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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES

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Alaska Children's Trust launches campaign aimed at preventing child abuse and neglect

Federal funds help effort to raise awareness of and prevent chronic harm to children

(Anchorage, Alaska) – The Alaska Children's Trust and the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) have launched a social marketing campaign aimed at raising awareness and preventing child abuse and neglect in Alaska. The Alaska Children's Trust campaign is funded with a \$593,686 federal appropriation to combat child abuse and neglect in the state. The statewide television and radio campaign ads began airing Sept. 26.

"Child abuse and neglect is a serious problem facing our state," said Alaska Children's Trust Chair Margo McCabe. "It is time to elevate this issue and get our entire community talking about how we can rid our state of child abuse and neglect."

Alaska ranks highest among states for reports of harm per capita, with 42.2 per 1,000 children in Alaska compared to the national average of 12.2 per 1,000 children. In fiscal year 2004, Alaska had 12,088 reports of harm to children.

As part of this campaign, the Children's Trust has established a statewide toll-free parent support line (1-800-643-KIDS). Professionals are available to answer parenting questions or refer parents who need additional resources to organizations in their community.

Additionally, the Children's Trust has benefited from partnerships to maximize this campaign; media organizations have donated over \$165,000 in bonus advertising spots to help the campaign reach more Alaskans across the state. Research evaluating the campaign effectiveness will be conducted after campaign completion in June 2006, comparing results to data collected prior to the campaign launch.

The Alaska Children's Trust was established in 1988 with the goal of preventing child abuse and neglect throughout the state. Seven trustees, appointed by the Governor, oversee the fiduciary functions of the Alaska Children's Trust. The trust operates as a savings account where the principal grows through grant income and donations while the earnings are provided through contracts or grants to nonprofit prevention programs for child abuse and neglect. For more information on the Alaska Children's Trust and the campaign to prevent child abuse and neglect, visit www.alaskachildrenstrust.org.