BIANNUAL REPORT

Submitted to

State of Alaska
Office of Children’s Services
Biannual Report
July - December 2013
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MISSION STATEMENT

The Child Welfare Academy trains and develops professional workers who work with Alaska children and families to assure children are safe and families are strong.

To accomplish our mission, we:

◊ Provide state of the art training guided by the OCS Practice Model
◊ Develop and evaluate curriculum
◊ Work in collaboration with related disciplines and community partners
◊ Support positive outcomes for children and families

CHILD WELFARE ACADEMY STAFF:

Tammy Sandoval, MSW, Director
Jay C. Bush, LMSW, Trainer
Stephanie Vaughn, MSSW, LCSW, Trainer
Tom McRoberts, LMSW, Trainer
Amanda Metivier, MSW, Youth Education Coordinator
Marianne Mahon, Project & Administrative Manager
Lisa Tanga, Training Coordinator
In summary, during July - December 2013, the Child Welfare Academy offered the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workers in Attendance</td>
<td>614</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCS Workers</td>
<td>570</td>
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<td>Tribal Partners</td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Community Partners</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Completed Training Days</td>
<td>135</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCS Contact Hours</td>
<td>2960</td>
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LEARNING COLLABORATION WEBINARS

The Child Welfare Academy (CWA) has continued to host and/or provide monthly learning collaboration webinars. Attendance is variable, depending on whether the webinar is mandated by OCS. The topics in the past six months were:

- Family Engagement and Motivational Interviewing
- Overview of Trauma Informed Child Welfare
- Family Services Assessment Process
- Assessment and Case Planning with Youth
- Preparing Children and Youth for Adoption
- The FRAN: Future Risk of Abuse and Neglect
- Finding the Right Family for a Child
- OCS Information Sharing with Tribes
- Relative Search/Placement Requests and Denials
- Preparing Families for Adoption

CHILD WELFARE ACADEMY APP

In December 2013, the Child Welfare Academy (CWA) launched a mobile app for the Office of Children’s Services (OCS) staff use. The app features all of the field guides Protection Services Specialists use to achieve the OCS Practice Model. It also has our contact information, directions to the Academy, the ability to record case notes to send to their computers, a place to document notes, links to our website and Facebook pages, and a list of service providers and their contact information. The app will continue to grow as changes are made within OCS. We have received dozens of comments from OCS staff that the app has helped both in the field and during staffings in their offices. Our app has received national recognition and to-date, there have been 595 downloads of the app!
**FAMILY SERVICES ASSESSMENT**

*In July 2013,* the Child Welfare Academy (CWA) launched the rollout of Family Services Assessment (FSA) training. The training was delivered in two phases to the staff of the Office of Children’s Services. Phase I occurred in July and August and consisted of 4 days of FSA and one day of Trauma Informed Child Welfare (TICW). **Phase I** introduced all staff to the FSA Practice Model and specifically addressed the first three stages of FSA; Preparation, Introduction and Exploration. Embedded within the FSA curriculum was Motivational Interviewing and Stages of Change Theory. Staff went through a case example, applied the new techniques of interviewing to gather information about the parent’s readiness to make the necessary changes to be protective of their children absent child protective services involvement. New to the CWA’s training methods, Team Based Learning (TBL) was included. TBL aims to go beyond simply covering content to allow time for team assignments that focus learners toward solving the kinds of problems they will face in the field. We found with TBL, learners are not only more engaged in training, they are far more likely to take their new knowledge back to their work. Specific questions were asked on the training evaluations and most trainees were pleased with the new training method.

**Phase II** was delivered in October and November 2013. Phase II entailed the last two stages of FSA; case planning/change strategies and evaluation. The Office of Children’s Services new policies on case planning with children, youth and families was distributed and reviewed with all staff. Much of the focus of Phase II included building a case plan around the perspectives of the family and how to effectively write case plan goals. Phase II picked up were Phase I left off in working through a case. Additionally, workers were expected to re-evaluate the case plan goals for the families they were currently working with and assess whether they thought the case plan would get a family to their desired state. Once the case plan goals were established, training focused on effective evaluation of the goals. Staffs were given criteria with which to evaluate a parent’s progress on their case plan. Again, TBL and other activities were a part of the training, moving to a less lecture curriculum format.
**Phase One**

