

**S B**

**409**

STATE OF ALASKA  
1990 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL VERSION: SA 409 (a)  
PUBLISH DATE: 2/23/90

FISCAL NOTE

REQUEST:

Revision Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title: Training for Teachers and  
certain State Officials  
Sponsor: Binkley  
Requestor: Senate CERA

Agency Affected: Education  
BRU: Educational Program Support  
Components: Office of the Director

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 91	FY 92	FY 93	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL	15.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
CONTRACTUAL	25.5	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0
SUPPLIES	3.0					
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS	30.0	30.0	30.0	30.0	30.0	30.0
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING	83.5	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0
CAPITAL						
REVENUE						

FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND	83.5	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
TOTAL						

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME						
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

ANALYSIS : (Attach a separate page if necessary)

See attached analysis.

Prepared by: Toni Kahklen-Jones Phone: 465-2830  
Division: Educational Program Support Date: 2/21/90  
Approved by Commissioner: William G. Demmert Date: 2/21/90  
Agency: Education

Distribution (by preparer):  
Legislative Finance  
Legislative Sponsor

## FISCAL NOTE

**REQUEST:**

Revision Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Title: An Act relating to Training for Teachers and Certain School Officials  
 Sponsor: Binkley  
 Requestor: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency Affected: Health & Social Services  
 BRU: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Components: \_\_\_\_\_

**EXPENDITURES/REVENUES:** (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 91	FY 92	FY 93	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
<b>CAPITAL</b>	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
<b>REVENUE</b>	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-

**FUNDING:** (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND						
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
<b>TOTAL</b>	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-

**POSITIONS:**

FULL-TIME	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
PART-TIME	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
TEMPORARY	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-

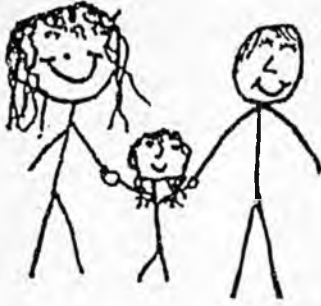
**ANALYSIS :** (Attach a separate page if necessary)

FY 90 fiscal impact is "0."

Prepared by: Sally Mead Phone: 561-4211  
 Division: Office of Prevention Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Approved by Commissioner: *Nicole M. Munson* Date: 2/2/90  
 Agency: Department of Health & Social Services

**Distribution (by preparer):**

- Legislative Finance
- Legislative Sponsor
- Requestor
- Office of Management and Budget
- Impacted Agency(ies)



# FAS/FAE

## Newsletter

Spring 1990

**A newsletter for Alaskan parents of children affected by prenatal exposure to alcohol or other drugs.**

---

---

### CONTENTS

Editorial .....	page 2
Mailbag .....	page 3
Announcements .....	page 3
Pathways Conference .....	page 4
Pathways Mail-In .....	page 5 and 6
Legislative Information .....	page 7

---

---

FAS/FAE Newsletter is produced quarterly by the FAS/FAE Parent Support Group. We are a support group for parents and others who care for children with prenatal exposure to alcohol.

We meet the last Tuesday of every month, at the Mary Siah Recreation Center in Fairbanks. Our March 27 meeting will feature John Revels of Tanana Chiefs Conference, he will speak on teaching everyday living skills to the developmentally disabled. For further information please call Chris Jackson, 452-1101. To address a letter to our MAILBAG write: Mailbag, FAS/FAE Newsletter, P.O.Box 74612, Fairbanks, AK. 99707.

## Editorial — Why we are here

In order to tell you what this newsletter is about I think it is important to relate to you the experience of a friend of mine.

Five years ago on the eve of the adoption of their little girl, this letter was forwarded to him and his wife from the agency they adopted through. It is a psychological consultation. It is a sobering exposure to the effects of fetal alcohol syndrome.

