


Family Ties



Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine

Volume 14 Number 8

Newsletter

September 2011

Talking with Your Kids About Their Day

Picture this scene: You pick up your child from school and ask him or her how their day went. They tell you, “Ok.” You ask if they did anything interesting or fun during school and the most likely response will be, “Recess.”

Try as you will, you frequently get little more out of him or her than one word responses and you find yourself wondering, just what exactly was your little one doing during all those hours at school? Try some of these strategies to stay on top of what is going on with your child and school!

Give Your Child an Opportunity to Unwind and Regroup

School is your child’s “work” and like adults, they might need some time to regroup before they are ready to share their day with you. Give your child that time to unwind, have a snack, maybe even play for awhile. The amount of time will vary from child to child and even from day to day.

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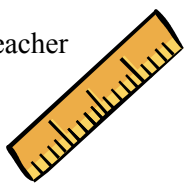
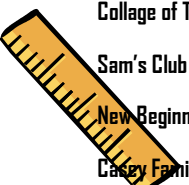
Ask Open-Ended Questions

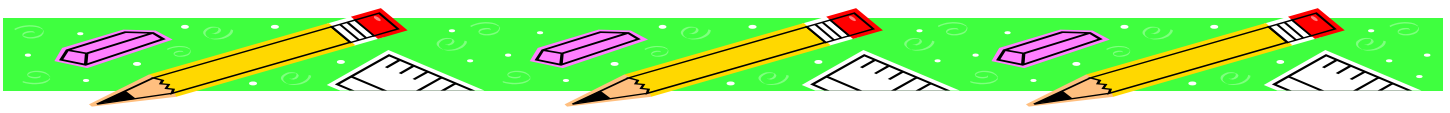


A yes/no question will most likely generate a yes/no answer. Get into the habit of wording your questions in such a way that your child will need to respond with a phrase or a sentence.

Some Examples might include:

- Tell me three things that happened while you were at school today.
- Tell me what games you played during recess today. Who did you play with?
- What was the best part of the story that the teacher read to you today? Who was in the story?





Play a Guessing Game

Small children love to play games where they are “teaching” adults. We can tap into that by playing a fun guessing game with them. It could go something like this:

“Let’s see now. You got to school and then you went to lunch...”

“You didn’t go to lunch first?...”

“Oh, so you had reading first! What did you do in reading then?”

“That’s really great...oh, and THEN you had lunch!...not yet?”

“...It sounds like you had a fun and interesting day...”

Talk About the Children they Know

One way to get a child to open up is to talk about the children he works, plays and interacts with. Ask specific questions about the different children he knows. “Who was your reading buddy today? What story did you read together?” or

“Who was in your math group today? What activity did you do today during math?”

“Did you play with _____ during recess today? What games did you play?”

Work to Develop Your Child’s Conversation Skills

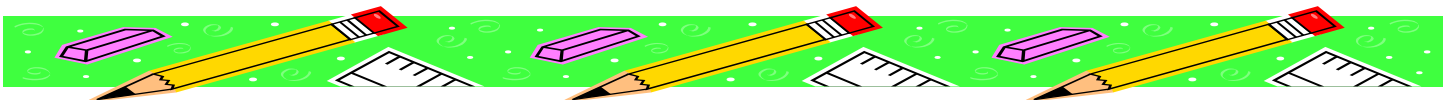
In roles as parents, as well as in that of teachers the rule of thumb is model, model, model. Children learn how to do things far more easily if they are shown. One way this can be done effectively is through role-play. You can take on the role of the child while your child plays the part of the teacher. As you role play through activities of a day, you can model good conversation skills for them. Children need to learn that eye contact, body language and warmth in their voices are all important when carrying on a conversation and that the development of these skills will serve them well in the months and years to come as they meet new people and make new friends.

Share About Your Own Experiences During the Day

As mentioned above, modeling is an integral part of training a child. When you share your daily experiences with your child, you are actively modeling the types of things you want to relate to you. For example: “This morning I went to _____ and did _____. It was hard work but I had fun doing it.” Or “I had to _____ and I finished it! That makes me feel really good.” These statements can naturally lead to questions that you can ask your child, and they might be a little more open to responding when they “don’t have to be first.”