**Question 1:** My ability to understand, apply, and practice concepts associated preparation, introduction and exploration in the FSA was:

- **Before:** 72 Responses
- **After:** 73 Responses

**Question 2:** My ability to understand, apply, and practice concepts associated with motivational interviewing in the FSA was:

- **Before:** 73 Responses
- **After:** 72 Responses

**Question 3:** My ability to understand, apply, and practice concepts associated with trauma informed care was:

- **Before:** 59 Responses
- **After:** 55 Responses

**Question 4:** My commitment to applying concepts associated with the FSA, motivational interviewing, and trauma informed care was:

- **Before:** 68 Responses
- **After:** 70 Responses
Phase Two

**Question 1:** My ability to understand, apply, and practice concepts associated with change strategies, case planning, and measuring progress in the FSA was:

- **Before:** 78 Responses
- **After:** 77 Responses

**Question 2:** My ability to understand, apply, and practice concepts associated with writing case plan goals in the FSA was:

- **Before:** 77 Responses
- **After:** 77 Responses

**Question 3:** My commitment to applying concepts associated with motivational interviewing and involving the parent in the development of their case plan goals was:

- **Before:** 77 Responses
- **After:** 76 Responses

**Question 4:** Compared to a lecture based training, my ability to learn concepts through team based learning and other activities was:

- **Before:** 75 Responses
- **After:** 76 Responses
**ODDS AND ENDS**

- Delivered a 3-day workshop to Cook Inlet Tribal Council on the OCS Practice Model and Trauma Informed Care
- Finished up work on the Safe Alaskans Family Toolbox, a 3-year federal grant in partnership with the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
- Delivered a one day workshop at the OCS Family Preservation Grantees Meeting
- Child Welfare Academy (CWA) is providing to two MSW students supervision while the students complete their practicums
- Facilitated a stakeholder meeting in Juneau on the new Family Services Assessment
- CWA trainers attended the West Coast Child Welfare Trainer’s Conference in Austin, Texas
- CWA is continuing to work with the OCS Infant Learning Program to aid in their strategic plan

**TRAUMA INFORMED CHILD WELFARE**

Training on Trauma Informed Child Welfare (TICW) training was also rolled out at the same time as the Family Services Assessment. There were 4 days of FSA and one day of TICW. The 2-day National Child Traumatic Stress Network curriculum was used. Modules included; essential elements of a TICW system, child traumatic stress, trauma’s effect on children, impact on the body and brain, influence on developmental stages, influence on culture, maximizing physical and psychological safety for children and families, trauma-related needs of children and families, enhancing child and family well-being and resilience, enhancing well-being and resilience of those working in the system, partnering with youth and families and partnering with agencies and systems that interact with children and families.

The Office of Children’s Services new policy and procedures for screening for trauma in children and families was also rolled out. The screening tools were distributed and reviewed with staff and plugged into the FSA training curriculum. Staff was educated as to the purpose, use for informed case planning and as an aid for referral to providers. Time was also given to the identification of secondary traumatic stress on OCS staff and ways in which it could be prevented and addressed once identified in an effort to retain quality employees.
Evaluation Questions

Assess Your Trainer(s):

- **Question 1**: Level of knowledge in content area.
- **Question 2**: Trainer(s) were effective and helpful.
- **Question 3**: Level of consistency between content and objectives.

Assess Each Individual Learning Objective:

- **Question 4**: Participants will be able to define the Essential Elements of a Trauma-Informed Child Welfare System.
- **Question 5**: Participants will be able to understand the term child traumatic stress and know what types of experiences constitute childhood trauma.
- **Question 6**: Participants will be able to understand the relationship between a child's lifetime trauma history and his/her behaviors and responses.
- **Question 7**: Participants will be able to practice strategies for enhancing psychological safety among children and families.
- **Question 8**: I have better knowledge upon which to base my decisions and actions.
- **Question 9**: This training has met my expectations.

Assess Your Satisfaction with the Overall Program:

Content-
- **Question 10**: Appropriate for intended audience.
- **Question 11**: I am satisfied with the level of practical knowledge and skills presented at this training.

Teaching Methods-
- **Question 12**: Visual aids, handouts, and oral presentations clarified content.
- **Question 13**: Appropriate subject matter.

Facility-
- **Question 14**: Was adequate and appropriate for session.

