



# BEST BEGINNINGS

## Alaska's Early Childhood Investment

March 31, 2013

Dear Rep Tarr,

I'm writing in support of HCR 21, urging Governor Walker and the Legislature to establish statewide policies and provide programs to address the public and behavioral health epidemic of adverse childhood experiences.

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month and is a perfect time to take up this resolution and actions.

In the first few years of life, a baby's brain makes 700 synapses or neural connections every second, a phenomenal exuberance of activity. Neural connections are formed through the interaction of genes and a baby's environment and experiences, especially "serve and return" interaction with adults. These are the connections that build brain architecture – the foundation upon which all later learning, behavior, and health depend.

Significant adversity impairs development in the first three years of life – and the more adversity a child faces, the greater the odds of a developmental delay. There is a 90-100% chance of developmental delays when children experience six to seven risk factors. We learned recently that young children in Alaska have acquired half of their accumulated adverse childhood experiences by the age of 3.

Clearly, it is more effective and less costly to positively influence the architecture of a young child's developing brain than to try to make up for inadequate learning opportunities, poor health, and negative behaviors later in life.

As is stated in the resolution, we strongly promote early investment and intervention in early childhood years as important strategies to achieve a lasting foundation for a more prosperous and sustainable state.

Best Beginnings supports HCR 21 as one component of a statewide prevention system needed to help reduce traumatic experiences among our children.

Sincerely,

Abbe Hensley, Executive Director

3350 Commercial Drive, Suite 104A • Anchorage, Alaska 99501  
t. 907.297.3300 • f. 907.297.3304 • [BestBeginningsAlaska.org](http://BestBeginningsAlaska.org)

*Best Beginnings* is a public-private partnership that mobilizes people and resources to ensure all Alaska children begin school ready to succeed.



2/15/2016

Representative Geran Tarr  
State Capitol Room 409  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Representative Tarr,

It is with great pleasure to provide this letter of support for the House Concurrent Resolution #21 – Adverse Childhood Experiences. Alaska Children's Trust (ACT) is the lead statewide organization focused on the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

One of our greatest assets is our children. We know that children who experience adversities (ACES) like abuse, neglect and other traumas are more likely to have poor school performance, abuse substances, and end up incarcerated, among other issues. We also know that the best way to help children deal with trauma are resilience factors including good relationships with competent care givers, social and emotional health, and social connections. By understanding this relationship, we can begin to act in a trauma-informed way.

Local data shows that more than two-thirds of adults surveyed report experience adverse childhood experiences at a rate higher than other states. These adversities have a significant cost to our state both economically and socially. This resolution encourages early intervention and investment in children and families to ensure less trauma and greater resilience.

We encourage the Governor and our State Legislators to work towards making Alaska a trauma-informed state by ensuring decisions take into account the principles of early childhood brain development and how trauma impacts that development.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Storrs', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Trevor Storrs  
Executive Director

First Lady Donna Walker  
*Honorary Chair*

Ginger Baim, *Chair*

Ivy Spohnholz, *Vice Chair*

Lisa Wimmer, *Treasurer*

Melanie Bahnke, *Secretary*

Ramona Reeves, *Past Chair*

Susan Anderson

Elsie Boudreau

Com. Valerie Davidson

Com. Michael Hanley

Carley Lawrence

Sherry Modrow

Tlisa Northcutt

Marcus Wilson

Julie Woodworth



## Alaska Association for Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health



April 1, 2016

This letter is to support House Current Resolution 21 introduced by Representative Geran Tarr that urges Governor Walker to establish policy and programs to address the public and behavioral health epidemic of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). The Alaska Infant and Early Childhood Association is a non-profit organization whose mission is to support the social and emotional well-being of children between the ages of 0-5 and their families. Our main focus is centered on educating the general public about infant mental health as well as building capacity in the workforce to be able to provide appropriate services to this specific group of children.