Don’t Always take Everything at Face Value

Children have vivid imaginations and occasionally have been known to spin some rather incredible yarns. On other occasions your child might have misunderstood something that was said in class, when you hear something that alarms or concerns you in any way, check with the teacher. It could simply be a situation where the teacher used terms that confused your child. On the other hand, if your child is telling you repeatedly that he is being teased or being picked on by a classmate or playmate, if he or she is making frequent visits to the school nurse, or refuses to go to school on a consistent basis, there might be a real problem which needs to be addressed. Calling the teacher or school counselor is the best way to determine what is going on, so that together you can confront the problem and get your child the support he needs.



U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

A SAFER GENERATION OF CRIBS

New Federal Requirements



5 New Federal Requirements:

- ❧ Traditional drop-side cribs cannot be made or sold; Immobilizers and repair kits not allowed
- ❧ Wood slats must be made of stronger woods to prevent breakage
- ❧ Crib hardware must have anti-loosening devices to keep it from coming loose or falling off
- ❧ Mattress supports must be more durable
- ❧ Safety testing must be more rigorous

Beginning June 28, 2011 all cribs sold in the United States must meet new federal requirements for overall crib safety.



SafeSleep is a campaign of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.



www.cpsc.gov



NSN 11-2

Adoption Announcements!

Sandra and Keith Snow are very pleased to announce the adoption of their 3 year old son Nate. Nate joins his sister Brittany and brother Justin!



Nathan and Hannah Tapley are thrilled to announce the adoption of Camas and Ezra on July 20th! They join siblings Jonathan, James, Harrison and Allyson!

Save the Date for tea at the Blaine House in Augusta!



Are you a newly adoptive family? Did you finalize an adoption in the past 12 months? Are you about to adopt a child? If so AFFM would like you to consider attending a tea in honor of adoptive families at the Blaine House in Augusta November 1, 2011 from 2-3:30 pm. Space is limited so it will be first call first served and by confirmation only. AFFM hopes to see you and your family there for this wonderful celebration of National and State Adoption Awareness Month!

ATTENTION FREE SKATING AT GREAT SKATES: 1st, 2nd and 3rd grade students skate for FREE every Saturday from noon to 1pm during the school year. This hour is designed to introduce young skaters to the healthy and exciting activity of roller skating. For more information call Great Skates at 945-0202 or visit greatskates.net

Kinship

Corner

It's that time of year again, Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine and the Kinship Connects Program is gearing up for the Holiday Gift Giving Program! Kinship families are invited to add their children's names, gender, clothing size and age to a wish list for holiday gifts. Once again, the amazing Ogunquit Spirit of Giving Project will work to provide holiday presents to kids in AFFM programs. Give the office a call at 1-800-833-9786 and have your child's information and gift wish ready. We ask that you keep requests to under \$50.00 per child. The sooner we get the information the more likely we are to fulfill the children's wishes. We look forward to hearing from you!



Upcoming Training

Trauma Informed Parenting—Part I

Facilitated by Lauren Bustard, Foster Home Developer at Community Care

Part I: Recognizing Trauma's Impact on Children

This workshop will explore the impact of trauma on children-on their development and behavior. Foster Parents will learn how to create a physically and psychologically "safe space" in which a child can begin to heal.

When: Saturday, September 17th, 2011

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Location: Community Health & Counseling Services (CHCS)
42 Cedar Street, Conference Room #4 Bangor, Maine

Space is limited. Sorry, no childcare available

Please RSVP to Debbie Rossignol at 973-2491 or e-mail drossignol@caseyfamilyservices.org by 9/13/11

*4 credit hours available to Foster Parents for each part of Trauma Informed Parenting

Trauma Informed Parenting—Part II

Facilitated by Lauren Bustard, Foster Home Developer at Community Care

Part II: Recognizing the Impact of the Child's Trauma on You

This workshop will explore the impact of trauma on caregivers or vicarious trauma. How to take care of yourselves while helping the child develop new emotional skills and positive behaviors will be discussed.

When: October 8th, 2011

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Location: Community Health & Counseling Services (CHCS)
42 Cedar Street, Conference Room #4 Bangor, Maine

Space is limited. Sorry, no childcare available

Please RSVP to Debbie Rossignol at 973-2491 or e-mail drossignol@caseyfamilyservices.org by 10/4/11

*4 credit hours available to Foster Parents for each part of Trauma Informed Parenting

Scholarship Opportunity!

