



Family Ties

Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine

Volume 14 Number 3

Newsletter

March 2011

AFFM is proud to announce the 13th annual training conference

“CHANGING TIMES, IMPROVING HEARTS AND MINDS”

APRIL 29-30TH 2011

@ THE BLACK BEAR INN

ORONO, MAINE



AFFM is excited to introduce Adam Robe as the keynote speaker for the upcoming conference. 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.

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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.

visit his website at www.robbietherabbit.com



Motivating Youth to Reach Higher

Do you have a story you would like to share of a successful former youth in care and/or adoptees? This can be someone from Maine or someone nationally. Each month AFFM would like to feature a youth who has motivated others to "Reach Higher" in their lives.



To share a story to be featured in *The Family Ties* monthly newsletter send an email to meagan@affm.net or call 1-800-833-9786

USDA ANNOUNCES:

Changes in school lunch Programs, The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 for free meals to foster children.



Children in foster care are Automatically entitled to free lunch Without application, (this applies only To foster children formally placed by a State child welfare agency or court). A letter from a placing agency is all that is needed to receive free lunch!

Note: Some schools districts may not have implemented this change as of yet.

ATTENTION!

FAMILIES WHO ADOPT A CHILD WITH SPECIAL NEEDS FROM FOSTER CARE CAN CLAIM A FEDERAL ADOPTION TAX CREDIT WITHOUT NEEDING TO INCUR OR DOCUMENT EXPENSES. THE PER-CHILD TAX CREDIT IS \$13,170 FOR ADOPTIONS FINALIZED IN 2010!

To claim the Adoption Tax Credit the IRS Form 8839 needs to be completed in addition to filing IRS form 1040. The forms can be found at www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f8893.pdf or by requesting it from 800-829-1040

For further information visit
<http://www.nacac.org/taxcredit/taxcredit.html>

CPSC Issues Warning on Drop-Side Cribs *32 Fatalities in Drop-Side Cribs in Last 9 Years*

WASHINGTON, D.C. - As part of its commitment to ensure safe sleep for young children, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is once again warning parents and caregivers about deadly hazards with drop-side cribs. In the last five years, CPSC has announced 11 recalls involving more than 7 million drop-side cribs due to suffocation and strangulation hazards created by the drop side. CPSC staff is actively investigating several other crib manufacturers for potential drop-side hazards as part of a larger effort by the agency to rid the marketplace and homes of unsafe cribs. CPSC will continue to take aggressive action to address any risks and will keep the public informed.

CPSC staff has completed a comprehensive review of crib-related infant fatalities reported to the agency between January 2000 and the present. CPSC staff is aware of 32 infant and toddler suffocation and strangulation deaths and hundreds of incidents that were caused by or related to drop-side detachments in cribs made by various manufacturers.

In addition to the 32 deaths the CPSC staff associated with the drop-side detachments, CPSC has received an additional 14 reports of infant fatalities due to entrapment in cribs that could be related to a drop side. The information obtained was insufficient for staff to conclusively determine whether or not the drop side was involved. Of the 32 deaths that were analyzed, some occurred in cribs where the drop side detached without caregivers noticing the detachment, while some other deaths occurred after a consumer tried to repair the detached drop side, but the repair ultimately failed.

In other incidents, consumers unknowingly installed the drop side or drop-side hardware incorrectly. In several cases, this occurred due to incorrect or confusing directions. In these incidents, the drop side still appeared to function as intended, but the stress on the crib hardware resulted in the drop-side detachment.

CPSC Chairman Inez Tenenbaum has committed to parents and caregivers that there will be a new and vastly improved mandatory federal standard for cribs this year. The standard will incorporate, at minimum, the new voluntary standard banning drop-side cribs from the United States market. Due to the new voluntary industry standard, many manufacturers have already stopped selling drop-side cribs or will do so beginning June 1, 2010.

Drop-Side Hazards

CPSC technical staff has determined drop-side cribs generally have a tendency to be less structurally sound than cribs with four fixed sides. Drop-side hardware is prone to break, deform or experience other problems during normal or foreseeable use. The older the crib, the more problems can be expected. When drop-side hardware breaks or deforms, the drop side can detach in one or more corners from the crib. If an infant or toddler rolls or moves into the space created by a partially detached drop side, the child can become entrapped or wedged between the crib mattress and the drop side and suffocate. Infants can also strangle in the "V" shape formed by a drop side that detaches in an upper corner.



Advice to Consumers

[Check your crib regularly](#) and make sure it has not already been [recalled](#).

While CPSC staff cannot say that every drop-side crib is hazardous, based on investigations of incidents we have received, the agency believes that overall most drop-side cribs are more prone to mechanical failure than similar designed fixed-side cribs. In addition, older cribs may not meet current voluntary standards. Factors that contribute to safety problems in older cribs include:

- The longer a crib is used, the more wear and tear on hardware and joints, allowing screws to loosen and fall out and plastic parts to flex and break.
- Repeated assembly and disassembly increases likelihood that crib parts can be damaged or lost.
- Wood warps and shrinks over time and glue can become brittle. This can lead to joint and slat failures.

