



March 25, 2024

Alaska State Legislature  
Alaska State Capitol  
120 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: Information about Marijuana Education and Treatment Fund

Honorable Members of the House Finance Committee,

The Alaska Children's Trust would like to respond to recent questions from committee members about programs that receive funding through Alaska's excise tax on marijuana, specifically the Marijuana Education and Treatment (MET) Fund. The statutory intent of this fund, as stated in AS 44.29.020(a)(14), is to support the public health response towards prevention of marijuana misuse.

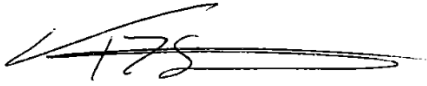
The MET Fund was established in 2018 with bipartisan and industry support. Like programs focused on alcohol misuse, the fund supports prevention strategies, such as community-based positive youth development and public education campaigns, and delivers direct treatment and public health monitoring for marijuana misuse. Per AS 43.61.010, 25% of the revenue from the marijuana excise tax is deposited into the MET Fund. These funds are administered by the Alaska Department of Health for comprehensive marijuana use education and treatment programs. Comprehensive marijuana use education and treatment programs include substance misuse prevention through youth service programs, public education on marijuana effects and laws, public surveys on knowledge, awareness, and attitude toward marijuana products, development and implementation of misuse training, monitoring public health related to marijuana and substance abuse screening and intervention. Programs are implemented by grant or contract with one or more in-state organizations, with quarterly reporting.

Youth service programs designed for marijuana misuse prevention are formally known as the Positive Youth Development Afterschool Program (PYDAP) Grant. **Thirty-nine out-of-school time programs are current grantees of this program** and are actively administering prevention strategies statewide. There are **eleven programs in Anchorage, four in the Mat-Su Valley, five in the Interior, two in Southeast Alaska, seven in the Kenai Peninsula and Kodiak, two in Southwest Alaska, and eight in Northern Alaska.**

Preventing or delaying the first use of marijuana among underage youth is an important component of a comprehensive public health response to substance misuse. Programs administered through the MET Fund increase Alaskan youths' access to prevention focused activities, resulting in a decreased risk for substance misuse related to marijuana.

Thank you for this opportunity to highlight an important element of Alaska's greater work in substance misuse prevention. I would be happy to come before the committee to share in greater detail the impact the MET fund has on our youth's lives, and answer questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'TJS', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Trevor J. Storrs  
President & CEO  
Alaska Children's Trust

**Alaska Children's Trust**

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