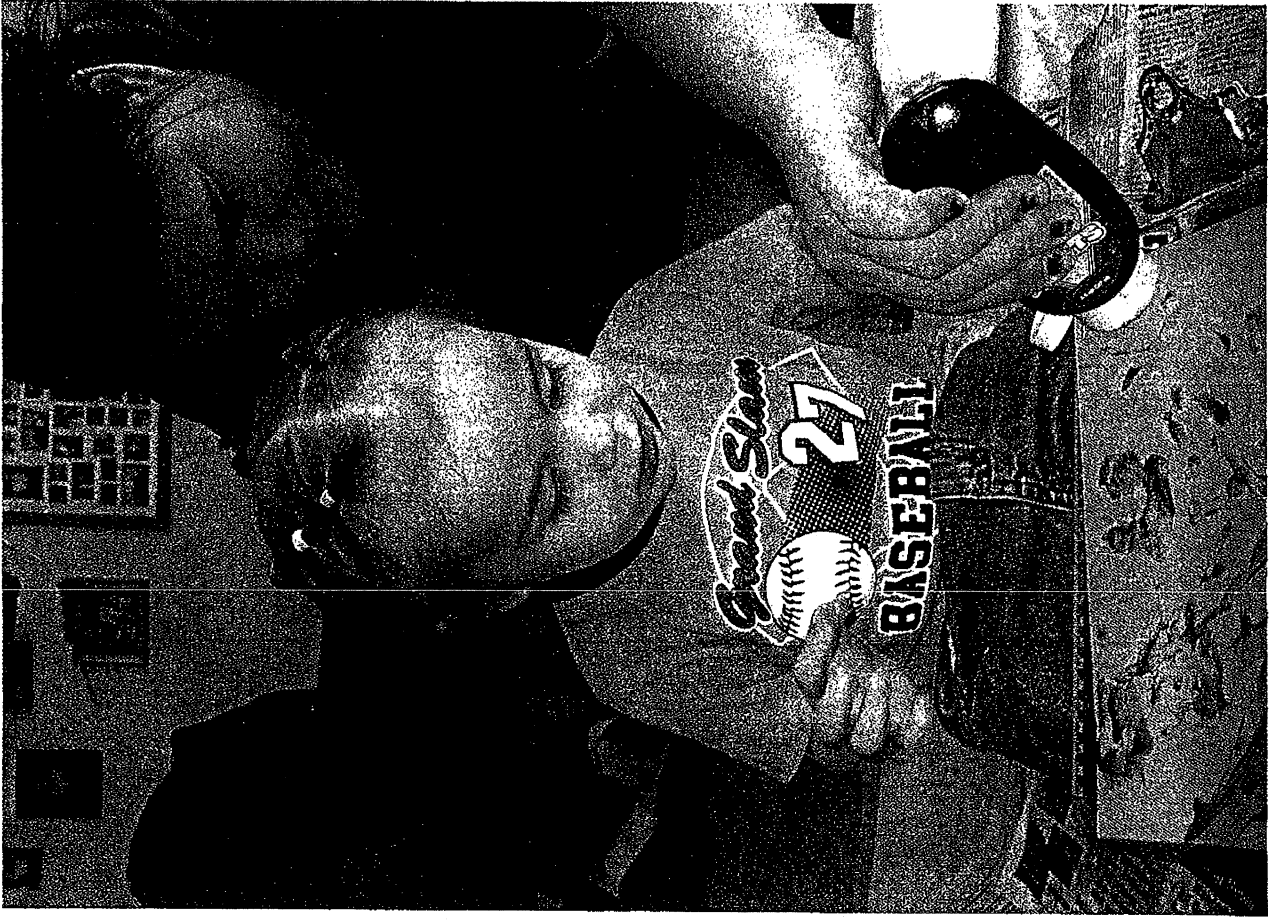
It's all about making connections that make living in rural Alaska easier and it has become an integral resource for us to grow as a family and a community.

Madeline had to feel what was in
the bag and match it to the picture.
Glennallen





Little Melanie trying to get a cherry out
of a plastic bottle 'Glennallen



Zephaniah found great joy in the sensation of squeezing the finger print. Goltana
 Zephaniah Enceladus Tyone - child



Zephaniah found great joy in the sensation of squeezing the finger print. Goltana

To whom this may concern

I really think this Parents
Teachers is a really good
thing to have for kids
that need around here

Cause some parents don't
send there kids to school
Untill they see the parents
& teachers so I think this
is a really good thing
to have around here in
Glennallen way I like my
daughter seeing Cynthia or put

from
Dawline
Lark