Important Message from CPSC: CPSC reminds parents not to use any crib with missing, broken, or loose parts. Make sure to tighten hardware from time to time to keep the crib sturdy. When using a drop-side crib, parents should check to make sure the drop side or any other moving part operates smoothly. Always check all sides and corners of the crib for disengagement. Disengagements can create a gap and entrap a child. In addition, do not try to repair any side of the crib. Babies have died in cribs where repairs were attempted by caregivers. If your baby is less than six months old and is not yet able to push up to his/her hands and knees, you can put your baby to sleep in a bassinet. Make sure your bassinet has not been recalled. [Here's a list](#). Also, you can use a play yard. Do not put additional bedding such as pillows, thick quilts, comforters or anything plush into your baby's sleeping space. More babies die every year from suffocation in plush sleeping environments than from defective cribs.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission is charged with protecting the public from unreasonable risks of injury or death from thousands of types of consumer products under the agency's jurisdiction. The CPSC is committed to protecting consumers and families from products that pose a fire, electrical, chemical, or mechanical hazard. The CPSC's work to ensure the safety of consumer products - such as toys, cribs, power tools, cigarette lighters, and household chemicals - contributed significantly to the decline in the rate of deaths and injuries associated with consumer products over the past 30 years.



To report a dangerous product or a product-related injury, call CPSC's Hotline at (800) 638-2772 or CPSC's teletypewriter at (301) 595-7054. To join a CPSC e-mail subscription list, please go to <https://www.cpsc.gov/cpsclist.aspx>. Consumers can obtain recall and general safety information by logging on to CPSC's Web site at www.cpsc.gov.

Interested in helping out youth in care??

Order a “Maine’s a Great Place for Kids” license plate for \$25, in addition to the regular motor vehicle registration fee. Renewal of the plates will cost \$15 annually to your regular registration fee. Make checks payable to: Woodfords Family Services. Please write in memo section Kids Plate.



\$10 of the annual fee will be transferred to a special fund for Kids in Maine from the original fee and \$5 from the renewal fee will be used for administration and production costs of the plate. Monies will go to the Department of Education to help support after school programming as well as to kids in foster care or kinship placements to support recreational activities as well as summer camps.

It is the hope to have plates available by the Spring of 2012, but it's never too early to order your plate now!

For more information on purchasing a plate go to www.woodfords.org and click on the Maine Kids Plate link, or “like” Maine Kids Plate on Facebook.

Casey Family Services Announces Openings

Services for Families Formed through Adoption and Guardianship in Maine

Now accepting referrals for Targeted Case Management and Outpatient Counseling

In Bangor contact: Bonny Dodson

bdodson@caseyfamilyservices.org

207.973.2491

866.662.2739 Toll Free

In Portland contact: Heather Dunbar

hdunbar@caseyfamilyservices.org

207.772.4110

800.559.1115 Toll Free

Casey Family Services has over 10 years of experience working with post adoptive and guardianship families. Our Masters-level staff have advanced training and experience in adoption, guardianship and trauma-related issues.

Targeted Case Management

- Offered to children adopted from the child welfare system or in permanency guardianship through the Maine court system.
- Assessment, service planning, connections to community supports, and oversight of service delivery for children with an emphasis on supporting the whole family.
- Children must be enrolled in MaineCare .



Outpatient Counseling

- For children adopted through Maine's child welfare system, in a guardianship situation, or in a family with a plan to adopt.
 - Casey's clinicians are trained in parent-child therapy as well as trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy, an effective treatment for children who have experienced abuse, neglect, or loss.
- MaineCare accepted.

NEW RESOURCES FOR FOSTER PARENTS

Youth in foster care, or with a history of foster care placement are at greater risk of suicidal behavior. A new resource from the national Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC) provides guidance for foster parents on recognizing and responding to warning signs, getting professional help, enhancing mental health and more. Part of a series of SPRC information customized for various audiences and roles, *What Foster Parents Can Do to Prevent Suicide* (December 2010), provides links to additional resources for foster parents, teenagers and young people. The document was reviewed by foster parents for accuracy and appropriateness. It is available as a PDF and HTML resource on the SPRC website. Visit www.sprc.org and click on the customized information link in the right hand corner. Or link directly to http://www.sprc.org/featured_resources/customized/pdf/FosterParents.pdf

Gail Underwood Parker, a foster parent since 1973 and treatment level foster parent since 1997, offers a blog for all to check out! The blog is full of hints and strategies to help readers survive the ups and downs of parenting and contains special references for foster, kinship and/or adoptive parents. You can check out the blog at

www.upbeatsanddownbeats.blogspot.com



AFFM is excited to share with you the Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine Toolbar! This toolbar helps support AFFM WITHOUT having to write a check or sell a product! By using the Yahoo search engine that is conveniently located on AFFM's toolbar you would be helping to raise funds for AFFM! The toolbar can be downloaded at

<http://www.benefitbar.com/benefitbar/subscribe/toolbar.php?toolbarId=10896>

For more information contact Errol Grant @ egra56@hotmail.com or call 207-852-8259

You can also Check AFFM out on Facebook, just search Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc. in the search bar and become a fan!

