

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA VALLEY

DV/SV RESOURCE GUIDE

SURVIVING ABUSE

PROMOTING WELLNESS

CHANGING HARMFUL BEHAVIORS



Photo Credit: Brendan Smith

If you or someone else needs help with safety:

EMERGENCY CONTACTS:

ALASKA FAMILY SERVICES (AFS)

24-hour Crisis Number: 1-866-746-4080 or (907) 746-8026

LAW ENFORCEMENT:

Police Departments: 911

State Troopers (Detachment B): (907) 745-2131 or call your community's VPSO

REGIONAL OCS OFFICES:

Wasilla: (907) 357-9797

PROGRAM DIRECTORY:

Alaska Family Services (AFS)

1825 S. Chugach St., Palmer, AK, 99645

24-hour Crisis: (866) 746-4080 or (907) 746-8026

WRRAP Program: (907) 746-6243

Family Violence Intervention: (907) 373-4456

www.akafs.org

My House Teen Shelter

300 N. Willow Street, Wasilla, Alaska 99654

Phone: 907-354-HELP (4357)

www.myhousematsu.org

DEFINITIONS:

For detailed definitions related to domestic violence see PDF titled "Basic Definitions". For additional information on the reporting and response to domestic violence and child abuse, see PDF infographics.



CALL 211 OR 1-800-478-2221
FOR ANY SOCIAL SERVICE OR
SAFETY RESOURCE.

The Children's Place

Phone: (907) 357-5157

www.thechildrens-place.org

Surviving Abuse: next

REPORTING: FOR CHILDREN & TEENS

(See PDF called “**Basic Definitions**” and PDF called “**Infographic: What to Do if You Suspect a Child is Being Abused or Neglected**” for more information on Child Advocacy Centers, or CACs.)

The Children’s Place, located in Wasilla, is the Mat-Su Valley’s child advocacy center (CAC). Its purpose is to provide a child-friendly, neutral facility for the evaluation, investigation, and treatment of child abuse and to support children and teens and non-offending caregivers. Services include:

- **Transportation** to CAC, if needed
- **Child-friendly, developmentally appropriate interviews** conducted by a trained forensic interviewer
- **Medical examinations** (when necessary) performed by a caring health care provider with special training in child abuse
- **Family advocates** to guide families through the CAC process and support them afterwards
- **Information and support** to help caregivers understand the abuse and how to help the child
- **Referrals** for counseling, legal services, and any other needs
- **Accompaniment and support** for the child through the court process



Children who come to The Children’s Place can receive a full well-child checkup at no cost to the family. This can help meet basic medical needs, and also makes the experience feel more normal and safe for the child.

Family advocates receive training in cultural competency and use professional interpreters through Alaska Language Services.

REPORTING: FOR ADULTS

(See PDF called “**Basic Definitions**” and PDF called “**Infographic: what are your options as an adult victim of DV and/or SV**” for more information about the option of reporting and about Sexual Assault Response Teams or SARTs.)

Adults (ages 18 and older) are not required to make a report if they are abused by a partner or sexually assaulted by anyone, but if they choose to, here is what’s in place for victims in the Valley:

- If a victim (female or male) of sexual assault contacts local law enforcement, they can receive transportation (at no cost to them) to a confidential, secure facility in the Mat-Su for the SART process.
- Victims and concerned loved ones may also contact Alaska Family Services or The Children’s Place (if children were present or involved) to get help making a police report and/or to get information about the process.
- In the SART process, the victim can meet with a law enforcement officer, receive support from an advocate, and complete a forensic exam done by a trained medical professional.
- A victim can have a forensic exam without reporting to law enforcement. This way, the evidence exists if they choose to report to law enforcement later.
- Partner physical violence can be reported to local law-enforcement or health care providers. With the victim’s permission, they can contact victim advocates to assist with safety planning.

If a victim chooses not to report to Law Enforcement, they are still highly encouraged to get a medical exam for their own personal health (e.g. antibiotics and Plan B to prevent STDs and pregnancy) and to address any other medical conditions as a result of being assaulted (e.g. strangulation).

Additionally, if a victim chooses to not report or have a medical exam, they are still encouraged to speak with an advocate, who can help them talk about their experience, safety plan etc.



