



VOA Alaska

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Who We Are

VOA Alaska is a non-profit providing behavioral health and well-being services to Alaska's youth, young adults, and families at low or no cost.

Our Mission: Empower Alaskans and uplift the human spirit through recovery services, housing, and promoting healthy communities.

Our Vision: A community that supports the hope, health, and healing of every Alaskan.

Alaska is facing a youth mental health crisis of alarming proportions.

Hospitals are Overwhelmed

Per the Health Facilities Discharge Data dashboard, in 2022, nearly **1,200 children and emerging adults** (0–24-year-olds) were **admitted to a hospital for a behavioral health-related diagnosis**.

About **1,900 children and emerging adults** were **admitted to ER** due to behavioral health-related diagnoses.

Only 30-40% of young people discharged from the hospital (BH-related) received continued care in the community.

Alaska's Child Welfare System is Struggling

Over the past year, 2,700 youth involved with OCS are in OHH placements. Only 53% of these youth are receiving BH services.

From Dec 2022 to Dec 2023, the OCS reports there are **124 kids each month with an Assessed Substantiated Claim of childhood maltreatment or abuse, and over 1,600 kids annually**.

OCS saw a 14% reduction in OCS-Licensed Residential Childcare Centers

Schools are on the Frontlines

Self-Harm and suicide increased 28% for 15–24-year-olds in 2021

In 2023, Alaska holds the unfortunate distinction of being the **number one state in the country for youth suicide rates**.

The **sharpest increase in suicide attempts occurred among the youngest demographic, specifically those aged 11-14 years old**.

**INVESTIGATION OF THE STATE OF
ALASKA'S BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
SYSTEM FOR CHILDREN**



United States Department of Justice
Civil Rights Division

December 15, 2022

Department of Justice Findings

Alaska's current continuum of care for children, adolescents, and families is fragmented.

A United States DOJ Civil Rights Division Investigation of the State of Alaska's Behavioral Health System for Children found that there is reasonable cause to believe the State is violating the Americans with Disabilities Act by **failing to provide appropriate treatment options**. Furthermore, the investigation found that Alaska children experience unnecessarily long stays at inpatient psychiatric and residential facilities **due to a lack of community-based treatment options**.



VOA Alaska is on the frontlines of the youth mental health crisis.

- Served over 1,100 youth, young adults, and families in 2023.
- Comprehensive continuum of care.
- Expanded community-based services by 300% since 2021.
- Rapid Response team
- Growth in recent years has been to strategically meet the gaps in Alaska's system of care.
- Meeting youth and families where they are.

How We Serve: Our Continuum of Care

Community Coalitions

Advocating for policy changes alongside community partners and leaders to address youth substance use in our community with the VOA-led **Anchorage Adolescent Substance Misuse Prevention Coalition**.

Prevention Education

Engaging youth in self-evaluation and equipping them with the tools they need to make healthier choices about drugs and alcohol with **PRIME for LIFE** classes.

School-Based Mental Health

Providing on-site mental health and wellness support to students, staff, and families with VOA clinicians based in elementary, middle, and high schools throughout Anchorage.

Mental Health & Substance Use Counseling

Supporting youth and young adults in learning coping skills, building resiliency, and improving their mental health and well-being.

Intensive Outpatient

Creating a safe space for youth and young adults struggling with drugs or alcohol to take charge of their recovery and maintain sobriety.

Day Treatment

Helping youth overcome barriers in their continued recovery by combining academic and therapeutic services in which youth engage at least 20 hours per week.