"While it is too early to predict eventual intellectual and functioning ability with precision, the probable range for this child seems to be from low to mid Mild Mental Deficiency (about I.Q. 50 at worst and I.Q. 60 to 65 at best)... she is going to need special education throughout her school career...especially important will be parents who will follow

---

***Our effort with this publication is hopeful. We are hopeful in our child's future and hopeful we, as parents, are doing our informed best.***

---

through on all the inevitable medical and therapeutic procedures ... she will need (parents) who will be strong advocates for her.

This psychologist was telling them their new daughter was brain damaged.

Most of you reading this newsletter have suffered this same revelation. It may have come from a grade school teacher struggling with your child's inability to "get with it". It may be from a high school counselor

The co-contributors to this newsletter are:  
Christine Jackson, Betty Taaffe, and  
Stephen Saiz.

Letters to the newsletter should be addressed  
to:

Mailbag, FAS/FAE Newsletter  
P.O. Box 74612, Fairbanks, AK 99707

wondering what to do with a 17-year old reading on a fifth grade level. It may come from a frustrated employer phoning to say he just had to let your son go because he couldn't perform his job.

All of the scenarios are different. This syndrome touches different people, different settings, and different classes with varying intensity. The one constant is that if you parent or foster parent a child adversely affected by prenatal exposure to alcohol, you will find yourself part of one of these scenarios. It will be saddening. It will be frustrating. It will not go away.

In a perverse way, along with our children, we are victims of this preventable syndrome. Louise Erdrich in the foreword to her husband, Michael Dorris' book The Broken Cord observes that in loving our children we...

"bow to fate. Few of his (their FAS affected son) problems can be solved or ultimately changed. So instead, Michael and I concentrate on only what we can control—our own reactions. If we can muster grace, joy, happiness in helping him confront and conquer the difficulties life presents...then we have received gifts. Adam (their son) has been deprived of giving so much else.

When I read Louise Erdrich's foreword and participate in my own child's speech and physical therapy, I understand the importance of focusing on what I can control. As parents and contributors to this newsletter, we struggle to move beyond the guilt, anger or blame in ourselves to focus on the opportunities of our children. Our effort with this publication is hopeful. We are hopeful in our child's future and hopeful we, as parents, are doing our informed best.

As parents to FAS/FAE children we face some unusual challenges. Challenges that call for parents, who are nurturers, advocates, innovators and lobbyists. This news-

*Continued on next page...*

**Mailbag—Your questions answered**  
As an educator what can I do for children with FAS/FAE? -- Michele, Fairbanks

Dear Michele,

In order to become more knowledgeable about what you're dealing with, we suggest the book The Broken Cord by Michael Dorris which offers a clear overview on the scientific literature on FAS, a father's personal insights, and a look at some of the traps teachers commonly fall into.

FAS/FAE children often have low motivation, bad judgement and poor learning ability. Sometimes they are stubborn and don't learn from their mistakes. Some feel an early diagnosis would save parents and teachers the expense and grief of trying everything without knowing the child's limitations or what works. Early diagnosis may save the child considerable frustration. Others feel a diagnosis may label and limit a child. Behaviors, they believe, should be evaluated and dealt with as they arise.

There is currently no curricula for working with FAS/FAE children, but researchers at the University of Washington are now developing appropriate educational methods and curricula to be published later this year.

Some suggestions we have gleaned from sources are:

From Dr. Ann Streissguth, a psychologist at the University of Washington, who has

worked with FAS children for 14 years. What works best is a simple direct approach using the shortest possible sentences, "Do this", avoid arguing behavior.

Linda Robertson, Project TEACH (ACCA, Fairbanks) has these suggestions for parents:

a) Have goals and break them down into steps.

b) Decide on ten things that are "The Rules." Recite and review these several times a day. Drop ingrained rules and add new ones.

c) The more structure you provide, the better, but leave room for mistakes.

d) Praise for good behavior, build success into the program.

e) Teach daily learning skills.

f) Seek professional help to set goals, structure the child's life, teach logical consequences, and plan their educational future.

We hope this information is useful in your classroom Michele. You may want to join us at our next FAS/FAE Parent Support Group on March 27, at Mary Siah Rec. Center, 1025 14th Ave., Fairbanks, AK. Meetings begin at 7:00. Thanks for your interest.

