A Community’s Journey Toward Embracing Prevention

Primary Prevention Summit
Mat-Su Health Foundation
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In 2013 the Mat-Su Community said that their #1 goal is that:

ALL CHILDREN ARE WELL-CARED FOR AND SAFE
This is about having a child’s home and community be a supportive, nurturing, and stable place

Unfortunately not all children are safe and well-cared for....

**Adverse Childhood Experiences**

**Individual abuse:**
- Physical abuse/neglect
- Emotional abuse/neglect
- Sexual abuse

**Household dysfunction:**
- Alcohol and/or drug abuse
- Incarcerated household member
- Mental illness/suicide in household
- Mother is treated violently
- One or no parents
ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES
- Abuse or Neglect
- Household Dysfunction

INCREASED RISK FOR THESE PROBLEMS
- Dysregulation
- Alcohol, tobacco, drugs
- Mental health problems
- Adult incarceration
- Divorce
- Homelessness
- Disability
- Low education levels
- Unemployment
- On-the-job injury or illness

THESE MAY BE PASSED DOWN TO THE NEXT GENERATION
- ACEs for Next Generation
  - Abuse or neglect
  - Household dysfunction

This takes more than one or two people or organizations in a family’s life, it takes a whole community......

schools, doctors, law enforcement, judges, counselors, hospital, employers, family, friends, neighbors.
### Sectors that normally interact with children and parents/guardians

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sectors that interact with children and parents/guardians in times of crisis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Childcare</td>
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<td>Early Learning</td>
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<td>Parent Support</td>
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<tr>
<td>Places of worship</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friends/family/volunteers</td>
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### Primary Prevention for All Families

- **Culture Change**
  - Educational campaigns and training
  - Community Organizing

- **Parent Support**
  - Parent training and peer support
  - Information, referral, and navigation assistance for parents

- **Childcare and Learning**
  - Quality, affordable childcare
  - Quality, affordable afterschool care
  - Home visiting programs
  - Center-based early learning and preschool

- **Medical/BH**
  - Family Planning (teen, adult)
  - Preconception/Prenatal Care
  - Primary Care (developmental screening, integrated BH care)
  - School Health Programs

- **Social Emotional Learning in education**
  - Services for families with dev. disabilities
Who are our families?

Families having good times

Families with stress

Families involved in child welfare and homeless youth

Levels of Prevention

3 Tertiary Prevention

2 Secondary Prevention

1 Primary Prevention

Tertiary
For children experiencing maltreatment

Secondary
For families in need to alleviate identified problems and prevent escalation

Primary
For entire population to provide support and education before problems occur
Thinking about these three family situations where does your community put the most prevention resources?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Count</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-4 years</td>
<td>7,478</td>
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<tr>
<td>5-9 years</td>
<td>8,324</td>
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<tr>
<td>10-14 years</td>
<td>7,893</td>
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<tr>
<td>15-19 years</td>
<td>7,078</td>
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</table>
Data for Prevention

- 2016 Mat-Su Household Survey (MHS)
- AK Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)
- AK Pregnancy Risk Monitoring System (PRAMS)
- AK Childhood Understanding Behaviors Survey (CUBS)
- AK Bureau of Vital Statistics (BVS)
- AK Office of Children Services SCAN
- AK School Climate and Connectedness Survey
- In-depth interviews with 60 residents
- Interviews with child and family professionals
- Service Gap Analysis (SGA)

Two Generation Approach – 2Gen

Focused on creating opportunities for and addressing needs of both children and the adults in their lives together
5 PROTECTIVE FACTORS

- Parents who have social connections
- Widespread knowledge of parenting and child development
- Promotion of social emotional skills in children
- Parents who are resilient
- Availability of support in times of need for families

Source: Strengthening Families Framework, Center for the Study of Social Policy

Social Connections: help parents build networks of support that reinforce positive norms and childrearing, provide assistance, and help solve problems

1. Create a community where it is easy for all parents to build supportive relationships with other parents, seniors, and others

2. Use community organizing to identify and unify parent leaders to create community-driven solutions to family issues
Social Connections

Almost 9 out of 10 of households feel comfortable going to neighbor for help (MHS, 2016)

50% often do favors for people in their community (MHS, 2016)

8% households have no one or only 1 person to ask for help (MHS, 2016)

RECOMMENDATIONS: Social Connections

Create a community where it is easy for all parents to build supportive relationships with other parents, seniors, and others

Use community organizing to identify and unify parent leaders to create community-driven solutions to family issues

Who is involved?