The infant mental health professionals who work in this field witness the effects of ACE's on infants and very young children. To catch up and to keep pace with the science of child development, we must ensure that Alaska creates a continuum of strategies and programs to prevent mental health problems, to promote social and emotional well-being, and to treat mental health disorders beginning in pregnancy and continuing on throughout the early years of life and beyond. Contrary to common belief, mental health problems can occur in children under the age of 5 years. Mental health problems for infants and young children might be reflected in physical symptoms, delayed development, inconsolable crying, sleep problems, aggressive or impulsive behavior, and paralyzing fears. Over time, untreated symptoms of mental health problems can "take root" in young children and accumulate to seriously affect their ability to learn and functions. Because infants and young children develop in the context of close, consistent relationships, their own emotional well-being is directly tied to the emotional functioning of their caregivers and families. Untreated parental depression, substance abuse, domestic violence, and trauma disrupt parenting and can affect the mental health of children.

Research demonstrates that early prevention and treatment strategies are more beneficial and cost-effective than attempting to treat emotional difficulties and their effects on learning and health after they become more serious. Therefore it is imperative that Alaska's state policy decisions acknowledge and take into account the importance of the early years offer a unique window of opportunity to prevent the intergenerational transmission of the effects of ACE's and heal the effect of ACE's on the caregivers of infants and toddlers.

Sincerely,  
Alaska Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health  
Board of Directors

## Bernice Nisbett

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**To:** Joyanne Bloom  
**Subject:** RE: HCR21 - ACEs Letter of Support

**From:** Joyanne Bloom [mailto:joyanneb@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 10, 2016 6:41 AM  
**To:** Bernice Nisbett <Bernice.Nisbett@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: HCR21 - ACEs Letter of Support

I support HCR 21 and urge its passage. As a teacher in an adult education program in Southeast, I work with people who are trying to get a GED or improve their skills to get a job. Many were not successful in school and many have learning disabilities and/or battle with mental illness. When they share their stories, my students appear to be dealt three or four or five Advance Childhood Experiences, ACES. They continue, even as adults to come to school hungry, to have high absenteeism and to have difficulty concentrating. Some are with us because they are court ordered and are trying to stay out of incarceration. Others are threatened with losing their welfare checks if they don't attend our classes. I believe that the great majority, maybe even 90% of our students, are struggling due to ACES. Many of those ACES could have been avoided if we had prevention measures in place. Now I fear, the cycle will continue if we don't act now. HCR21 is an important start.

Joyanne Bloom

Joyanne Bloom  
The Learning Connection  
SERRC Alaska's Education Resource Center

(907) 586-5718

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Joyanne Bloom  
883 Basin Road  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

(907) 723-3604

Deborah Bock, MSW. LCSW  
2053 Eastridge Dr.  
Anchorage, AK 99501  
[bockdebbie@gmail.com](mailto:bockdebbie@gmail.com)  
(907) 345-6611

March 28, 2016

RE: Support for HCR 21, Adverse Childhood Experiences

Dear Representative Tarr,

I want to thank you for introducing HCR 21 and to urge the Governor and the legislature to support it.

Cutting edge scientific research in brain science is demonstrating that it is possible to disrupt intergenerational cycles of violence, addiction, and disease.

We have the opportunity to be leaders in the new movement of trauma-informed services.

We must grab the gold ring that hangs in front of us!

Yours truly,

*Deborah Bock*

Deborah Bock, MSW, LCSW

Linda Chamberlain PhD MPH  
35342 Howling Husky Circle  
Homer, AK 99603

RE: Letter of support for HRC 21

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter, as an Alaskan resident and scientist that specializes in the effects of trauma across the lifespan, to support HRC 21. I have worked in the field of domestic violence and childhood trauma for more than 25 years, specializing in the ravages of early childhood trauma on brain development and learning. The State of Alaska has an urgent opportunity to improve the well-being of Alaskans, prevent the intergenerational transmission of trauma and save an extraordinary amount of money.

If we want to reduce government spending for social services and do something that can truly turn the tide of substance abuse, suicide, mental illness, violence and loss of productivity in our state, then the passage of HRC 21 is a crucial step. Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are predictive of all these problems and much more. The connection between ACEs and health across the lifespan is so strong that it demonstrates something that is rarely found in public health research—a dose response relationship. Like going up a staircase, as the number of adverse experiences increases, the likelihood of behavioral problems, asthma, learning problems, aggression and a long list of poor outcomes for children also increases. The list becomes even longer for adults and includes many of our most persistent and costly problems. In one generation, Washington State was able to demonstrate a reduction in the prevalence of ACEs and its consequences when communities worked together to address ACEs with collaborative leadership, universal education and collective action.