Christine Jackson  
FAS/HIV Coordinator, Resource Center  
for Alcohol and Other Addictions

"The best thing about the future is that it comes only one day at a time."

— Abraham Lincoln

Editorial continued...

letter is meant to assist you in being just that: a parent to an FAS/FAE child. We will feature legislative initiatives regarding FAS/FAE issues. We will synopsise the latest scientific findings in the field. We will advertise the resources and media available through the State of Alaska. We

will try to keep you abreast of educational strategies that work for FAS/FAE kids. We will try to put you in touch with others in your area who share your concerns. Finally in our Mailbag section we will give you an opportunity to either share your thoughts and suggestions or ask questions of professionals we consult.

## Pathways-A Gathering of Parents and Professionals

Mark your calendars and set aside April, 19-21, for the Second Annual Pathways Conference. This year's conference has much to offer the parents of FAS/FAE children. Some scheduled workshops are:

- managing parental stress
- ADD: information on learning disorders associated with hyperactivity
- caring for the medically fragile child
- making your child's IEP work
- Great Expectations: coping with the myth of the perfect baby
- computer usage for the disabled child
- teaching problem solving strategies
- What is it like to be learning disabled?
- Hope Cottages: living outside the home
- building power in the family

Aside from the workshops, parent/professional panels will discuss preschool programs, parent advocacy, family resources and sibling relations. There will be conference receptions and informal luncheons with

presenters, legislators and gubernatorial candidates.

Last year the conference attracted over 500 persons from across the state. Again, this year's conference will give the parents of children with special needs an opportunity to meet with professionals and share common concerns, discuss new ideas and build partnerships for the future.

If childcare is a concern, Pathways is encouraging the use of your local community's respite service. If it is necessary to bring your child to Anchorage, on site care will be provided,

for a nominal fee. More information will be provided with registration applications.

### Pathways-A Parent's Perspective

My husband and I attended Pathways Conference last year. If we had enough time to think over the logistics of leaving the children and the house, we wouldn't have gone. I'm glad we had a friend giving us a gentle but firm push to send us off. All arrangements went smoothly.

It had been eight years since I had been away from my child. Pathways allowed me to take a deep breath, so to speak, and regenerate myself. I realized I wasn't alone. I listened to other parents, heard what worked for them, and allowed myself to reach out to others with suggestions of what worked with our family. After Pathways I came home full of ideas, full of energy, and most importantly full of hope.

---

---

## Announcements

The Alaska Women's Commission will hold a conference on substance abuse issues for women from Alaska's rural communities. The conference features Phyllis Chelsea from Alkali Lake, and will focus on women taking a leadership role in the prevention of substance abuse in their communities. Scholarships are available. Contact: Evelyn Tucker, Alaska Women's Commission, 561-4227.

Dr. Ira Chasnoff, President of the National Assoc. of Perinatal Addiction Research and Education, will offer a training May 3 and 4, on developmental issues of cocaine babies. The workshop is geared towards: social workers, health care providers, legal professionals, teachers, parents, and foster parents. For information contact: Robin Kornfield at 276-2087.

*Continued on page 7*

# PATHWAYS

## Parents and Professionals Working Together

Alaska's Second Statewide Conference for parents and others concerned about people with special needs

Dear Noel,

I am interested in attending the Pathways Conference in Anchorage, April 19-21.

Please send the information packet which includes a registration form and information on workshops, child care, lodging, college credit, parent stipends, key note speakers and social get-togethers.

I am: \_\_\_\_\_ a parent, foster parent  
\_\_\_\_\_ a health care provider  
\_\_\_\_\_ a concerned person

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State: \_\_\_\_\_  
Zip code: \_\_\_\_\_

To mail this request please

- 1) tear on the perforation
- 2) fold on dotted line so the postal service can read Noel's address
- 3) staple or tape the bottom edge together
- 4) affix stamp and mail

THANK YOU!!! See you at Pathways

---

Stamp  
Here

**Pathways Conference  
Noel Murry  
805 Airport Way  
Fairbanks, AK 99701**

## **FAS Legislation in the 1990 Alaskan Legislature**

**Senate Bill 407 (Binkley, Zharoff, Goghll, Pourchot, Adams, Kelly)**

Setting a priority relating to treatment of persons for alcoholism, drug abuse, inhalant abuse and intoxication. Priority established among state funded programs for persons whose actions could harm others, including fetuses, over those who could only affect themselves.