Community:
Family
Friends
Places of worship
Schools
Volunteers

Mat-Su:
Connect Mat-Su
R.O.C.K. Mat-Su
United Way of Mat-Su
Faith-Based
Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development: Having accurate information about raising children and appropriate expectations for their behavior

- Promote affordable, high quality childcare, afterschool care and home-visiting programs that support optimal child development and youth resilience
- Support a wide array of parent training, education and support efforts
- Ensure widespread access to family planning

Knowledge of Parenting/Child Development

- 41% of Mat-Su adults have heard of ACEs (MHS, 2016)
- In Mat-Su 41% of births were unwanted or unplanned (PRAMS 2011)
- In 2015, there were 3,528 allegations of child maltreatment in Mat-Su (OCS-SCAN 2015)
- In 2015, 248 substantiated reports of abuse had an estimated lifetime cost of $55.4 million (OCS-SCAN 2015/McDowell)
Recommendations: Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development

Who is involved?

**Community:**
- Childcare providers
- After school programs
- Medical providers
- Parents
- Volunteers
- Employers

**Mat-Su:**
- Heart Reach
- Head Start (CCS Early Learning)

Community Education in Mat-Su:
- R.O.C.K. Mat-Su
- Alaska Family Services
- Thrive Coalition

Parental Resilience: ability to constructively cope with and bounce back from all types of challenges.

Create immediate access to behavioral health care for children, parents, and families

Ensure support for the “whole” parent and child in medical settings with integrated physical and behavioral health care

Create family-friendly workplaces with work-related stress reduction strategies, parental leave, employee assistance programs, flexible and consistent schedules, and no behavioral health stigma

Implement trauma-informed policies in workplaces, social service agencies, courts, police, medical offices, and schools to help families who are healing from trauma
Parental Resilience

There is a lack of immediate access to behavioral health care for families (BHES, 2015)

4 out of 10 adults have two or more ACEs (BRFSS, 2013/14)

17% of households would not be likely to ask for help with child care etc. if needed (MHS, 2016)

Recommendations Parental Resilience

Who is involved?

Parental Resilience in Community:
- Employers
- Behavioral health providers
- Medical providers
- Schools
- Social service agencies
- Courts
- Law enforcement

Youth Resilience in Mat-Su:
- MY House
- MSBSD
- Tribal
- Faith-Based
- WPFD (Youth Court)
- United Way Mat-Su
- No More Mat-Su
- R.O.C.K. Mat-Su/Thrive
- Youth360
Social Emotional Competency of Children: The ability to self-regulate and to effectively communicate emotions, and have healthy relationships.

Support universal access to early learning and preschool programs to ensure kindergarten readiness around social emotional competency of Mat-Su children

Promote social emotional competency for all Mat-Su school-age children and young adults, including those who have experienced trauma

Promote immediate access to integrated pediatric physical and behavioral health care

Social and Emotional Competence of Children

Over 1 out of 4 high school students had serious difficulty concentrating because of physical, mental, or emotional problems (YRBS, 2014/25)

About 4 out of 10 high school students said at least one parent talked to them about what they do in school daily (YRBS, 15)

Over 4 out of 10 students said it was hard for them to get through something when they felt frustrated (grades 6-12) (SCCS, 2015)
**Recommendations: Social Emotional Competency of Children.**

**Primary Prevention**

Support universal access to early learning and preschool programs to ensure kindergarten readiness around social emotional competency of children.

**Who is involved?**

**Community:**
- Head Start
- Pre-K Programs
- School District

**Youth Voice in Mat-Su:**
- MSBSD
- United Way Mat-Su
- R.O.C.K. Mat-Su

**Home school families and supports:**
- Prevention Summit (many)

**Medical providers**

**Child care providers**

**Behavioral Health providers**

**Concrete Supports in Times of Need:** Support to meet needs in times of crisis – food, clothing, shelter, and other resources

**Secondary Prevention**

Create a more connected and complete network of support service providers who leverage efforts to meet the needs of Mat-Su families.

**Tertiary Prevention**

Ensure that parents have continuous Medicaid coverage; even those who have temporarily lost custody of their children.