The Alaska Family Services shelter provides child-friendly spaces and opportunities for adults to support one another.

SHELTER

For victims of abuse and their children needing immediate safety, the following options are available:

Palmer:

Alaska Family Services (AFS)

A **32-bed** facility for women and their children (male children only up to 17 years of age) for short-term (typically 30-60 day) stays

Longer-term stays available through the Women's Residential Reunification and Action Program (WRRAP), where women receive **drug or alcohol treatment and parenting support** as they work on family reunification

Emergency housing referral assistance for **male victims**

Transportation to shelter for victims, their children, and their pets is provided at no cost to the victim.

Shelter residents are provided with a **care package** when they arrive, which includes items such as calling cards, toiletries, towels, journal, planner, calculator, etc.

Advocacy services for anyone seeking shelter (see advocacy section below)

Palmer:

My House Teen Shelter makes available the basic needs of safety, shelter, warmth and nourishment for runaway and homeless teens in the valley, and will help connect teens to resources such as advocates.

SURVIVING ABUSE



ADVOCACY, SUPPORT, AND INFORMATION

Trained, caring advocates support children, teens, and adults at both Alaska Family Services (AFS) and The Children's Place. Advocates provide the following services (which are not exclusive to people in shelter):

- **24-hour hotline** (AFS), where advocates can provide non-judgmental listening, support, safety planning, and information to victims of abuse, friends and family members of victims of abuse, or anyone needing help
- **Safety planning**
- In person **one-on-one support** and information
- **Legal advocacy** (court accompaniment, protective orders, connecting victim to a lawyer at no cost, and monthly legal information workshops open to the public at AFS)
- **Medical advocacy** (accompanying victim to a SART exam, or supporting a child victim and their family during a forensic exam at The Children's Place)
- **Group support** and education (see section 4 of prevention)
- Help to find housing, food, clothing, job training and other **basic needs**. Limited vouchers to help pay for housing.
- Help to find other needed **resources**, such as counseling or children's programs
- Trained interpreters available for languages other than English

PROMOTING WELLNESS



YOUTH MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Education Opportunities:

Alaska Family Services (AFS):

The outreach advocate and the children's outreach coordinator at AFS work with the Mat-Su School District and Job Corp to offer developmentally-appropriate presentations for K–12 classrooms and youth groups on:

- safe touch
- safe dating
- available services
- bystander intervention
- healthy vs. unhealthy relationships

TRAININGS FOR TRIBES AND PROFESSIONAL GROUPS:

Staff at **The Children's Place** are available by request to do community presentations on their mission and services, abusive head trauma/shaken baby syndrome, and other topics related to child maltreatment.

Staff at **AFS** offer trainings on general services, how referrals to AFS work, and how to safely and discretely handle DV issues in workplace. These trainings are for law enforcement, businesses, and others.

CHANGING COMMUNITY NORMS:

In the Mat-Su Valley, **AFS** and **The Children's Place** put on many events in the community during DV Awareness Month (October) and SV Awareness Month (April), including community marches. They welcome participation.

Promoting Wellness: next



Advocates (like this one, photographed at the AFS shelter outdoor play area) provide support and information, and give educational presentations and trainings in the community.

EMPOWERMENT, SUPPORT, AND EDUCATION GROUPS :

AFS in Palmer offers an art group for mothers and their children and DV support groups (in the shelter and in the community—including one for children).



HELP FOR PEOPLE WHO HAVE HARMED OTHERS

Batterer Intervention Programs:

There are a number of different batterer intervention programs and other accountability and education programs for those who have harmed partners and/or children. All of these are run by AFS and are open to those who are court ordered to attend as well as those who go voluntarily:

The **State-approved men's 36-week Batterer Intervention Program** is based on the Duluth Model (a model that teaches participants about the role of power and control in abuse, the belief systems of violence and how to unlearn them, and how to acquire skills for healthy communication and relationships). It is available in the community, as well as at the Palmer Correctional Center and the Goose Creek Correctional Center.

Women's Alternatives to Violence Education(WAVE) 36-week Program

12-week anger management courses

For parents:

For information on responses for caregivers who are involved with the Office of Children's Services (OCS) or at risk of OCS involvement, contact your local OCS office or ICWA coordinator.