Supportive Housing

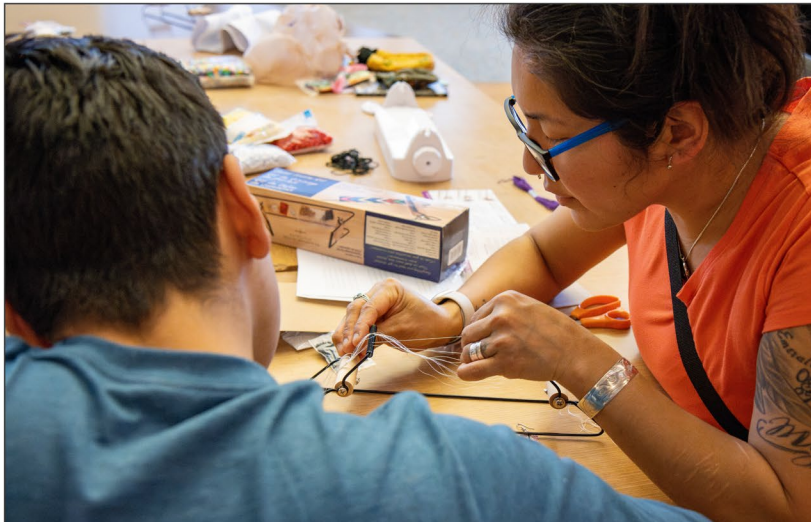
Ending the experience of homelessness for young adults through affordable housing, mental health and wellness services, and life-skills development.

Residential Treatment

Empowering youth to address their substance use and co-occurring mental health challenges in a structured, therapeutic environment at the **Adolescent Residential Center for Help (ARCH)**.

Peer Support and Care Navigation | Providing immediate connection to youth and families in need, creating engaging pathways to care, and guiding youth in their journey through mentorship from those with lived experience.

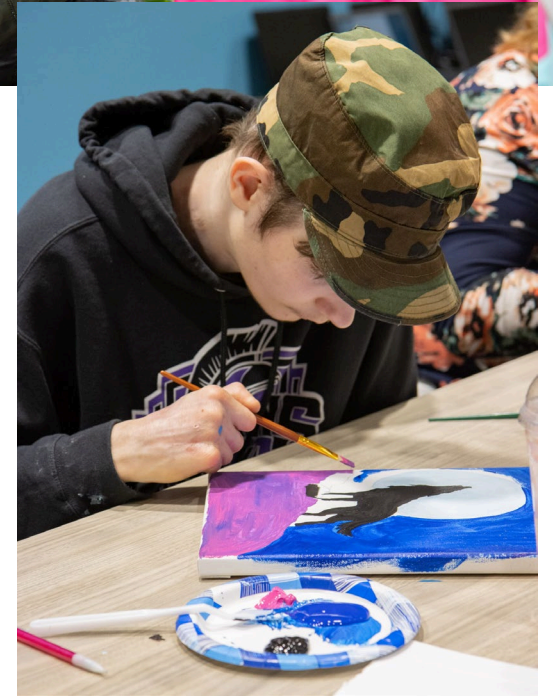
Family Services | Supporting all families with youth enrolled in VOA Alaska's care through education, intervention, home-based services, and family therapy; with additional supports for Alaskans raising relative children.



MOA Alcohol Tax: Empowering Rising 6th Graders at Begich & Connecting Families with Services



MOA Alcohol Tax: Providing Fun & Engaging Pathways to Services for Youth





ARCH – Adolescent Center for Help

- ARCH is the ONLY residential substance use treatment facility for youth open today in the entire state
- A divided behavioral health system is not in the best interest of youth.
- Current rates do not consider the unique differences between adolescent and adult behavioral health care.
- Providers operating an adolescent services array often require twice as much stuff as adult providers, and agencies are shutting down because of it.
- State grants supporting substance use have seen increased demand with insufficient increases to meet needs

	Mental Health	Substance Use
Adult	MH RT Level 1 \$501.87/day MH RT Level 2 \$628.68/day	ASAM 3.1 \$418.87/day ASAM 3.5 \$475.78/day ASAM 3.7 \$940.50/day
Adolescent	CRT Level 1 \$319.77/day CRT Level 2 \$444.51/day RPTC \$802.69/day	ASAM 3.1 \$369.96/day ASAM 3.5 \$521.06/day ASAM 3.7 \$940.50/day



Connect with VOA Alaska

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