



www.AARBF.org

## Alisa Ann Ruch Burn Foundation

# ORGANIZATIONAL FACT SHEET

**ORGANIZATION NAME:** Alisa Ann Ruch Burn Foundation

**PRONUNCIATION:** A-leesa Ann Roo-sh Burn Foundation

**DATE FOUNDED:** 1971 as a California nonprofit

**MISSION & HISTORY:** The mission of the Alisa Ann Ruch Burn Foundation is **to enhance the lives of burn survivors and promote burn prevention education.**

At age 8, Alisa Ann Ruch was fatally injured in a backyard barbecue accident. In 1971, Alisa Ann's parents partnered with Southern California firefighters to found the Alisa Ann Ruch Burn Foundation (AARBF), a 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization.

Forty years later, AARBF works with local hospitals, fire departments, safety coalitions, and other organizations across California to develop innovative programs and services. Burn prevention education is key to avoiding agonizing burn injuries and survivor services are paramount to improving the quality of life for courageous burn survivors.

AARBF is staffed with a total of 8 full time staff members across three regional offices and has a volunteer base of over 500 members.

**WEBSITE:** www.AARBF.org

**GEOGRAPHIC AREA SERVED:** State of California through 3 regional offices:

### Northern California Region

665 Third Street, Suite 345  
San Francisco, CA 94107  
T. (415) 495-7224 or 1-800-755-BURN  
F. (415) 495-7224

### Central California Region

911 H Street  
Fresno, CA 93121  
T. (559) 621-4016 or 1-888-492-BURN  
F. (559) 498-1072

### Southern California Region

2501 West Burbank Blvd., Ste 201  
Burbank, CA 91501  
T. (818) 848-0223 or 1-800-242-BURN  
F. (818) 848-0296

### **LEADERSHIP:**

Scott Vandrick, Executive Director  
P: (818) 848-0223 | svandrick@aarbf.org

Sarah Burton, Director of Programs  
P: (415) 495-7223 | sburton@aarbf.org

## PREFERRED VOCABULARY:

Organizationally, the Alisa Ann Ruch Burn Foundation uses:

- “burn survivor” instead of “burn victim”
- “firefighter” instead of “fireman” or “firewoman”
- “burn injuries” instead of “burn wounds”
- “California fire service” to denote the state’s firefighting force
- “County and city fire departments” to denote local and regional firefighting forces

## SOUNDBITES:

- Burns are one of the most painful injuries and often cause severe physical and emotional trauma.
- It is estimated that for every 1% of their body that is burned a patient spends 1 day in the hospital.
- For burn injured children, the skin does not grow and stretch normally, so often these kids will have dozens of skin grafts surgeries to allow for growth.
- For nearly forty years, the Alisa Ann Ruch Burn Foundation has provided burn survivor services and burn prevention education to the residents of California.
- In 2009, the Alisa Ann Ruch Burn Foundation served more than 1,000 of the state’s burn survivors and their families through its vital support services and outreach.
- The Alisa Ann Ruch Burn Foundation works in partnership with 7 regional California hospitals to provide burn survivor services to those treated in a hospital for burn injuries.
- The Alisa Ann Ruch Burn Foundation hosts Champ Camp, the largest and longest running summer camp for burn injured kids in the United States, hosting an average of 140 kids each summer.
- Infant and toddler scalds make up the largest percentage of burn injuries. These injuries represent the highest rates among the kids (ages 5-17) who attend Champ Camp each year.
- The Alisa Ann Ruch Burn Foundation is responsive to fire disasters involving burn injuries. It established the Burn Survivor Emergency Relief Fund to support burn survivors and their families impacted by disaster and facing life-threatening emergencies.

## PROGRAMS & SERVICES:

### AARBF Burn Survivor Support Services include:

- **Hospital visits** to provide initial information about and resources for burn injuries;
- **Peer support** through monthly support groups, peer mentoring, and volunteer efforts;
- **Burn Survivor Emergency Relief Fund** for financial assistance during the time of hospitalization, including housing, food and medical assistance, medical supplies, including pressure garments to alleviate pain;
- **Image enhancement services**, including cosmetics consultations, wigs, and camouflaging make-up;
- **“Bridge-to-Life” Scholarships** for burn survivors seeking a higher education;
- **Young Adult Summit**, which teaches life management skills, promote educational and career development and focus on relationship building;
- **Champ Camp**, a week-long residential summer camp for kids 5-16;
- **The Getaway**, an adult survivor family camp to promote healthy interaction with fellow burn survivors; and
- **Training for professional service providers**, including nurses and firefighters, through the American Burn Association annual conference and World Burn Congress.

### **AARBF Burn Prevention Services include:**

The Alisa Ann Ruch Burn Foundation has been at the edge of the burn prevention education movement since 1971. The organization promotes child and family safety through the following educational programs:

- **Firefighters in Safety Education**, which teaches elementary school students (age 5-8) how to protect themselves by:
  - Stop Drop & Roll:** a technique introduced into the schools by AARBF in 1972 to teach kids what to do if their clothes catch on fire.
  - Cool-A-Burn:** a message that burns should be cooled with water, not ice, butter or by other means.
  - Hug A Fighter:** an exercise that teaches kids what a firefighter looks like in full gear including facemask and oxygen tank. During a fire, young children have exhibited fear when a firefighter approaches and have been shown to run from emergency personnel and hide.
  - Crawl Low & Go:** a lesson that teaches kids to drop under the smoke of a fire and to find an exit.
- **Infant Scald Prevention** kits that provide parents with materials to prevent scald injuries as well as a follow-up toddler kits to address changing needs of children;
- **Coordination with local community agencies** (schools and fire departments) to assist with the implementation or augmentation of agency-specific prevention programs including information on juvenile firesetting intervention options; and
- **Safety precaution education** by distribution of information packets online and at community health fairs, agency presentations.

### **AARBF Camps & Recreational Programs, such as Champ Camp, provide:**

- A safe place for burn-injured children to get away from the stares and unwanted attention associated with being burned;
- A loving and supportive family atmosphere that helps soothe the potentially devastating emotional and physical pain a burn injury can cause while spotlighting the child's "inner beauty," not the scars;
- An opportunity to meet others who have been through a similar experience and to experience new and challenging activities together; and
- A program that ensures that children and adult burn survivors have a great time!

### **MORE QUESTIONS?**

#### **INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITIES:**

##### **Scott Vandrick**

*Executive Director*

Scott can discuss the ongoing programs of AARBF, how burn injuries occur and what families can do to prevent these burn injuries from happening to their children. He can also give an overview of past, current and future plans for AARBF, as well as comment on administrative and fundraising activities.

***svandrick@aarbf.org***

***T: (818) 848-0223***

***F: (818) 848-0296***