



Office Supplies and Beyond.

Alaska Children's Services and Staples, Inc.

At Staples, enabling cost savings and improved productivity is key, but if we can also support a more safe and environmentally friendly work environment, then we've done our job well. Staples makes it easier to be green through our Sustainable Earth® cleaning product line and 3,000 EcoEasy™ products in stores and online.

Below is one example of how we introduced an organization to more environmentally sound office and cleaning supplies, reducing employees' exposure to chemicals and saving valuable time and money in the process.

The Company

Founded in 1890, Alaska Children's Services is a residential facility that provides treatment for children six to 18 years of age who suffer from emotional or behavioral disorders. With seven cottages across two campuses, the organization provides a safe environment for children and families who require special assistance to live in harmony with each other.

The Challenge

To maintain its office, janitorial and cleaning supplies, Alaska Children's Services would drive to local stores on a weekly basis. This was an ad-hoc and time-consuming process, requiring multiple stops to replenish out-of-stock items.

In addition, the organization was buying ready-to-use janitorial products to clean its cottages and recreational facilities – a costly alternative to dilutable solutions and not accompanied by training on usage or safety procedures.

"It was obvious that our purchasing processes were not a great use of resources," said Frances Mesa, Purchasing Manager for Alaska Children's Services. "We were willing to take extra steps in order to obtain top-quality products; however, if our purchasing could be automated, it would be a big step in the right direction."

“ From day one, Staples has been an extension of our internal staff. They educate us about products that would be valuable to our organization and outline the cost versus performance benefits, allowing us to make smart purchasing decisions. ”

Frances Mesa
Purchasing Manager
Alaska Children's Services



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To improve efficiencies, Alaska Children's Services decided to first focus on office supplies, moving to a vendor with an online ordering system and an extensive array of products. The organization partnered with Staples due to its competitive pricing and professional customer support.

The Solution

Alaska Children's Services was quickly placing orders on the Staples Web site, comparing product price, availability and delivery details with just one click. The organization created a list of approved items for purchase, resulting in streamlined invoicing and order coordination across staff members.

"We later learned that Alaska Children's Services was still relying on local stores for janitorial supplies, said Ryan Moody, Facility Supply Specialist with Staples. "Its staff was coming in close contact with powerful disinfectants and cleaners and therefore, the organization was interested in more environmentally sound alternatives."

“ Not only have we dramatically cut back our chemical use, but the new products clean and deodorize much better than what we were using before. We trust Staples to provide quality products on time as promised, and they have always met our expectations – for cleaning supplies and office products. ”

Frances Mesa
Purchasing Manager
Alaska Children's Services

Staples introduced Alaska Children's Services to its Sustainable Earth product line – designed to reduce the effect on the environment and human health and concentrated to reduce waste and lower usage costs. While transitioning to environmentally responsible products had its obvious benefits, the staff at Alaska Children's Services wanted to ensure that the products – that had a very different look-and-feel from those currently being used– could deliver the required results. Staples provided on-site demonstrations for several Sustainable Earth products to showcase their effectiveness and ultimately the organization moved to the Staples product line.

Alaska Children's Services was impressed with the quality and performance of the Sustainable Earth cleaning products (which meet the environmental criteria of Green Seal or EPA's Design for Environmental Program), the ability to reduce harsh chemicals in the cottages and the potential cost savings by reducing product waste.

The Results

Staples conducted on-site training to demonstrate how to dilute the solutions, use the ExpressMix™ dispensing systems and apply the products to surface areas. Keeping the solutions out of the hands of residents was critical, and therefore the solid, stainless steel chemical dispensers provided by Staples included lockable cabinets, allowing only authorized staff to gain access.

As a result of transitioning to Sustainable Earth products, the organization has reduced the volume of cleaning supplies it purchases, lowering purchasing costs and allowing limited storage space to be utilized for other purposes.

The Future

The partnership between Alaska Children's Services and Staples is expected to expand as the organization has received terrific customer support and continues to receive positive feedback from employees about product quality.

To learn more, please visit www.staplesadvantage.com.