Alaska is poised to move forward and build on the momentum that has begun in many communities. Please support this bill to validate that the State of Alaska is committed to this work.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Linda Chamberlain", written in a cursive style.

Linda Chamberlain PhD MPH

## Bernice Nisbett

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**To:** Rep. Geran Tarr  
**Subject:** RE: I support HCR21

**From:** Daniella DeLozier [<mailto:danielladelozier@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 30, 2016 8:34 AM  
**To:** Rep. Geran Tarr <[Rep.Geran.Tarr@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.Geran.Tarr@akleg.gov)>  
**Subject:** I support HCR21

March 30th, 2016

Dear Representative Geran Tarr,

Child abuse and neglect in Alaska are a chronic and devastating problem. To overcome the high rates of trauma experienced by our children and youth, prevention efforts need to be deployed at multiple levels.

Unfortunately, the trauma and sustained toxic stress associated with child abuse, neglect and a list of other adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) such as incarceration of a parent and drug and alcohol abuse have been shown to undermine a child's healthy development. Such factors damage the developing brain and adversely impact a child's learning and behavior, making academic achievement more difficult. Moreover, such factors increase susceptibility to physical and mental illness and put children at higher risk for involvement in delinquent and/or criminal activities. When children do not have equal opportunity for healthy growth and development, we are putting the future society of Alaska at risk.

The long-term effects of ACEs in Alaska are costly. High ACE scores are linked to social, emotional and cognitive impairment; adoption of health-risk behaviors; chronic medical diseases; disability and social problems; and early death. More than 65 percent of Alaskans have experienced adverse childhood experiences in their lifetimes. Additionally, Alaska has some of the highest adverse trauma rates among the five other states surveyed by the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Systems survey (Washington, Louisiana, Tennessee, Arkansas, and New Mexico).

Preventing childhood trauma and supporting those who have experienced childhood trauma will save the State of Alaska significant costs across the board including spending on health care, Medicaid, incarceration and juvenile justice systems. According to a recent report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the average lifetime cost per victim of nonfatal child maltreatment is over \$48,000 per child. There are thousands of reports of child maltreatment every year in Alaska, meaning we are spending tens of millions of dollars every year for costs related to child abuse.

I support HCR21 as one component of a statewide prevention system needed to help reduce traumatic experiences among our children, but also as an investment in our state's infrastructure and future.

Sincerely,

Daniella DeLozier

2601 Darby Circle

Anchorage, AK 99508



March 16, 2016

Donald E. Roberts Jr.  
264 Lilly Drive  
Apt C2  
Kodiak, AK 99615

Alaska House Health and Social Services Committee  
Alaska House Finance Committee

RE: Support for HCR 21 – Respond to Adverse Childhood Experiences

Members of the Alaska House Health and Social Services and Finance Committees, my name is Don Roberts, I have lived in Alaska Since May of 1997. I offer my unequivocal support for HCR 21 which “urges Governor Walker to establish policy and programs to address the public and behavioral health epidemic of adverse childhood experiences (ACES)”.

You’ve heard that “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure”? Acknowledging and addressing adverse childhood experiences is that “ounce of prevention.” And while prevention is not always possible, being able to resolve these experiences early is far more effective than waiting, or worse, doing nothing.

Without delving too far into my personal life my childhood was rife with such experiences: domestic violence, racial violence, parental separation, family sickness (my mother had Multiple Sclerosis and had gran mal seizures – something I had to experience and help my mother with as my parents were separated) and childhood poverty. Now at the age of 58 I am dealing with a number of health issues, many of which could have been prevented (or assuaged had the resources been available to me) and I would not be languishing in poverty.

As the ACES studies have been around since the late 1980s I think it’s time for Alaska to catch up to other states and makes use of the research and resources available so that other people will not live in perpetual ill-health and poverty.

Thank you.

Donald E. Roberts Jr.

Dear Governor Walker,

I am writing a letter in support of HCR21. I am a member of Jesuit Volunteer Corps NW/Americorps, and I am serving for a year in Juneau at the Zach Gordon Youth Center. My primary responsibility as a full-time volunteer at the Zach Gordon Youth Center is to build relationships with youth, many of whom who have experienced or are currently experiencing childhood trauma.

