

Children are counseled

**By Shirley McConnell
Project Now**

If you are an adult, child or runaway in need of counsel or help, the Division of Family and Children Services is the place to go.

Besides counseling, the agency provides adoption services where they match and place children. They make 6-8 visits to the prospective parents, lasting 1½-2 hours. If the adoptive parents live in the bush, a social worker will visit the village for 3-4 days.

Another service the agency provides is licensing day care homes. Nancy Johnson, in the State Office Building on the first floor, section E works in this department.

One of the most important problems facing Fairbanks concerning families is child neglect. By law the agency provides protective services if the child is abused or abandoned. If at all possible, they try to keep the child in the family. Only if the child is in danger will he be removed from his home and placed in another.

The counselors try to reunite runaways with their families. If they can't adjust to their home they either go to a foster home or institutions such as Jessee Lee in Anchorage or the Hospitality House in Fairbanks.

The agency also works with children referred from other agencies such as schools, neighbors and self-referrals.

If the referrals need a place to stay until their problems are solved there is the Receiving Home on Gillam Way. Runaways can go there also.

The Receiving Home provides emergency care for children of all ages for a maximum of 60 days. The home is run by the Hospitality House.

Counseling for the children is free, but a family with an income over a certain maximum must pay for the services. Often the agency is overcrowded and will refer the family over the maximum income to Island Counseling or other agencies.

So if you are in need of counseling, there's help.