The Horatio Alger Association is pleased to be accepting applications from foster families' high school seniors of the Class of 2012 for the 2012 Horatio Alger College Scholarships.

To apply for the Horatio Alger Scholarship Programs, the following items must be completed by

October 30, 2011:

Online application at <https://www.horatioalger.org/scholarships/apply.cfm>.

Certifications Form All applicants must complete the **Academic Information** section and the **Adversity** section in order for your counselor to access the online Certification Form. A login will be emailed to your counselor and they will be required to complete the Certifications form online once these two sections are complete. (Please notify your counselor that they will receive an email from the Association providing instructions for how to complete the certifications form online).

High School Transcript All applicants must submit an official High School transcript. Applicants have the option to either upload the transcript through the online application or to send it by regular mail to the address below. **Faxes/emails will not be accepted.**

Letter of Support All applicants must have one Letter of Support. Students must provide the email address of the person filling out their letter of support. A login will then be emailed to this person. The letter must be filled out online. **Faxes/emails will not be accepted.**

A copy of your parent/guardians federal tax return (Income Verification Information) All applicants must provide a copy of the front page of your parent/guardian's 2010 individual federal tax return (1040, 1040A, 1040 EZ or 1099 SSA-Social Security Tax Form). *If your parents/guardians were not required to file a tax return, include statement copies showing the amount of any government benefits, such as food stamps or Public Assistance documents.* **Faxes/emails will not be accepted.**

Income Verification Cover Sheet All applicants are required to submit a cover sheet with their income verification information.

The above materials should be mailed to:
Horatio Alger Scholarship Programs
PO Box 4030
Iowa City, IA 52243-4030
Phone (866) 763-9228

Featured Treatment Foster Care Agency of the Month:

***Each month AFFM will be offering Treatment Foster Care Agencies a chance to be featured in the Family Ties Newsletter. This is a great opportunity to get the word out to families about your agencies. Agencies will be featured at a first come, first serve basis. Please email agency information to meagan@affm.net**

Providing Help and Creating Hope in Maine

THERAPEUTIC FOSTER PARENTS

Catholic Charities Maine Therapeutic Foster Care Program is seeking Foster Parents to provide care for children with special needs (emotional, behavioral, developmental, and learning disabilities) as therapeutic foster parents and as therapeutic respite care providers.

Current or previously licensed parents are preferred, although new families are always welcome and will be guided through the process of becoming licensed.

We provide a high quality program, using a supportive team approach. Training, supervision, and individualized support plans are provided and every foster family has their own CCM Foster Family Consultant who will meet with them weekly and whenever needed to provide support and assistance.

Reimbursement rates are competitive and based on the needs of the child.

Serves communities within an 80 mile radius of Augusta. For more information, please feel free to visit our website (www.ccmaine.org) email fosterinfo@ccmaine.org or contact Joanne O'Neal at (207) 453-4365 ext. 2211

Complete information is available at www.ccmaine.org



A United Way and Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.

ATTENTION FOSTER PARENTS:

Many of the families in Northern Maine who receive the AFFM monthly newsletter, Family Ties, are already familiar with FACT (Families and Children Together). FACT was founded 18 years ago by foster care families and social work specialist who have walked in your shoes! FACT prides itself on having staff available anytime, day or night to support families and children.

FACT is a therapeutic agency that works with children with special needs and the families they live with. Previously, FACT has focused their efforts predominantly on families and children who reside in Northern Maine.

FACT is EXPANDING their services into Knox, Lincoln and Waldo County! We need caring people, like you, who are interested in becoming a part of our team! If you have parented a special needs child for at least one year, please consider becoming a professional parent with FACT.