The youth who frequent the center are brilliant human beings with ample potential, but they are vulnerable to developing dire physical, emotional, and mental health issues on account of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). Many of the youth I work with already exhibit the negative effects of trauma through behavioral issues, depression and anxiety, and unhealthy habits like drug and alcohol use.

I am concerned that Juneau, and the state of Alaska, lacks adequate policies and programs to address and prevent childhood trauma. Studies suggest that Alaskans experience Adverse Childhood Experiences at a higher frequency than the national average. Widespread instances of childhood trauma are detrimental to individuals and the community as a whole. The government ought to recognize ACEs and develop comprehensive programs to prevent childhood trauma and provide healing for individuals who have experienced childhood trauma. Not only will programs addressing ACEs build stronger and healthier communities, they will save the state millions of dollars annually in health care costs, corrections, and substance abuse.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Alexandra Douglas

## Bernice Nisbett

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**To:** Rep. Geran Tarr  
**Subject:** RE: Support HCR 21 to help our children

**From:** Anne Fuller [mailto:[fernleafgt@yahoo.com](mailto:fernleafgt@yahoo.com)]  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 06, 2016 9:01 PM  
**To:** Rep. Geran Tarr <[Rep.Geran.Tarr@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.Geran.Tarr@akleg.gov)>  
**Cc:** Rep. Sam Kito <[Rep.Sam.Kito.III@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.Sam.Kito.III@akleg.gov)>; Rep. Cathy Munoz <[Rep.Cathy.Munoz@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.Cathy.Munoz@akleg.gov)>; Sen. Dennis Egan <[Sen.Dennis.Egan@akleg.gov](mailto:Sen.Dennis.Egan@akleg.gov)>  
**Subject:** Support HCR 21 to help our children

Ms. Tarr,  
Thank you for introducing the HCR 21 in the legislature this year.  
We should consider the research that shows trauma is a root cause of problems that cost so much (from addiction, violence, chronic illnesses).

Building a society which reduces adversity for youngsters is exactly what we need to be doing. Leaving our vulnerable ones to self-medicate, to flee, or to fight is not teaching them ways of living in harmony with other people and with nature.

We know that the statistics for domestic violence, child abuse, suicide and more in Alaska are horrifying. We know that past institutions, individuals, and policies have hurt children. Yes, understanding that schools in the past have damaged students means we need to also understand how schools now can heal students. This resolution is a way to address the issue and create statewide solutions.

Anne Fuller  
7943 N Douglas Hwy  
*Juneau, AK 99801*

## Bernice Nisbett

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**From:** Gayle Trivette <gayletriv@gci.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 04, 2016 10:29 AM  
**To:** Bernice Nisbett  
**Subject:** HCR 21

I am writing to voice my support for HCR 21. Research has shown irrefutably that Adverse Childhood Experiences contribute to a host of problems that are not only costly to the affected individuals but to society. <http://dhss.alaska.gov/abada/ace-ak/Documents/ACEsEconomicCosts-AK.pdf>

In order to be good stewards of Alaska's financial and human resources, it is critical that the recommendations of HCR 21 be followed.

Thank you for your service to Alaska.  
Gayle Trivette  
7870 Glacier Hwy  
Juneau, AK 99801



3/4/16

Representative Geran Tarr  
State Capital Room 409  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Representative Tarr,

Thank you for your work on House Concurrent Resolution 21 regarding Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). The Juneau Suicide Prevention Coalition is pleased to add our support. We are a coalition of nearly 100 Juneau residents. We are survivors, statisticians, volunteers, board members, frontline youth care providers, clinicians, counselors, educators, doctors, and concerned citizens. We see firsthand the impact of childhood trauma, neglect, and abuse and are focusing our efforts on breaking the link between childhood trauma and suicide.

Nationally, Alaska is first in some wonderful things—wilderness, scenery, natural resources, mountains, and miles of coastline. Our fisheries remain the envy of much of the world. Hike a mountain in Alaska and the mountains go back and back and back. The sun sets and rises seamlessly. The salmon run our clean, gleaming streams.

