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### Our Mission Statement

- » Facilitating life transitions for at-risk and vulnerable youth.

### Our Guiding Principles

- » All people have the right to be loved and treated with respect and dignity.
- » Every youth should be able to find shelter, food, warmth, and caring adults whenever they need it.
- » Our actions should reflect our beliefs.

### Volunteer Spotlight

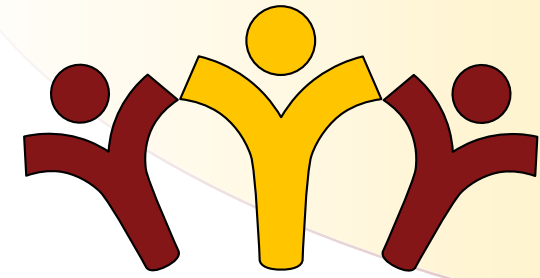


Kasey Bentz

Kasey Bentz is a Soldier at Fort Wainwright by day, and a volunteer social worker by night. In addition, she is working on a Masters in Social Work. She leads a Seeking Safety group every Tuesday and helps us to provide family mediation services for kids staying at The Door. She is a vital member of our diverse team, that together is making a difference in the lives of families and the youth in our community.

**Thank You Kasey!**

from our door to yours  
*Merry Christmas*  
from all of us at Fairbanks Youth Advocates



# FAIRBANKS YOUTH ADVOCATES

*Facilitating life transitions for at-risk youth*



Some of the FYA team

*Fairbanks Youth Advocates is a 501c3 non-profit, governed by a board of directors. All contributions are tax deductible. We are licensed by the State of Alaska as a Residential Child Care Facility with a specialization in Emergency Shelter Care and Emergency Shelter Care for Runaway Youth.*

## Youth Voices

*"When I came to FYA, I wasn't really sure what to expect or what to do. But right away, they tried to get me on my feet and gave me options, and the people here are probably some of the best and most caring people I've ever met."*



*"[FYA staff] They are cool and respectful. They care about everyone. Definitely Recommend."*

*"When I needed help the most The Door helped me get a room, clothes, food, and shelter. I was upset and they helped me get through stuff."*

### More Than A Shelter

At Fairbanks Youth Advocates, we have a powerhouse team of employees and volunteers! This is a passionate and skilled workforce who serve the youth at The Door both day and night, every day of the year. As a team we are committed to helping kids leave stronger than when they came, so while they are with us, we educate, encourage, challenge them with goal setting, and celebrate their accomplishments.

From our counselor to our House Parent, our volunteer maintenance worker to the staff who provide front line care, we are all focused on helping kids remain safe in their moment of crises. Here are a few things you might not know about daily life at The Door...

- » **Church:** Some kids choose to attend near-by church services or youth group.
- » **AA Meetings:** We have staff that attend AA meetings with youth dealing with substance use.

- » **Safety Group:** We hold a weekly Seeking Safety group for all kids in residence.
- » **School:** Through a partnership with the Fairbanks North Star School District, each youth in school continues to attend their own home school via taxi.
- » **Birthdays:** We celebrate birthdays with cards, homemade cakes, favorite meals and a special gift.
- » **Art:** A volunteer comes in weekly and does art projects with kids.
- » **Homework:** We have a nightly study time and staff sit alongside kids and help them with their math, English and anything else needing attention.



Art projects at The Door

**Lovalaska**  
Pick. Click. Give.

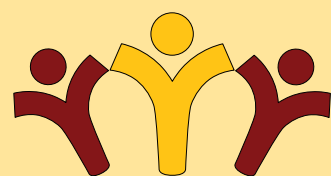
Our first year qualifying for Pick Click Give, and we are happy to announce that You gave \$3600.00 to further our mission through this program. THANK YOU!

## IRA Smart Giving

By making a charitable contribution from your IRA, you can satisfy your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) amount without reporting additional income. The IRA Trustee or custodian must make the distribution directly to the charity. Distributions made payable to the IRA owner and transferred to the charity will not qualify. Consult a tax professional for additional information.