**Senate Bill 408 (Binkley, Zharoff, Goghll, Pourchot, Ellason, Falks, Jones, Pearce, Adams, Kelly)** Requiring health care providers to report cases of fetal alcohol syndrome. Physicians, nurses or other health care professionals must submit a confidential report to the State Epidemiologist, as is done with measles and rabies. An annual report of the number of cases will assist health care planners.

**Senate Bill 409 (Binkley, Zharoff, Goghll, Ellason, Pearce, Adams)**

Relating to training teachers and certain school officials. This bill will require school districts and REAA's to provide inservice training to teachers and other school personnel on ways to work with FAS/FAE children.

**Senate Bill 410 (Binkley, Zharoff, Ellason, Jones, Pearce, Adams, Pourchot, Kelly)** Relating to warning signs about effects of alcohol consumed during pregnancy. Mandates the lettering on posted warning signs to be at least 1/2 inches high.

**Senate Bill 411 (Binkley, Zharoff, Pourchot, Ellason, Adams, Pearce)**

Relating to sales of alcoholic beverages by a package liquor store. This requires mail order shipments of liquor to contain a brochure warning about FAS/FAE.

**Senate Bill 412 (Binkley, Zharoff, Pourchot, Adams, Ellason)**

Relating to the distribution of information on the health effects of alcohol consumption. Marriage license applications to be accompanied by a brochure warning about dangers during pregnancy.

**Senate Bill 413 (Binkley, Zharoff, Ellason, Jones, Adams)**

Relating to eligibility for receiving a career education loan. Vocational training in the alcohol field must include FAS/FAE training if student loans are used to pay for costs.

**Senate Bill 414 (Binkley, Zharoff, Goghll, Pourchot, Ellason, Falks, Adams, Kelly)** Relating to commitment to treatment programs for pregnant women who are alcoholics. Spouse, guardian, relative, physician, or administrator of treatment facility may petition for commitment to custody of treatment facility if individual "is pregnant and unless committed is likely to harm the fetus by continued use of alcohol."

We are thankful to Sen. Binkley's office for this legislative information. We are pleased to see the heightened interest in FAS/FAE in our legislature and welcome progress on all initiatives that justly seek to eradicate this preventable birth defect and maximize the potential of those already stricken. If you feel strongly about any of these bills, and would like to voice your opinion we ask you to call your own legislator (their number can be found in your phone book under State of Alaska--Legislative Affairs Agency). For a small fee, bush communities can use the Alascom telegraph service 1-800-478-9500 to contact your legislator. Your action can make a difference!!!

---

### **Announcements — Continued from page 4**

To reduce the high incidence of infant mortality in Alaska the State Healthy Baby Project is offering two programs. The Pregnant Women Program will provide prenatal, delivery and postpartum care for women needing financial assistance. The Healthy Child Program will provide medical coverage for children ages 1-5, born since Jan. 1988. For information contact the Public Assistance Office at 675 7th Ave., Station E, Fairbanks or call 451-2850.



# Alaska State Legislature

## SENATE

### Committee on Finance

Official Business

P.O. Box V  
State Capitol  
Juneau, Alaska 99811

#### MEMORANDUM

April 9, 1990

TO: Senator Paul Fischer, Chairman  
Senate Health, Educational and Social Services Committee

FROM: Senator John Binkley *J. Binkley*

RE: Senate Bill 409 - Relating to training for teachers  
and certain school officials

---

SB 409 would require school districts and REAA's to train teachers and other school personnel on alcohol-related birth defects. This would include special educational needs.

Children with alcohol-related birth defects, both Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Fetal Alcohol Effects, show symptoms of hyperactivity, poor coordination, and noncompliance. In school they require constant supervision, have difficulty with change, require additional classroom structure, and have extremely low attention spans.