Kinship Corner

Maine Wildlife Park passes are in! Call the office today to request your pass, don't miss out on all the park has to offer, see more than 30 species of Maine's Wildlife, take a guided tour, attend scheduled events throughout the season and much, much more! The park opens April 15, 2011! Call 1-800-833-9786 to have a pass mailed to you today!



Mountain Lion

MARCH KINSHIP EVENTS

When you go to a group meeting you get a chance to connect with other grandfamilies by sharing stories and information, offering support and listening to each other. Some group meetings provide childcare, and this gives the children an opportunity to meet and socialize with other children in similar situations.

AUGUSTA

Group Meeting - Wednesday, March 16th at 6:00 pm, The Children's Center, 1 Alden Avenue. *Please contact Meaghan at F.A.C.T. to reserve childcare.*

BANGOR

Group Meeting – Tuesday, March 1st at 6:00 pm, Families And Children Together office, 304 Hancock Street. *Please call Meaghan at F.A.C.T. 941-2347 to reserve childcare.*

Group Meeting – Tuesday, March 15th at 6:00 pm. *See above for location and childcare information.*

Belfast

Group Meeting - Thursday, March 10th at 10:30 am meeting at the Belfast Free Library on High St., 3rd floor conference room. Parking available on Spring and Miller Streets.

DOVER-FOXCROFT

Group Meeting – Monday, March 28th at 6:30 pm, Penquis, 50 North St. *Call Meaghan at F.A.C.T. 941-2347 to reserve childcare.*

ELLSWORTH

Group Meeting – Tuesday, March 8th from 1:30 - 3:00 pm, Downeast Health Services, 52 Christian Ridge Road, Ellsworth. This month's topic: *Self-Esteem*. *To register, contact Candy Eaton at 667-5304 ext. 261.*

LEWISTON

Group Meeting – Wednesday, March 2nd at 6:30 pm, in the LePage Center at St. Mary's Regional Medical Center (entrance on Campus Avenue.)

MACHIAS

Group Meeting – Tuesday, March 1st from 10:00 am - 12:00 noon, Downeast Health Services, 247 Main Street, Machias. This month's topic: *Getting To Know You*. *To register, contact Candy Eaton at 667-5304.*

PORTLAND

Group Meeting – Wednesday, March 9th at 6:00 pm, The Family Workshop, 215 Congress Street. *Call Nancy at F.A.C.T. to reserve childcare at 591-6278.*

Group Meeting – Wednesday, March 23rd at 6:00 pm, The Family Workshop, 215 Congress Street. *Call Nancy at F.A.C.T. to reserve childcare at 591-6278.*

SANFORD

Group Meeting for Grandparents and Grandfamilies – Wednesday, March 9th at 6:30 pm at the Trafton Senior Center, 19 Elm Street. *For more information, contact the Trafton Senior Center at 457-0080.*

WATERVILLE

The Grandest Parents of All - Tuesday, March 15th at 5:00 pm at Educare, 56 Drummond Ave. Childcare and dinner for the whole family served. *For more information and to register, contact Elizabeth Baron at The Children's Center at 626-3497.*

Adoption Announcements



Bridget and Perry Green are thrilled to announce the adoption of Elliot Alexander Green on February 7th, 2011

Jan Partridge is pleased to announce the adoption of 8 year old daughter Priscilla on November 8, 2010

Congratulations to Joseph and Joanne St. Pierre for the recent adoption of their nephew!

Robert and Sally Perkins are excited to announce the adoption of 17 month old Lily Rose. Lily is welcomed by her six brothers, a sister-in-law and nephew!



Save the Date

Substance Abuse in Older Adults: An Invisible Epidemic

The Sixth Annual University of Maine Geriatric Colloquium

8:30am-4:00pm

Friday, April 1, 2011

Point Lookout Resort & Conference Center Northport, Maine

Recognizing and treating substance abuse in older adults presents unique challenges due to factors such as age and psychological needs associated with life events like retirement and widowhood. Diagnosis, treatment, and recovery for older adults put demands on treatment programs traditionally geared for a younger population.

This conference will bring together experts in geriatrics as well as substance abuse to examine how older adults become addicted, how to recognize the problem, and what treatment programs need to improve on.

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National Foster Parent Association

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FAMILY TIES

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PLEASE DIRECT COMMENTS TO: EDITOR, FAMILY TIES, AT THE ADDRESS ABOVE.

**Check out Maine Maple Sunday at the Page Farm and Home Museum at the
University of Maine in Orono**



March 27, 2011



Time: 11-2p.m.

**Children (by grade level k-5th) will carry out learning activities, play games
and hear stories! Then travel to the University of Maine Maple Sugaring
Operation!**

For more information call: 581-4100