Logistics-
- **Question 15**: I learned about the training with adequate time to plan my attendance.
- **Question 16**: Registration was easy and straightforward.
Assess Your Trainer(s):

**Question 1:** Level of knowledge in content area.

**Question 2:** Trainer(s) were effective and helpful.

**Question 3:** Level of consistency between content and objectives.

Assess Each Individual Learning Objective:

**Question 4:** Participants will be able to recognize their role in responding to child traumatic stress.

**Question 5:** Participants will be able to utilize trauma screening to identify trauma-related needs of children and families and make appropriate referrals.

**Question 6:** Participants will be able to identify coping responses, strengths, and protective factors that promote resilience among children who have been impacted by trauma.

**Question 7:** Participants will be able to enhance family well-being and resilience by providing trauma education and support to birth and resource families.

**Question 8:** Participants will be able to identify ways in which they are impacted by secondary traumatic stress and identify coping strategies.

**Question 9:** Participants will be able to understand the importance of partnering with youth and families.

**Question 10:** Participants will be able to identify strategies for partnering with other agencies and systems that interact with children and families.

Assess What You Have Learned:

**Question 11:** I have better knowledge upon which to base my decisions and actions.

**Question 12:** This training has met my expectations.

Assess Your Satisfaction with the Overall Program:

**Content:**

**Question 13:** Appropriate for intended audience.

**Question 14:** I am satisfied with the level of practical knowledge and skills presented at this training.

**Teaching Methods:**

**Question 15:** Visual aids, handouts, and oral presentations clarified content.

**Question 16:** Appropriate subject matter.

**Facility:**

**Question 17:** Was adequate and appropriate for session.

**Logistics:**

**Question 18:** I learned about the training with adequate time to plan my attendance.

**Question 19:** Registration was easy and straightforward.
Staff Development Survey Summary

Child Welfare Academy

January 2014

1. Did you attend SKILS after July 1, 2012?

2. On a scale of 1 to 5, how well did SKILS prepare you for field practice (1=not very well; 5=extremely well)
4. If yes, what do you feel should have been covered?

Dozens of respondents provided comments as to what they felt should have been covered in SKILS and without doubt, ORCA and legal training were most frequently noted. How to document in ORCA and court preparation, including court report writing continues to be an ongoing pressing need. How to complete routine tasks and understanding how the practice model fits with the day to day work was also noted by several respondents, including time management techniques. Other noted suggestions included; Alaska statutes, youth issues, licensing, self-care, worker safety, working more closely with tribes, OCS policies and procedures, working with families with mental health, substance abuse and domestic violence. There were other comments about the methods of training the CWA uses and several opinions that all workers should get all training instead of splitting the training up into Initial Assessment and Family Services. Also notable was the suggestion that there be more interviewing within SKILS.
6. If not, what were the barriers?
Most respondents said they were too busy with workload demands to complete the Staff Development Plan (SDP). A few others said they hadn't seen a SDP. Some respondents that indicated the required online trainings weren't available. One respondent said their supervisor had not been available to them for completion.

7. Which requirements were not completed?
Most of the requirements that were noted were because the worker had not yet been with OCS for six months.

8. Overall, how did the SDF help your understanding of OCS and the job you are doing? (1 = not very well; 5 = extremely well)

- 1 = 13%
- 2 = 18%
- 3 = 41%
- 4 = 22%
- 5 = 6%
10. **What other training opportunities would be helpful to you to achieve fidelity to the practice model and trauma informed child welfare practice?**

Many of the responses were similar to the answers to question #4, however, several respondents indicated that they thought more shadowing of seasoned workers and having a mentor would be helpful. Other responses included having specialized training on mental health, substance abuse, and how to engage families when they are unwilling to participate in the intervention. More detailed, concrete training about the day to day tasks and court report writing was noted. Ongoing training, interviewing practice, updates in the field office and one year check-ins were offered as a way to achieve fidelity to the practice model.

11. **Do you use our website for resource information?**

51% Yes
49% No
12. **What has been useful and what might be improved?**

There were several positive statements made about the CWA website and other resources the CWA provides, most especially the new “app”. Respondents did suggest making the website more user friendly and easier to find other trainings/links/resources. It would appear that some staff are not aware of how to find forms, guides, and useful tools for everyday practice.
16. What additional information or features would you like to see on our website?
Many respondents indicated that they did not know there were additional online trainings available on our website. Ideas for additions included; critical stress management, mental health information, and videos of interviews with co-workers on tips and tricks to the job.