Not all of these children are referred to special education. Not all of these children are developmentally disabled. Yet all of these children present special challenges to parents, teachers, and other care providers.

The Department of Education has responded to SB 409 with a plan to develop training materials for inservice instruction, to be implemented during the 1991-1992 school year.

The bill is supported by NEA, Alaska Association of School Boards, the Department of Education, the Office of Prevention, Tanana Chiefs Conference, RurAL CAP, AFN, Village Participation Conference, the FAS/FAE Support Network in Alaska.



# NEA-ALASKA

AFFILIATED WITH THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

## Don Oberg, President

Mary Lou Brent  
Vice-President  
Box 810174  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99708

## ANCHORAGE REGIONAL OFFICE

1411 W 33RD AVENUE  
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99503  
(907) 274-0536  
FAX: (907) 274-0551

## JUNEAU OFFICE

105 MUNICIPAL WAY, SUITE 302  
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801  
(907) 586-3090  
FAX: (907) 586-2744

## FAIRBANKS REGIONAL OFFICE

2118 CUSHMAN STREET  
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA 99701  
(907) 456-4435  
FAX: (907) 456-2159

March 26, 1990

Judy Sartin  
NEA  
45101  
Kenai, Alaska 99501

Paul Jarvi  
Region I Director  
PO Box 5876  
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

Deedle Sorenson  
Region I Director  
6903 Sunny Dr  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Beverly Goad  
Region II Director  
Box 341  
Copper Center, Alaska 99571

DeWayne Craig  
Region III Director  
406 So Forest Dr - 3A  
Kenai, Alaska 99541

Myra Poage  
Region IV Director  
Box 974  
Nome, Alaska 99762

Marilyn Rosene  
Region IV Director  
Box 1170  
Dillingham, Alaska 99576

Mike Warme  
Region IV Director  
PO Box 72  
Nunivak, Alaska 99763

Claudia Douglas  
Region V Director  
PO Box 74817  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99707

Gayle Harbo  
Region V Director  
Box 80522  
College, Alaska 99705

Loretta B. Christie  
Region VI Director  
2220 Yorkshire Lane  
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Don Hadley  
Region VI Director  
3259 Wesleyan Dr  
Anchorage, Alaska 99508

Richard Kronberg  
Region VI Director  
3511 Chiniak Bay Dr  
Anchorage, Alaska 99515

Leona Mounds  
Region VI Director  
5816 Winding Way  
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Pamela Reynolds  
Region VI Director  
1510 Ekadore Dr - 135  
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Carolyn Tolson  
Region VII Director  
Box 874914  
Wasilla, Alaska 99687

Hank Harrison  
Region R Director  
Box 110325 S Station  
Anchorage, Alaska 99511

**TO: Senator Rick Uehling and Senator John Binkley, Co-Chairs, and members of the Senate Finance Committee**

**FROM: Don Oberg, NEA-Alaska**

**RE: SB 409, "An Act relating to training of teachers and certain school officials"**

**NEA-Alaska supports passage of Senate Bill 409.**

The appalling rate of alcohol abuse in Alaska makes it imperative that something be done to deal with secondary results of that abuse as it manifests itself in classrooms throughout the state.

Educational Employees are concerned about those children who suffer from Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, or exhibit aberrant behavior associated with living in households with alcoholics, and symptoms of alcoholism in the children themselves.

NEA-Alaska believes that an appropriate route for providing this needed training would be the use of existing inservice training days, so that teachers would not have to bear the burden of additional financial cost or impairment of job security.

In addition, NEA-Alaska believes the proposed legislation should include significant penalties for districts not complying with this requirement.

The problems of alcohol abuse in Alaska are tremendous. The reality of raising future generations of people whose formative years are already endangered by the alcoholism of their families brings to mind the specter of a calamity too frightening to be ignored.

**NEA-Alaska supports speedy passage of SB 409.**

LE03/SB409/dl

Senate Bill 409

Relating to training for teachers and certain school officials

*Sectional Analysis*

Section 1. Amends AS 14.20 under Required Training in the Education Statutes to add a new section.

