

# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



REPRESENTATIVE GERAN TARR

## **Understanding and Reducing Adverse Childhood Experiences in Alaska**

- Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) and supporting those who have experienced childhood trauma will save the State of Alaska significant health care costs.
- Adverse Childhood Experiences include physical, sexual and emotional abuse as well as dysfunction in a child's household. Dysfunction can include living with someone with mental illness, who abuses substances and or has spent time in prison. Adverse experiences also include living through a divorce and witnessing domestic violence.
- Compared with other with five other states (Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Tennessee and Washington) studied by the Center for Disease Control **Alaska had the ACES** rates in half of the categories.
- Adverse Childhood Experiences contribute to social, emotional and cognitive impairment, adoption of health-risk behaviors, disease, disability and social problems and early death.
- The State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services provides resources and information on ways to prevent ACES.
- It is important to provide children who have experienced trauma with adequate medical care to help prevent the occurrence of additional traumatic events.
- Trauma informed practices can be incorporated into our education system to improve student outcomes.