17. Have you "liked" us on our Facebook page - Alaska ChildWelfare Academy?
18. Please comment on the usefulness of our Facebook posts.
Most of the respondents noted that they didn’t use Facebook or if they did they were not connected to the CWA. Two people noted that they felt like they needed to unlike the page because they didn’t want their personal posts to be seen by upper management. A few respondents liked the articles, but requested putting our more information on personal growth and not just professional growth would be helpful.

19. Have you downloaded the new CWA app which includes field guides and other invaluable tools to help you in the field?

![Pie chart showing 64% No and 36% Yes]

20. Have you attended at least one webinar?

![Pie chart showing 94% Yes and 6% No]
22. Which learning collaboration webinars were most effective and why?
Many respondents indicated that of the webinars they had attended most of them were helpful. They noted the updates as being most beneficial. There were many comments made about webinars not being the most effective way of learning and that the information is not supported by within the field offices. Some of the ineffectiveness was chalked up to too many distractions at their desk or chatter if attending in a group.

23. Do you understand the sign-in process and how to receive credit for the webinar training?

Yes 63%
No 37%
CHILD ADVOCACY CENTERS

The Child Welfare Academy (CWA) began its work to provide training and technical assistance to Child Advocacy Centers (CAC) and Multi-disciplinary Teams (MDT) by surveying each CAC/MDT as to its current needs. Some needs were identified and are in process of being addressed. CACs universally agreed that training in Trauma Informed Care was needed and requested training. Trauma training will be provided in February 2014 in conjunction with OCS personnel. The CWA attends the regularly scheduled monthly teleconference and responds to requests and information as needed.

WORKER SAFETY INITIATIVE

In concern for worker safety, the Office of Children’s Services (OCS) has asked the Child Welfare Academy (CWA) to provide worker safety training to all field office staff. The CWA has hired Joe Masten, former Anchorage Police Department employee to provide both Crises Prevention Intervention (CPI) and Environmental Awareness Training. Environmental Awareness teaches staff about wilderness encounters, active shooters/attackers, verbal judo, and packing for travel. Crises Prevention Intervention is a safe, non-harmful behavior management system designed to help human service professionals provide for the best possible Care, Welfare, Safety and Security of disruptive, assaultive and out-of-control individuals. Training will take place all across the state and be completed by June 30, 2014.

TEAM BASED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

The CWA continues to incorporate new training methods into the SKILS curriculum. One method, Team Based Learning (TBL) uses a structured method to encourage learning to build consensus, critically think and problem solve using case examples. Three new TBL modules will be introduced in March 2014. More TBL modules will be created as the year progresses.

WEBINARS

In addition to the learning collaboration calls, the CWA is exploring other creative ways to engage the Office of Children’s Services workers in online training. The CWA is exploring podcast interviews with workers, short online training videos and other new training methods in the next six months.
EDUCATION AND TRAINING VOUCHERS

The Child Welfare Academy (CWA) administers the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program to youth eligible for the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program. Eligible youth were in foster care and out of home placement, on or after their 16th birthday. Youth remain eligible for the ETV Program until they reach age 23 as long as, they are enrolled on their 21st birthday.

The CWA Youth Education Coordinator provides case management services to youth receiving ETV, Presidential Tuition Waivers, and the OCS Scholarship funding. The Youth Education Coordinator also work with incoming students on the enrollment/admissions process, plan and coordinate the annual foster youth Education Conference, and participate in outreach within the University and community to expand supports and resources to foster youth.

FALL 2013 STUDENT POPULATION

A total of 38 students attended the fall 2013 semester, with 27 students returning from the previous academic year. The majority (22) of students attended full time with 12 or more credits. Seventy-one percent of students were considered freshman with less than 30 credit hours completed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Returning</th>
<th># of Students</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Students</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>28.95%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Returning Students</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>71.05%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
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<tr>
<th>Enrollment</th>
<th># of Students</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Part time (1-11 credits)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>42.11%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Full Time (12 or more credits)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>57.89%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
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</table>

Fall 2013 ETV Student Type (n=38)