**AS 14.20.680 (a)** School districts and REAA's would be required to train teachers, administrators, counselors, and other school specialists on medical and psychological effects of alcohol-related disabilities and on the specific educational needs of these children.

**AS 14.20.680 (b)** Newly hired employees would be required to be trained within 45 days.

Section 2. Applicability.

Current employees, including those employed at the time of enactment, and those hired after enactment but before July 1, 1992, shall be trained before July 1, 1992.

---

140330001W 2

*Tanana Chiefs Conference, Inc.*

122 First Avenue  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701-4897  
(907) 452-8251  
Fax (907) 451-8936

April 9, 1990

Senator Paul A. Fischer  
Chairman, HESS Committee  
Alaska State Legislature  
P.O. Box V (MS 3100)  
Juneau AK 99811

RE: Senate Bill 409

Dear Chairman Fischer:

The Tanana Chiefs Conference, Inc. (TCC) favors passage of Senate Bill 409, an act relating to training for teachers and other school officials.

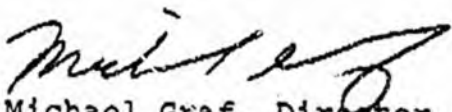
There is a definite need for specific educational needs of students with alcohol-related disabilities. The average IQ of fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS) children generally ranges from 20 to 90. For children with fetal alcohol effects (FAE), the range is 39 to 105. The average for both groups is 68. Average normal IQ generally range from 95 to 105. Intellectual and behavioral problems associated with FAS and FAE are often not recognized until they enter school. These children may have problems in areas of verbal comprehension, attention and memory. Academic performances often peaks at ages 12 to 15 (grades 6 to 8) and shows little improvement after this time.

Educators and administrators in our school systems must be made aware of the medical and psychological characteristics of FAS and FAE. They must learn how to create and implement an instruction program specifically geared to students with alcohol-related disabilities. The more knowledge you disseminate about FAS and FAE, the better equipped society becomes at addressing the problems that are associated with this illness.

TCC passed Board Resolution 90-120 at its annual meeting held in March. The 43 villages who gave unanimous approval to this resolution continue to feel FAS/FAE education and treatment is one of our top priorities. By way of this letter, I will share the Resolution with your Committee members. We would appreciate your scheduling this bill and passage out of your Committee as soon as possible. Thank you.

Sincerely,

TANANA CHIEFS CONFERENCE, INC.

  
Michael Graf, Director  
Community Health Services

LAC/de

Attachment: TCC Board Resolution 90-120

cc: Senate HESS Committee

TANANA CHIEFS CONFERENCE, INC.  
Board of Directors  
Resolution No. 90-120

FAS SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

WHEREAS, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) affects children and adults throughout the State of Alaska; and

WHEREAS, children affected by FAS require special attention, including special educational services; and

WHEREAS, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Indian Health service, and all Native organizations in Alaska should be concerned with FAS and its implications, specifically in regards to the present and emerging needs for special education for FAS children; and


WHEREAS, the Tanana Chiefs Conference, the Fairbanks Native Association, Inc., Doyon, Limited, and the Denakanaaga Elders recognize that the present and anticipated educational problems of FAS children are of great concern to these organizations.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Tanana Chiefs Conference request the State of Alaska and BIA, Indian Health Service to fund a study and develop a plan concerning the special education needs of FAS children and informational program of awareness of FAS for high school student in school systems throughout Alaska; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we request the State of Alaska, the BIA, Indian Health Service, and all Social Service Organizations develop a plan to meet the special educational needs of this population, and provide the special education services that are needed by FAS children.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this resolution was duly passed by the Tanana Chiefs Conference, Inc. Board of Directors on March 15, 1990 at Fairbanks, Alaska and a quorum was duly established.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mitch Demientieff  
Secretary-Treasurer  
Tanana Chiefs Conference, Inc.

