

**Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc**

**Presents**

**The 13th Annual Training Conference**

**CHANGING TIMES, IMPROVING  
HEART AND MIND**

**APRIL 29TH AND APRIL 30TH, 2011**

**BLACK BEAR INN  
ORONO, MAINE**

***This conference is designed for:***

*Foster Parents Adoptive Parents Kinship Providers  
Case Workers Adoption Workers CASA  
Judges Attorneys Educators Advocates*

***This Years Presenters:***

*Adam Robe  
Bette Hoxie ~ Jane Drake  
Kim Plourde ~ Barbara Ford ~ Joe Kroll  
David Plourde ~ Mary-Ellen Roma  
Youth Leadership Advisory Team*

# *Changing Times, Improving Heart and Mind*

123h Annual State Conference Black Bear Inn Orono, Maine

Hosted by: Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc.

<b>Friday April 29th</b>		<b>Today's conference agenda</b>
Times	Event	Location
7:30-8:30am	<b>Registration</b>	
9:00-9:45am	<i><b>Keynote Speaker</b>— Adam Robe</i>	
9:45am -11:45am	<b>AM Workshops</b>	
( A1 )	<i>Issues of Subsidized Adoption &amp; Adoption Tax Credit – Joe Kroll</i>	
( B1 )	<i>Collaborating with Birth Parents—Barbara Ford</i>	
( C1 )	<i>Kids, Computers and the Internet - David Plourde</i>	
12:00pm - 1:45pm	<b>Lunch—On-site (with presentations)</b>	
2:00pm– 4:30pm	<b>PM Workshop</b>	
( D2 )	<i>Challenges of Youth Aging Out of Foster Care/Creating Life-Long Connections - Adam Robe</i>	

*Dinner Starts at 6:00pm.*

Dinner will be graciously put on by a local Kinship Support Group at the Old Town Recreation Center. Spaghetti, salad and breadsticks will be served! Along with dinner a viewing of *April's Heart*, a short film that gives an intimate look at the challenges, hopes and dreams of American teenagers, will be shown.

(Directions to Old Town Rec. found on last page of brochure)

<b>Saturday April 30th</b>		<b>Today's conference agenda</b>
8:00-9:00	Registration	
9:30—12:00	<b>AM Workshops</b>	
( E1 )	<i>The Great Behavior Breakdown—Kim Plourde</i>	
( F1 )	<i>The Emotional Impact of Foster Care on Children/Grief and Loss— Adam Robe</i>	
( G1 )	<i>Issues of Subsidized Adoption &amp; Adoption Tax Credit - Joe Kroll</i>	
12:00-1:30pm	<b>Lunch—On-site (Silent Auction Winners Announced)</b>	
2:00—4:30	<b>PM Workshops</b>	
( H2 )	<i>Allegation Prevention and Protocol— Bette Hoxie &amp; Jane Drake</i>	
( I2 )	<i>Youth Voice in Times of Transition— YLAT</i>	
( J2 )	<i>In This Together—Mary-Ellen Roma</i>	

**Workshop A1— Issues of Subsidized Adoption & Adoption Tax Credit**

***Joe Kroll***

In this session parents will receive basic information on benefits available for Maine special needs children. Topics include eligibility and definitions, benefits, negotiations, appeal process, and more. The adoption tax credit for special needs adoption which has been a flat tax credit (you do need to document expenses) since 2003 and a refundable credit in 2010 and 2011 will be described in detail with sample forms provided.

Joe Kroll, an adoptive and birth father, became involved with NACAC in 1975 and has served as NACAC's executive director since 1985. As executive director, Joe has taken NACAC from a small grassroots organization to a acclaimed nonprofit that serves thousands of adoptive parents each year and strives to improve the child welfare system for foster children and the families who care for them. A passionate advocate for children, Joe is committed to achieving NACAC's mission that every child deserves a permanent, loving, and culturally sensitive family. Joe's work includes talking with individual families about how to obtain post-adoption support, to training parent group leaders and other foster and adoptive parents, to testifying before Congress and speaking at the White House to achieve needed system reforms to better serve vulnerable children and families. He remains committed to achieving system reform by building a network of adoptive families at the grassroots level. By bringing together parents, professionals, and policy makers for more than two decades at NACAC, Joe has significantly improved the lives of adoptive families throughout the U.S. and Canada.