Thanks to the Fred Meyer Community Rewards program, Fairbanks Youth Advocates, has received a total of \$5778.40. Thank you for all the little ways you reach out to help kids stay safe. Join this program by going to FredMeyer.com and clicking rewards and search for (87829).



We are seeking to grow our Board, consider joining us. See our website for details.

## A Sustainable Youth Shelter



In the last newsletter, I shared some fiscal ups and downs of operating a youth shelter. But first, a heartfelt **THANK**

**YOU** to so many of you who responded by offering a word of encouragement, gave a financial gift, brought by food and more. Your support is making a lasting impact in the lives of teens in our community.

Now back to keeping our services sustainable. In spite of our tour-de-force team of volunteers, the biggest expense

is staffing a shelter 24-7, 365 days a year. Following a creative brainstorming session, we decided to convert our current administrative office into staff housing, which will save some payroll expenses by offering compensation through housing.

We are continually exploring ways we can best optimize all of our assets and offset the expenses in order to keep this deeply needed service sustainable. We want to be here for teens and families in crisis - for the long haul.

Wishing you a very Merry Christmas.

*~ do justly, love mercy, walk humbly. Micah 6:8*

*Maugel*



everystockphoto/woodelywonderworks

## Beyond the Door

“Where do kids go when they leave The Door?” is a question we are often asked. I wish we could report that all kids return home to their families. That certainly is our heart’s desire, but the harsh reality is that individuals are complex and family dynamics even more so. So far this year, 73 youth have exited our program.

We **LOVE** hearing from former residents. While we never become guardians, we are advocates, coaches, mentors, aunties and uncles to the kids. This past week we heard from some former residents and it has felt a little like homecoming.

**Mark** recently responded to a small care package we sent him (at the Alaska Military Youth Academy), “Hey Guys...thanks for everything, the books and letters—a letter is like money here—people go to bed crying.”

**Isaac**, whom we helped to transition back home, called to tell us he was passing biology class. We whooped and hollered in honor of his efforts and improved grades.

**John and Jess** stopped by, they are now young adults expecting their first child. They are no longer age eligible to stay with us and still don’t have a stable home. We listen, connect them to community resources, and we make sure they don’t leave hungry!

**Jules** stopped in to say she is moving into her own apartment and has all A’s.

All of these kids have something in common. Thanks to you, when they were in crisis, they had a safe place to sleep—free from those who would harm or take advantage of them.

## One Homeless Night And Mayor’s Walk

September’s One Homeless Night featured two tandem events: a “Sleep Out” and a “Mayors Walk.” It began with FNSB Mayor Kassel, North Pole Mayor Ward, and Fairbanks Mayor Eberhart walking from North Pole to The Door in Fairbanks, followed by kids and adults who slept outside in houses made out of cardboard boxes. There was fun, games, food, and awards for the most creative cardboard house. The event helped bring awareness about youth homelessness and participants raised **\$15,500** for The Door, Fairbanks’ only youth shelter.



## Christmas at the Door

During the holidays we get calls from thoughtful supporters voicing concerns about kids waking up on Christmas without gifts.

Holidays stir up emotions in all of us, and for many youth staying at The Door, spending Christmas in a youth shelter is not ideal. Sure, they love a turkey dinner, but on Christmas they would rather distance themselves from memories or tradition and go for mac & cheese or pizza instead. They love presents too, but nice presents can cause inner turmoil....“my xxx should have given me this...” Being in a shelter during holidays is just plain hard. Kids might be



in conflict with their family—but they still miss family members or certain traditions. Some kids will choose to return home or go to a friend’s house, only to come back a few days after the holiday is over.

How do our youth spend their Christmas then? Well, we ask them what they would like to do and how they want the day to go. Sometimes this has resulted in a sledding adventure, going to the movies, hanging around in Pj’s and slippers or participating in a Jenga tournament. Regarding gifts—stockings with small special gifts inside are always a hit. We do our

best to make the Holiday a special time for all of the kids.

Thank You  
One Homeless  
Night Sponsors!