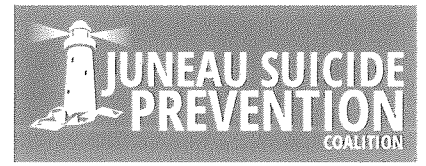
As noted in House Concurrent Resolution 21, we are also first in ACEs. Two-thirds of our citizenry report traumatic childhood experiences at rates higher than other surveyed states. In 2009 Alaska had the highest ACEs scores in sexual abuse, family member incarceration, substance abuse, and divorce. Alaska scored a very close second in every other category. When looked at in this light, our fish are often better set up for success than our most valuable resource—our children.

A person with four or more ACEs is 12.2 times more likely to commit suicide, 10.3 times more likely to use injection drugs, and 7.4 times more likely to be an alcoholic. We score highest in four categories. We know that these levels of toxic trauma and stress are not only driving addiction but damaging brain development, and impacting our youth's ability to learn and make healthy choices. The Alaska Mental Health Board and the Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Advisory Board estimate this is costing us, as a state, approximately \$774,000,000 a year.

The Juneau Suicide Prevention Coalition encourages our state legislators and Governor to work closely with each other to create more trauma-informed schools, increase risk screening in primary care, support early-childhood and parenting programs, as well as develop programs that address the high cost and impact of ACEs on Alaska's youth and communities.

Sincerely,

Gareth Hummel  
Suicide Prevention Specialist  
On behalf of  
The Juneau Suicide Prevention Coalition



3/4/16

Representative Geran Tarr  
State Capital Room 409  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Representative Tarr,

Thank you for your work on House Concurrent Resolution 21 regarding Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). The Juneau Suicide Prevention Coalition is pleased to add our support. We are a coalition of nearly 100 Juneau residents. We are survivors, statisticians, volunteers, board members, frontline youth care providers, clinicians, counselors, educators, doctors, and concerned citizens. We see firsthand the impact of childhood trauma, neglect, and abuse and are focusing our efforts on breaking the link between childhood trauma and suicide.

Nationally, Alaska is first in some wonderful things—wilderness, scenery, natural resources, mountains, and miles of coastline. Our fisheries remain the envy of much of the world. Hike a mountain in Alaska and the mountains go back and back and back. The sun sets and rises seamlessly. The salmon run our clean, gleaming streams.

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Sincerely,

Gareth Hummel  
Suicide Prevention Specialist  
On behalf of  
The Juneau Suicide Prevention Coalition

**Rep. Geran Tarr**

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**From:** Karen White <kwhite@bartletthospital.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 07, 2016 9:30 AM  
**To:** Rep. Geran Tarr  
**Subject:** HCR 21

Dear Rep. Tarr,

I am writing in support of HCR 21 which calls for action to address public health epidemic of adverse childhood experiences. According to the research, the impact of adverse traumatic events during childhood have lifelong consequences. They impact the mental and physical health of children subjected to these events throughout their lives and into the next generation. Focus on this healthcare issue will ultimately reduce healthcare expenses and enrich the lives of Alaskans for generations.

Sincerely,

**Karen White, BSN, RNC-OB**

OB Director

Bartlett Regional Hospital

3260 Hospital Dr.

Juneau, AK 99801

907-796-8657

kwhite@bartletthospital.org



THE STATE  
of **ALASKA**  
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

## Department of Health and Social Services

ALASKA MENTAL HEALTH BOARD  
ADVISORY BOARD ON ALCOHOLISM  
AND DRUG ABUSE

431 North Franklin Street, Suite 200

Juneau, Alaska 99801

Main: 907.465.8920

Fax: 907.465.4410

March 29, 2016

Representative Paul Seaton, Chairman  
House Health and Social Services Committee  
State Capitol Room 102  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Re: HCR 21 – Adverse Childhood Experiences

Dear Representative Seaton,

The Alaska Mental Health Board and the Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse support House Concurrent Resolution 21 in response to the impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) in Alaska. The Boards have been instrumental in educating Alaskans about ACEs through use of specific data regarding the childhood experiences of Alaskans of all ages and the impact adverse events have throughout a lifetime, and we appreciate the work of Representative Tarr and your community to expand the knowledge base on ACEs in Alaska.