**Workshop B1— Collaborating with Birth Parents**

***Barbara Ford—President, Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc.***

This workshop explores the participants attitudes and biases in regards to making connections with members of the foster or adoptive children's past. It challenges the participants to be creative and open in their approach in creating a healthy working relationship. The workshop has an emphasis on finding commonalities that will encourage care providers to be strength based in their approach. This workshop will also provide the opportunity to explore many options for being creative and positive about your children's contact and visitation and how all resource families can be a mentor and an important part in the success of these relationships.

The format of this workshop is interactive with participants encouraged to be honest and open in their responses. Participants are asked to share their concerns and experiences. This workshop is intended for foster, adoptive, kin providers, social workers, therapists and case managers.

Barbara Ford is President of Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine (AFFM). She serves on the board of Directors of a residential boarding school for teenage girls in crisis pregnancy. Barbara provides in home parenting instruction and supervision. Barbara has received a Giraffe Award for Adoption Advocacy from the Maine Children's Alliance in 2009. She also received North American Council on Adoptable Children's Adoption Advocate Award in 2005. Barbara has received recognition for her legislative work on behalf of Maine families and has been honored by Maine Governor Baldacci. Barbara and her husband Ed were honored for 'Founding Family of the first Foster Family inspired Treatment Foster Care Agency' Barbara and Ed have been treatment foster parents for 20 years. They are the adoptive parents of 5 and biological parents of 1

**Workshop C1— Kids, Computers and the Internet**

***David Plourde***

This workshop will present a practical look into computers being used by kids in your home. The educational benefits and enjoyment computers provide while keeping our kids safe will be discussed. David will talk in plain English WITHOUT all the techno jargon.

David Plourde is a senior Computer System expert currently working for the state of Maine Office Information Technology. David and his wife Natali are a KidsPeace Treatment Resource Family with many years of experience who, along with their kids, enjoy an active "high-tech" life style.

**Workshop Choices**

**Friday April 29th**

**Afternoon Session**

**2:00—4:00**

**Workshop D2— Challenges of Youth Aging Out of Foster Care/  
Creating Life-Long Connections**

***Adam Robe***

Every year there are approximately 25,000 youth who age out of the foster care system. These youth face multiple challenges and in many cases are ill prepared for adulthood. Participants will learn about the challenges facing youth leaving care, how they can help ensure that a youth is receiving the preparation they need, what resources are available to them and how to help youth create emotional and situational connections.

Adam Robe is a former foster child and adoptee. He remembers snippets of his young life — how a police officer in downtown Kansas City found him and his siblings after his mom abandoned them. He then spent four years in foster care until he was adopted at the age of nine. Adam began his child welfare work volunteering as a CASA and quickly found his calling in social work. He then worked as a behavioral health tech for a residential treatment center while putting himself through college where he earned a BS in Social Work from Central Missouri State University. He later went on to earn his MSW from the University of Kansas. Now, with more than a dozen years in the social work field, he's helped hundreds of foster children and their families adjust to tough life changes. His experiences range from working as a family-centered service worker in the Children's Division... to supervising CASAs... to directing foster care programs... serving as a regional director of an adoption and child welfare agency...and teaching at a university. Determined to help children on a national level, Adam and his wife, Kim recently authored (and published) several Robbie the Rabbit™ books — a series of children's stories (and adult guides) designed specifically for foster parents, adoptive parents and/or caseworkers who want to help children in care adjust better to tough changes in life. Adam is also a contributing author to the book, *Flux: Life After Foster Care*. He sits on the national state board of directors for Foster Care Alumni of America.

**Workshop Choices**

**Saturday April 30th**

**Morning Session**

**9:30-12:00**

**Workshop E1— The Great Behavior Breakdown**

***Kim Plourde—LCSW***

This workshop will give participants an eye-opening and heart opening understanding of the causes of difficult behaviors and a practical way to work with them that puts the focus on strengthening the relationship rather than trying to control the behavior. This workshop will address the root problems and not just the symptoms.