Submitted by: FNA

## Second Chance

# As Drug Babies Grow Older, Schools Strive To Meet Their Needs

A Los Angeles Program Deals With Behavior Extremes, Short Attention Spans  
Lots of Old-Fashioned Love

By CATHY TROST

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

LOS ANGELES—The children look like a casting call for Sesame Street, but they carry unseen burdens.

One slim, six-year-old boy sits on the floor with his classmates happily singing an alphabet song. Two years ago, he used to throw hour-long tantrums. He would build a tower of blocks, then shout that it was on fire and knock it down. Last year, while classmates watched the space shuttle blast off on television, he banged on his desk and cried.

What little his teachers know of his background helps explain some of his problems. While pregnant with him, his mother used alcohol, cocaine and PCP. After he was born, she would abandon him from time to time in deserted buildings. Once, a building exploded in flames when he was inside. "He had an area in the schoolroom where he could just go and cry," says a social worker at his school.

The troubled boy is part of a pilot project here for children exposed to drugs in their mothers' wombs. These 30 or so preschoolers and kindergarteners represent the advance guard of a generation of drug babies who are growing up and starting school. The project's goal is to provide early help to children who are of normal intelligence but considered at high risk for developmental, behavioral and learning problems.

## A Growing Issue

Researchers are just now beginning to uncover a web of problems related to prenatal exposure to crack and other drugs, though much still is not known of the long-term effects. A child's ability to learn may be impaired. Fine motor skills may be hampered. A child may have difficulty developing strong attachments for others. Extremes of behavior are common, from apathy to aggression, passivity to hyperactivity, indiscriminate trust to extreme suspicion.

"These are vulnerable kids who won't make it in a classroom where at four you're supposed to know how to print your name and all the ABCs," says Carol Cole, one of the teachers in the program. "Their preschool and kindergarten environments need to be more protective."

The numbers of afflicted children are multiplying, especially in drug-laden urban areas. Within a few years, 40% to 60% of the children in some inner-city schools will have been prenatally exposed to drugs, predicts Judy Howard, clinical professor of pediatrics at the University of California, Los Angeles, School of Medicine, whose research helped spark the project.

Even the suburbs and the urban enclaves of the well-to-do are likely to see the effects of the drug epidemic in their classrooms soon. A 1988 survey of 38 urban and suburban hospitals found that 11% of the newborns had been exposed to drugs in the womb.

## A Family Destroyed by Drugs

Most schools are ill-prepared to handle, much less nourish, such children. Drug-exposed children may look normal, but their disabilities often frustrate teachers who may not be familiar with their backgrounds. To help spread the lessons it is learning, the program's administrators opened their classrooms to a reporter, requesting only that children's names not be used.

On a recent day, the classroom at the Salvin Special Education School crackles with the combustible energy of three- and four-year-olds pushing dolls in strollers and hurtling down slides. A girl crawls on a visitor's lap. She says playing outside and coloring are her favorite things to do.

.... NEXT PAGE

# Second Chance: Schools Strive To Meet Needs of Drug Babies

She is being raised by her 50-year-old father, who teachers say started using heroin at age 13. Her 26-year-old mother has to go to meetings because she uses drugs, the child says. Her grandmother died of AIDS, contracted from her husband, a drug addict.

Teachers say the little girl is doing well in school, but her actions sometimes betray a wellspring of frustration. Once, a teacher recalls, the child was playing in a sandbox when she got upset. She reached into her sock and pretended to pull out a knife to jab at a boy's face.

## Blank Stares and Tantrums

Drugs and violence are familiar to these children. Circle-time talks sometimes include the news of a mother's jailing or a parents' fight. "To pretend that it's not a reality is to deny them," says Ms. Cole, the teacher. She recalls the time two preschoolers argued over a wagon and one angrily threw the other the sign of the Crips, a notorious drug gang.

Another time, she asked her class for the name of the "special house that caterpillars make before they become beautiful butterflies."

"It starts ca-ca-ca," she hinted.

"Cocaine!" one of the boys proudly replied.