More than two-thirds of Alaskan adults experienced ACEs prior to their eighteenth birthday. The neural networks being “wired” in the developing brains of children and youth are especially susceptible to traumatic events. Research is showing that ACEs can affect the normal development of children and that these are the mechanisms behind the poor outcomes associated with childhood trauma. From poor school and work performance to substance abuse and mental illness to poor physical health outcomes, the link to ACEs has been shown in Alaskan and other states’ populations as well. Hundreds of millions of Alaska’s dollars in state and private funds are spent each year as a result of traumatic events experienced during childhood. Even modest reductions in childhood trauma would have immediate and long-term benefits to our state financially and socially.

All over Alaska, communities are addressing ACEs in big and small ways. HCR 21 recognizes and supports the need continued research and evidence-based efforts to prevent and mitigate the impact of ACEs. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Kate Burkhardt".

J. Kate Burkhardt  
Executive Director

cc: Representative Geran Tarr



April 1, 2016

Dear Representative Geran Tarr,

Child abuse and neglect in Alaska are a chronic and devastating problem. To overcome the high rates of trauma experienced by our children and youth, prevention efforts need to be deployed at multiple levels.

Trauma and sustained toxic stress associated with child abuse, neglect and a list of other adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) such as incarceration of a parent and drug and alcohol abuse have been shown to undermine a child's healthy development. Such factors damage the developing brain and adversely impact a child's learning and behavior, making academic achievement more difficult. Moreover, such factors increase susceptibility to physical and mental illness and put children at higher risk for involvement in delinquent and/or criminal activities. When children do not have equal opportunity for healthy growth and development, we are putting the future society of Alaska at risk.

The long-term effects of ACEs in Alaska are costly. Preventing childhood trauma and supporting those who have experienced childhood trauma will save the State of Alaska significant costs across the board including spending on health care, Medicaid, incarceration and juvenile justice systems. According to a recent report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the average lifetime cost per victim of nonfatal child maltreatment is over \$48,000 per child. There are thousands of reports of child maltreatment every year in Alaska, meaning we are spending tens of millions of dollars every year for costs related to child abuse.

I support HCR21 as one component of a statewide prevention system needed to help reduce traumatic experiences among our children, but also as an investment in our state's infrastructure and future.

Sincerely,

Linda M Lekness  
Sprout Family Service, Board Member  
Homer, AK

**Bernice Nisbett**

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**To:** Rep. Geran Tarr  
**Subject:** RE: HCR 21 Adverse Childhood Experiences

-----Original Message-----

From: Liz Downing [mailto:eadowning@gmail.com]  
Sent: Monday, March 28, 2016 12:38 PM  
To: Rep. Geran Tarr <Rep.Geran.Tarr@akleg.gov>  
Cc: Rep. Paul Seaton <Rep.Paul.Seaton@akleg.gov>  
Subject: HCR 21 Adverse Childhood Experiences

It is my profound hope that the Alaska Legislature and Governor Walker support HCR21 recognizing the impact Adverse Childhood Experiences have on our children and adults. The financial toll is staggering - the human potential loss is beyond belief. By creating policies and directing our programs to strategize and educate health care providers, educators, and the general public we can positively impact the occurrence of ACEs and improve the quality of life for Alaskans.

Thank you,

Liz Downing  
Homer, AK

March 13, 2016

Dear Representative Geran Tarr,

My name is Matt Hirschfeld MD/PhD, and I've been a pediatrician in Alaska for over 10 years. By writing this letter, I'm showing my support for HCR 21.

HCR 21 urges Governor Walker to establish policy and programs to address the public and behavioral health epidemic of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are traumatic experiences that occur during childhood and have a lasting, negative effect on a child's developing brain and body. The long-term effects of ACEs in Alaska are costly. High ACE score are linked to social, emotional and cognitive impairment; adoption of health-risk behaviors; disease; disability and social problems; and early death. More than 75% of Alaskans have experienced adverse childhood experiences. Alaska has some of the highest ACE rates among the five other states surveyed (Washington, Louisiana, Tennessee, Arkansas, and New Mexico).

Preventing ACEs and supporting those who have experienced childhood trauma will save the State of Alaska significant health care costs. According to a recent report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the average lifetime cost per victim of nonfatal child maltreatment is over \$48,000 per child. There are thousands of reports of child maltreatment every year in Alaska, meaning we are spending tens of millions of dollars every year for costs related to child abuse. Alaska also spends millions of dollars annually on corrections, substance abuse, chronic health conditions, and other issues related to ACEs. For example, 40% of current Medicaid use can be attributed to ACEs. A recent report by the Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse found that with a modest reduction in the ACEs scores of Alaskans who use Medicaid, we could see annual savings of \$39 million in Medicaid spending.