Kim has worked in a variety of settings which all focused on child and family development since 1990. Her passion is in supporting children and families as they grow and work together building supportive environments where individuals can grow, learn and experience loving secure and nurturing relationships.

Kim graduated from Gordon College in Wenham, Massachusetts in 1990 with a BA in social work. Kim worked as a caseworker for the Department of Health and Human Services from 1991-2005. In 2005 Kimberly obtained a masters degree in social work, MSW, from the University of New England College of Health Professionals in Westbrook, Maine.

Kim has experienced working with children and families dealing with difficult behaviors, such as acting out verbally and physically. Kimberly has training in TF-CBT (trauma focused cognitive behavioral treatment). Kim has been a licensed clinical social worker in the state of Maine since April 2008.

**Workshop F1— The Emotional Impact of Foster Care on Children/Grief and Loss**

***Adam Robe***

When a child is removed from their home it is never easy. The experience of grief and loss. The symptoms may get overlooked and not get treated for what they are. This workshop will help participants learn about the trauma of removal (or additional foster home moves) on a child, identify the stages of grief and loss, how they may present themselves and how to advocate for the child's needs.

**Workshop A1— Issues of Subsidized Adoption & Adoption Tax Credit**  
***Joe Kroll***

In this session parents will receive basic information on benefits available for Maine special needs children. Topics include eligibility and definitions, benefits, negotiations, appeal process, and more. The adoption tax credit for special needs adoption which has been a flat tax credit (you do need to document expenses) since 2003 and a refundable credit in 2010 and 2011 will be described in detail with sample forms provided.

Joe Kroll is the executive director of North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC).

**Workshop Choices      Saturday April 30th      Afternoon Session      2:00-4:00**

**Workshop H2— Allegation Prevention Protocol**  
***Bette Hoxie & Jane Drake***

This workshop will assist families in asking “the right questions” prior to placement, provide helpful hints on what and when to document events, provide creative ways to prioritize and/or reduce conflicts between adults and children, provide a basic understanding of confidentiality rules and the respecting and valuing of privacy. The training will also share the process of investigating an allegation in a foster home and what families can anticipate in terms of the process. (Nearly all-foster families undergo an investigation at sometime during their foster parenting career)

Who should attend? Foster Parents, Kinship Providers and Pre-adoptive Parents, case workers and private agency case managers

This workshop is co-presented by Jane Drake, LSW. Program Manager of Out of Home Investigations and Customer Support Unit at DHHS

Bette Hoxie, Program Director, Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine

## Workshop I2— Youth Voice in Times of Transition

### YLAT

This workshop will focus on the need for youth to have a voice in planning and decision making about their lives. Participants will hear stories from youth and adult supporters about the central importance of permanency and family connections, as well as the issues that youth face in times of transition. This workshop will help families to prepare young people during these transitions by using strategies that encourage and support youth voices in decision making (e.g., case planning, family team meetings, treatment teams, court).

The Maine Youth Leadership Advisory Team (YLAT) is a team of Maine youth in care ages 14-21, engaged in the education of state government, public, caregivers and peers regarding the needs of children and adults in the child welfare system and advocating for change where needed.

## Workshop E2— 'In This Together'

### Mary Ellen Roma

We believe that Foster Parents and DHHS employees have an amazing ability to work empathetically and effectively on behalf of the children we care about. We also believe that the difficulty of this work can be overwhelming, and that getting back to the basics of how we support and communicate with one another is imperative.

The first exercise includes testimonials that offer a realistic and powerful comparison of the objective responsibilities, and the subjective experiences of DHHS workers and foster parents. The second exercise is a "fishbowl" activity that incorporates the real issues facing DHHS workers and foster parents. Participants anonymously contribute topics to be explored in this listening experience.

### Presenter:

Mary Ellen Roma & panel

## What to Expect at the Conference:

~ **The annual silent auction will be happening throughout the conference, bid on a basket filled with goodies, including handmade Debbie Irish quilts, gift certificates, toys, baby items, baskets filled with items to entertain the whole family and so much more! Winners of auctioned items will be announced during Saturday's lunch.**

~ **50/50 raffle and door prizes!**

~ **Awards for Maine's Youth Advocates presented during Friday's lunch**

~ **Register Today!**



Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine would like to thank the Maine chapter of the Foster Family Treatment Association, who work hard for all Therapeutic Foster families in Maine everyday and assist in underwriting this conference.