- Freshman (0-30 credits) 7.89%
- Sophomore (31-60 credits) 7.89%
- Junior (61-90 credits) 13.16%
- Senior (91 or more credits) 71.05%
The majority of students enrolled continues to be at the University of Alaska Anchorage, Main Campus. Eight students lived on campus with one in Fairbanks, one in Juneau, and six in Anchorage. The majority of all 38 students are Alaska Native, making up 36% of the overall ETV student population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campus</th>
<th># of Students</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UAA Main Campus</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>65.79%</td>
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<tr>
<td>UAA - Mat-Su Campus</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13.16%</td>
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<tr>
<td>UAS</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UAF</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10.53%</td>
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<tr>
<td>UAA Katchemak Bay</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.63%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
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<tr>
<th>Campus Housing</th>
<th># of Students</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On Campus</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off Campus</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>78.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
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</table>
ACADEMICS
Overall, students maintained a GPA above a 2.0 for the Fall 2013 Semester.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION SUPPORT SERVICES

The Youth Education Coordinator provides post-secondary education support to students enrolled in and those exploring post-secondary education options. Services include: College Preparation, Financial Aid Assistance, College Counseling, Tutoring, and Test Preparation. CWA staff provided 166 Post-Secondary Education Support Services between July 1st and December 30th, 2013.

- College Preparation/Financial Aid--102
- College Counseling--61
- Tutoring--2
- Test Preparation--1
## July 2013

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## TRAININGS

### July 2013
- 182 SKILS: FS July 8-12  Anchorage
- FSA/TICW: July 22-26  Kenai / Kotzebue / Bethel
- FSA/TICW: July 29 – August 2  Wasilla/Gakona

### August 2013
- FSA/TICW: August 1-2  Wasilla/Gakona
- FSA/TICW: August 12-16  Rural NRO (FAI)
- 181 SKILS: IA August 12-16  Anchorage
- 182 SKILS: IA August 19-23  Anchorage
- FSA/TICW: August 26-30  DLG/Kodiak/KS  Anchorage

### September 2013
- 181 SKILS: IA September 9-13  Anchorage
- 182 SKILS: FS September 16-20  Anchorage
- 183 SKILS: ADV September 23-27  Anchorage

## MEETINGS / CONFERENCE ROOM

- ETV Orientation: August 14  Anchorage
- CQI Leadership: September 4  Anchorage
- Tribal Grantee Meeting: September 24-26  Anchorage
- OCS Leadership

## WEBINARS / Learning Collaborations

- MEPA – July 16
- Family Engagement & Motivational Interviewing - July 19
- Field Guide to Child Functioning - July 31; August 28
- Overview of TICW - August 14
- FSA Process – September 4
### October 2013

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### TRAININGS

#### Training / Date / Location

**October 2013**
- ARO TICW: October 8-9; 14-15; 29-30
- FSA/TICW: October 7 - 11
  - Rural NRO / SERO/ Kenai
- FSA/TICW: October 21 - 25
  - Nome/WAS-Gakona/DLG-Kodiak-KS (Anchorage
- KWYA: October 22-23 Anchorage
- NRO TICW: October 28-29; 31-Nov 1
- NRO FSA Update: October 30
- ICWA: October 31 - November 1 Anchorage/SCRO

**November 2013**
- NRO TICW: November 1
- ICWA: October 31 - November 1 Anchorage/SCRO
- 181 SKILS: IA November 4 - 8 Anchorage
- ARO TICW: November 12-13; 14-15
- 182 SKILS: IA November 18 -22 Anchorage
- FSA/TICW: November 18 -22 WRO
- ARO FSA Update: November 19; 21

**December 2013**
- 183 SKILS: ADV September 23-27 Anchorage
- 140 SSA Training: December 3 -5 Anchorage

### MEETINGS / CONFERENCE ROOM

- ILP Touchpoint: October 31
- OCS Leadership

### WEBINARS / Learning Collaborations

- Field Guide to Child Functioning - Oct 2; Dec 11
- FSA: Case Planning w/Youth Policy - Oct. 16
- Preparing Children/Youth for Adoption - Nov 6
- The FRAN: Nov 7
- Finding the Right Family for a Child - Nov 20
- Preparing Families for Adoption - Dec 4
- Initial Referral Services - Dec 11
Contact Us

Physical/Mailing Address
Child Welfare Academy
4500 Diplomacy Drive, Suite 303
Anchorage, AK 99508

(907) 786-6720 Main Line
(907) 786-6735 Fax Line