Teachers also see more subtle signs of the children's drug exposure and fragmented lives. A girl demands to be left alone, bumps into walls, or stares blankly into space. A boy screams and throws him-

## Continued From First Page

self on the floor because he wants to be picked up but can't express himself.

This is the first day of school for a chunky three-year-old in pink and white barrettes and a pink corduroy jumper. Though she is very bright, the girl's language skills lag those of others her age by about six months. Her coordination is poor, too. Simply building a tower of blocks is a struggle.

These children also carry the scars of their unstable home lives. Many have been abandoned or taken away from their biological parents, then bumped from home to home. Exposed in the womb to heroin, cocaine and PCP, one boy was taken from his mother by the state after his sister was born addicted. By age three, he has been in six different homes and now lives in a group home staffed by nine care-givers.

On the average, the children in the pilot project have been placed in three different homes; some have been shuffled through as many as seven or eight. Not one of the eight children in Vicky Ferrara's kindergarten class lives with his or her biological mother, though some of the mothers drift in and out of their children's lives. Most of the children are being reared by foster parents or grandparents.

"That kind of 'who's going to take care of me' gets translated into difficulty making transitional changes, even from art class to the playground," says Ms. Cole. She believes such insecurity could mean difficulties later in making commitments, from jobs to relationships.

## Motherless Boys

In the classroom, two three-year-old boys dressed identically in shorts and suspenders play quietly. The boys share a foster mother who cares for four preschoolers and six infants in two group homes. All of the children, Elouise Dangerfield, the foster mother, says, have been "touched by drugs."

One of the boys was born prematurely to a drug addict who hasn't seen her son since he was a few months old. As a baby, he was plagued with respiratory problems and other ailments that kept him hospitalized for six weeks.

The other boy's mother gave him up at birth. His father has been in jail for most of his life. At birth, the boy suffered seizures that doctors thought were linked to his mother's drug use; he spent time on breathing monitors and sedatives. "He was the kind of child who had nightmares in his sleep," says Mrs. Dangerfield.

Mrs. Dangerfield says the boys have thrived in the program. In an ordinary classroom, teachers wouldn't have been able to handle the boys' temper tantrums or short attention spans, she says.

## Costly Care

Children are referred to the program by hospitals, social service agencies and foster parents. But the program is not

teachers and five aides. All the children are seen regularly by a social worker, a psychologist, a pediatrician, a speech and language therapist, and a physical education teacher. Parents and care-givers are invited to attend a support program.

Caring for drug-damaged children demands an extraordinary commitment from the staff—in and out of the classroom. Some ferry children to after-school parties they normally would have missed for lack of transportation. Others spend long hours with children's families or caseworkers.

But such care is costly. The Los Angeles Unified School District pays up to \$18,000 a year to educate each of these children. In contrast, it pays an average \$4,000 a year per child in its regular classrooms.

## A Dose of Love

"It's worth it in line with what we are learning," says Phillip Callison, the district's assistant superintendent for special education. Among the lessons gleaned from the two-year-old project: Routine is crucial. Abrupt transitions from one activity to another can be unsettling. Lots of old-fashioned love helps immeasurably.

Educators across the nation are hoping to apply some of these lessons in their own school districts. Representatives of several school districts have sought information from the project's teachers and administrators.

The results here are hopeful. The boy who was terrified of fires and explosions turned out to be a gifted child; his talents are emerging as he becomes more secure at school and with a loving foster family. He is the first in the program to be adapted into a regular first grade. Two others have graduated into a regular kindergarten.

Ms. Ferrara, the kindergarten teacher, says the biggest change is that the children "are now able to discuss their feelings, needs and wants" rather than misbehave in frustration. When one girl first came to the class, "she went to 20 different toys in 20 minutes," flinging them around, says Ms. Ferrara. "Now, she has whole themes in her play." It also helps that her sixth foster home has been a success.

It's story time for the preschoolers, and a teacher is reading a fairy tale to a four-year-old girl in a red dress, red socks and patent-leather shoes. "They lived happily ever after," the teacher concludes. Then she pauses, and adds, "I hope that happens to you."

WALL STREET JOURNAL  
DEC. 27, 1989