A Thank you also goes out to the Maine Department of Health and Human Services.

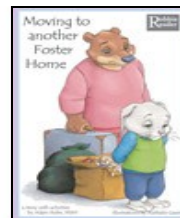
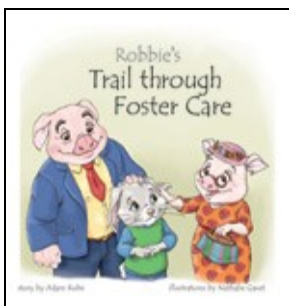


**\*\* Keynote Presenter at a glance \*\***



**Adam Robe**

In 2008, Adam began developing the Robbie Rabbit™ book series. These unique books help child welfare professionals and foster/adoptive parents who want to help children in out-of-home care adjust better to tough changes in life. Additionally, he's a contributing author of FLUX: LIFE AFTER FOSTER CARE, a book for teens transitioning from out-of-home care. Along with the Robbie Rabbit™ book series, Adam has developed kid-friendly brochures, *What is Adoption?* And *Foster Care? What's That?* These brochures are designed to help children understand the process of foster care and adoption and also addresses commonly asked questions and explains the role of people such as caseworkers, therapists, guardians ad litem and CASA volunteers.



To learn more about Adam Robe visit his website: [www.robbietherabbit.com](http://www.robbietherabbit.com)



**Directions to the Black Bear Inn**

**Physical Address:**

**4 Godfrey Drive  
Orono, Maine 04473**



**Coming from North**

**Head South on I-95, take exit 193 (Old Town/ Stillwater), turn left at Stillwater Avenue, turn right on Godfrey Drive.**

**Coming from South**

**Head North on I-95, take exit 193 (Old Town/ Stillwater), turn right at Stillwater Avenue, turn right on Godfrey Drive.**

**Directions to Old Town Rec. Center**

- Start out going northwest on Godfrey Dr. toward Stillwater Ave.
- Turn right onto Stillwater Ave drive 0.34 miles
- Turn left onto Bennoch Road/ME-16
- Old Town Rec. will be on the left

Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine  
294 Center Street, Suite 1  
Old Town, Maine 04468  
1-800-833-9786 **Fax 207-827-1974** email: meagan@affm.net

**Registrant 1**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Alt. Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Registration Deadline April 8, 2011**

**Please check all that apply:**

- Foster       Adoptive       Kinship  
 \$80single       \$150/ couple  
 Child Welfare Professional (\$95 per person)  
 Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Payment (check one)**

- Check/Money Order Enclosed  
 Bill Agency: \_\_\_\_\_  
Prior authorization number from your agency (purchase order number) \_\_\_\_\_  
*Payment or PO number must accompany registration to be processed.*

**Friday, Morning Session (Choose One)**

- A1    B1    C1    N/A

**Friday, Afternoon Session**

- D2       N/A

**Saturday, Morning Session (Choose One)**

- E1    F1    G1    N/A

**Saturday, Afternoon Session (Choose One)**

- H2    I2    J2    N/A

**Please check off which meals you will be attending:**

- Friday Lunch (12:00 - 1:45 PM)  
 Friday Dinner (6:00 PM)  
 Saturday Lunch (12:00—1:30 PM)

Please register by April 8, 2011

Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine  
294 Center Street, Suite 1  
Old Town, Maine 04468  
1-800-833-9786 **Fax: 207-827-1974** email: meagan@affm.net

**Registrant 2**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Alt. Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Registration Deadline April 8, 2011**

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 \$80 single       \$150/ couple  
 Child Welfare Professional (\$95 per person)  
 Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Payment (check one)**

- Check/Money Order Enclosed  
 Bill Agency: \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Friday, Morning Session (Choose One)**

- A1    B1    C1    N/A

**Friday, Afternoon Session**

- D2       N/A

**Saturday, Morning Session (Choose One)**

- E1    F1    G1    N/A

**Saturday, Afternoon Session (Choose One)**

- H2    I2    J2    N/A

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