**For further information, or a professional Parent application form, please contact: Pat Tavernakis at (207) 991-1270
We look forward to hearing from you!**

Collage of Thanks:

Are you one of the many who's child and or household that benefited from one of the many generous businesses or individuals who share with AFFM? Has your little girl had or have a Mary Lake dress? Is one of your beds cozier because you have a quilt handmade by Debbie Irish? Did your kids get holiday gifts in brightly covered packages from the Spirit of Giving Program and other holiday gift providers? Did you capture on camera the sparkle in their eyes as they opened, wore or played with their gifts? Are you sporting bathroom, bedroom and/or kitchen accessories donated by Bed Bath and Beyond or Pottery Barn? Are your home projects improved by donations from Home Depot? Do the stories you read to your children at night come from AFFM's wonderful partnership with Border's Bookstore? Is your child going back to school with a back pack loaded with supplies provided in part by LL Bean? Does your child have a new winter jacket hanging in the closet provided through this office and the keen shopping skills of Marie Barbieri?

Did your child attend a summer camp with the assistance of the AFFM staff and the Maine Summer Youth Camp Association? Has your child ridden their bike in the Hampden Children's Day Parade?

If you answered "Yes" to one or more of these questions AFFM would like you to join them as they say thank you to the businesses and organizations and individuals mentioned here and many that are not but who are equally important in AFFM's capacity to assist and support the ever increasing numbers of families and children in the association.

AFFM hopes to make a collage of photographs and thank you notes provided by all of you and share it with all who provide the many items we distribute. I hope you will send as many pictures and notes as possible. We'd love to provide an annual thank you collage and want it to reflect the over 600 families who have had these advantages this year alone. Honoring in a significant way those who share with AFFM increases the potential for future opportunities and improves the probability of expanded resources to more and more children and families who have a need.

Thank you for all you do for Maine's children!

Announcements:

Who can be a Host Home?



Single people. Married people. Older people. Younger people.

Current and past foster families.

People like you who care enough to help a teenager overcome unfortunate situations and brighten their prospects for the future.

We are looking for people willing to share their homes with a teen in Cumberland and York Counties.

Learn more about Host Homes.

Call Jada at 795-4070.

Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine is excited to announce an exclusive membership offer: ALL families involved with AFFM will receive a \$25 Sam's Club gift card when they sign up for or renew a Sam's Club membership by November 30, 2011. To become a Member, bring the certificate found online at www.affm.net to your local Sam's Club. Upon payment for a Plus Membership, you will receive a \$25 Sam's Club Gift Card. Upon payment for an Advantage Membership, you will receive a \$10 Sam's Club Gift Card.

For a club near you, visit SamsClub.com or call 1-800-881-9180.



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 Maine Care.



THE DIRECT SERVICE AGENCY OF
THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION

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.

Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc.
294 Center Street, Unit 1 — Old Town, ME 04468

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Fax: (207) 827-1974
On the Web: www.affm.net
E-Mail: info@affm.net

Affiliated With:
The North American Council on Adoptable Children
National Foster Parent Association

FAMILY TIES
THE NEWSLETTER OF ADOPTIVE & FOSTER FAMILIES OF MAINE, INC.
PUBLISHED WITH SUPPORT FROM THE MAINE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN
SERVICES. PLEASE DIRECT COMMENTS TO: EDITOR, FAMILY TIES, AT THE
ADDRESS ABOVE.

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In Remembrance of Janice Brown

AFFM is pleased to have started a new practice. A few months ago a dear friend of AFFM, Janice Brown died in an auto accident. Janice was well loved and respected by family, friends and colleagues. She had an established reputation as an outstanding adoption worker. She went above and beyond the call of duty to insure the children on her caseload found permanency!

A practice that she established outside of her office was the filling and distributing of a backpack. Janice would consider who would benefit from her gift then she would shop for items to fill the child's need. Her backpacks contained everything from school supplies to pajamas and underwear and toiletries. AFFM received the final pack she had prepared before her untimely death. AFFM surprised a deserving youth with the backpack and goodies in early June.

This was such a noble and loving act on Janice's part. The staff and management of AFFM and the Board of Directors have decided to continue this project in Janice's memory. Each month AFFM will select a youth and carefully fill the back pack with items befitting the gender and age of the youth. The bag will subsequently be delivered to the youth. In the backpack will be a note explaining why AFFM has opted to provide the backpacks in Janice's memory. Two such deliveries have been made thus far and another is being filled for the month of August delivery. We hope all who become recipients will think of Janice and her wonderful gifts to Maine's children and their families as they use the backpack and the items included.