Develop a policy/advocacy agenda that creates structural changes that support homeless youth and young adults to thrive.
Concrete Supports in Times of Need

10,876 families were below the poverty level ($30K family of 4) (ACS, 2013-17)

In the 2019 school year, over 600 students experienced homelessness (Mat-Su School District)

In past year, household member went without needed:
Dental care - 14%
Medical care - 12%
Medication - 13%
(MHS, 2016)

Recommendations: Concrete Supports in Times of Need

Create a more connected and complete network of support service providers who leverage efforts to meet the needs of Mat-Su families

Develop a policy/advocacy agenda that creates structural changes that support homeless youth and young adults to thrive

Ensure that parents have continuous Medicaid coverage; even those who have temporarily lost custody of their children

Who is involved?

Community:
Food banks
Public assistance and Medicaid
Homeless prevention and Housing providers
Homeless youth advocates
Schools
Medical providers

Mat-Su:
MSBSD
Alaska Family Services
United Way Mat-SU
Kids Kupboard
Upper Su Pantry
Frontline Mission
Substance Abuse Prevention

**Mat-Su:**
United Way Mat-Su - Thrive
Youth360
WPD (Youth Court)

Strengthening Families

**Mat-Su:**
R.O.C.K. Mat-Su
Knik Tribal Council
Chickaloon Village Traditional Council
State Funding for Prevention by Level, Mat-Su, 2015
Total $8.3 million

Source: State of Alaska, Department of Health and Social Services

YOUTH THRIVE PROTECTIVE FACTORS –
Youth in Iceland Program

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<tr>
<th>Youth Thrive</th>
<th>Youth in Iceland Program</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social connections</td>
<td>Parental organizations/ youth activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge of adolescent development</td>
<td>Laws changed, Parent agreements, Parent education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive and Social Emotional Competence</td>
<td>Built infrastructure for organized activities and provided “leisure card” for families with yearly allowance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Youth resilience</td>
<td>Measured progress with yearly survey</td>
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<tr>
<td>Availability of support in times of need</td>
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Source: Center for the Study of Social Policy
Since inception in 2007, Thrive Mat-Su has been the community’s leader in addressing substance abuse issues. Acting as a catalyst for change, Thrive Mat-Su mobilizes resources and forges partnerships to impact the Valley in lasting and measurable ways.

Strategic Prevention Framework
Thrive utilizes the Substance Abuse & Mental Health Administration (SAMSHA) Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) as its planning process for preventing substance use and misuse.

ROCK ADVISORS

United Way
AK Family Services
Big Brothers/Big Sisters
Mat-Su Public health Nursing
Palmer Mental Health Court
American Lung Association
DJJ
Cook Inlet Tribal Council
Sunshine Community Health Center
Mat-Su Youth Court
Fiend2Clean
AK National Guard
CoDI
Mat-Su Health Foundation
City of Wasilla
AK Youth Soccer

School District
Set Free AK
CCS Early Learning
Knik Tribal Council
AK Children's Trust
Chickaloon Tribal Council
Church on the Rock
MSSCA
Kids Kupboard
MyHouse
Frontline Mission
Upper Su Food Pantry
Connect Mat-Su
Heartreach
Residents
Youth
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Youth and families thrive best when they are supported, heard and offered safe, engaging spaces in which to learn, play and grow together. Youth360 is a local initiative designed to build communities where access to afterschool connection and activities is available for all.

Youth360 connects local youth to their peers, parents and community to increase health and wellness. The more connected a young person is, the more likely they will become happy, healthy, thriving adults. Social connection is linked to increased rates of health and well-being and reduced rates of bullying, suicide, and substance misuse.

Youth360 builds connection by providing positive, meaningful activities and opportunities for young people and their families.
R.O.C.K. Mat-Su (Raising Our Children with Kindness) is a collaborative of community members – including individuals and organizations – joining together to promote family resilience and reduce child maltreatment. R.O.C.K. works to build social supports, eliminate silos, and influence systems that affect kids and families throughout the borough, all in support of achieving the goal of ending child abuse in Mat-Su.

What do you think about the protective factors? Who is working collaboratively across multiple levels of prevention? GROUP ACTIVITY

- Parents and youth who are resilient
- Social connections for parents and youth
- Availability of support in times of need for families
- Widespread knowledge of parenting and child development, health promotion
- Promotion of social emotional skills in children