Left unacknowledged and untreated, ACEs can lead to poor health and risky behaviors during adulthood. This includes, but is not limited to, physical, emotional, and sexual abuse; physical and emotional neglect; and household dysfunction, such as domestic violence, separation or divorce, and substance abuse, untreated mental illness, or incarceration of a household member

In short, supporting HCR 21 is a vital step to reducing ACEs in Alaska, and I wholeheartedly endorse the resolution. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or clarifications regarding this letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matt Hirschfeld", is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Matt Hirschfeld, MD/PhD



## AKCHILD & FAMILY

April 1, 2016

Representative Geran Tarr  
State Capital Room 409  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Representative Tarr,

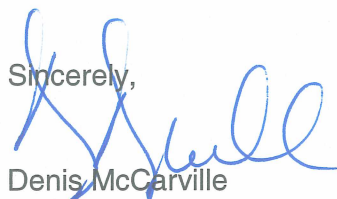
Thank you for your work on House Concurrent Resolution 21 regarding Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). AK Child & Family is more than pleased to add our support. Without exception, the children we treat on a daily basis have all experienced trauma in their young lives. Daily we see the effects of these adverse experiences while we find ways to help these children cope with their life stories and become resilient.

As you know, at least two-thirds of Alaskans have had traumatic childhood experiences at rates higher than other surveyed states. In 2009, Alaska had the highest ACEs scores in sexual abuse, family member incarceration, substance abuse, and divorce. Alaska scored a very close second in every other category.

AK Child & Family is striving to become the first organization in Alaska to become a Sanctuary Certified organization. This special certification is being sought because we recognize the effects of childhood trauma on our youth, their parents and their parent's parents. While intergenerational trauma is not unique to our state, we know that the uniqueness of our history drives these high ACEs scores. We recognize that we are not only working with children and families with high ACEs scores but we also have a workforce with high ACEs scores. Sanctuary brings to our organization a way to directly deal with past trauma in the lives of our children, their parents, and our staff.

AK Child & Family encourages our state legislators and Governor to work closely with each other to create more trauma-informed schools, increase risk screening in primary care, support early-childhood and parenting programs, as well as develop programs that address the high cost and impact of ACEs on Alaska's youth and communities.

We applaud you in recognizing the pervasive nature of adverse childhood experiences and doing something about it

Sincerely,  


Denis McCarville  
President and CEO  
AK Child & Family

## Bernice Nisbett

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**From:** LPNAKA@aol.com  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 12:44 PM  
**To:** Bernice Nisbett  
**Cc:** Garethh@jys.org  
**Subject:** House Concurrent Resolution No 21

Representative Geran Tarr

03/02/2016

My name is Dr. Peter Nakamura. I have been a residence of Juneau Alaska since 1991. Prior to that date, I Provided and directed health services to our Native American People in the States of Arizona, New Mexico, Oregon, Washington, and Idaho as well as in Anchorage, Bethel, and in the rural communities of the Yukon Kuskokwim and Bristol Bay regions of Alaska. I moved to Juneau in 1991 to serve ten years as the Public Health Director for the State of Alaska under the governorship of our two major political parties. I retired in 2001 and presently participate as a citizen volunteer member of the Juneau Suicide Prevention Coalition. I share my professional resume only to demonstrate that my concern for House Concurrent Resolution No 21 is sincere and based on experiences related to the issues it addresses.

To address significant issues negatively impacting on the lives of our Alaskan people, especially our young children, it is imperative that a statewide policy including programs to address these issues be established and readily accessible to those affected. Adverse childhood experiences have been proven to be a major precursor to the many economic and personal tragedies experienced by our citizens.

The responsible control and hopefully reduction or elimination of these negative life issues requires the identification, monitoring, prevention, and direct intervention by State sponsored Programs involving our State and local leadership, citizens, and professional staff, as well as those endangered with or contributing to adverse childhood experiences.

**Solving the problem first starts with a commitment to address the issue but also requires a commitment to develop and support a comprehensive program addressing the issue of "adverse childhood experiences".**

Thank you for your involvement and efforts on resolution no 21.

Peter Nakamura

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