

Family Ties



Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine

Volume 14 Number 9

Newsletter

October 2011



Celebrate Adoption Awareness Month



Adoption Month is a great time to plan special ways and occasions to talk about adoption, culture, and family connections—and perhaps start habits that last year-long

- Each Adoption Month, repeat shared seasonal activities such as attending county, school, or state fairs; taking apple orchard or fall foliage outings; participating in a community harvest or powwow; or getting outdoors for a final fall camping trip or picnic.
- Set aside one day of the month as special meal day. Use the best dishes, chose and prepare a menu together and dress up for the event.
- Become familiar with your child's heritage. Learn more about traditions, achievements, or the style of dress within the culture. Make plans with your child to celebrate an upcoming holiday or attend a cultural festival.
- Find out how children's birth or foster families (or families from their country or culture of origin) celebrate holidays. Include some of the best ideas in your own celebration. If the child recalls negative traditions, create new, better memories.
- Go around the table sharing, on different days, a thought for the day, a wish for someone else at the table, a favorite memory, a happening at school or work, a reaction to a current event, a joke, a dream, or a plan for the week.

This Month's Family Ties	
Hall of Flags Announcement	2
Adoption Announcement	2
A Fall Recipe!	2
Grant Opportunity	3
TFC Agency of the Month	4
Halloween Safety	4
Upcoming Trainings	5
Thank you	6
Casey Family Service Announcement	6
Kinship Corner	6
Calendar of Events for November	7

Meet the Staff of AFFM!

Meet Nicole O'Roak, Kinship Support Specialist and the newest member of the staff at AFFM. Nicole is a social worker and for the past 13 years, prior to working at AFFM, has been a stay at home mother home schooling her daughters as well as providing respite for developmentally challenged individuals. She and husband Patrick are the proud parents of two daughters Emmy age 14 and Myrah age 9. In the past, Nicole and her family provided kinship care to their niece giving Nicole a great foundation for the support she provides to Resource Families and kinship families in particular.

Nicole describes herself as someone with a strong love for children which is exemplified through her previous job at a daycare for over 5 years at the UMO. She works at the Sunday school at her church teaching four and five year olds. She is also an active volunteer at the God Parent Home in Bangor. She hopes her life will be viewed as one of service to her family and others.

A strong characteristic of Nicole's personality is her faith focused approach to all her activities. She is unbiased and respectful of everyone.





Adoption Announcements!

Mary Winchenbach & Deborah Nicholls are thrilled to announce the adoption of Catherine age 7, Cody age 5 and Paige age 3! The adoption took place August 4th. Congratulations!!



Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine would like to invite you to come join the annual 'Hall of Flags' recognition event, to be held in the Hall of Flags at the State Capitol on November 15th, 2011 from 10-12 noon to raise awareness about the need for adoptive families for Maine's youth in care. This event is open to the public.

AFFM invites all adoptive parents or those wanting to learn more about adoption in the state of Maine to enjoy information tables and light snacks along with music, speakers and raffles. For more information about this event, or if you are an organization that would like to host a table please call 1-800-833-9786 or email meagan@affm.net

A Fall Treat for the Whole Family to Enjoy!

ACORN DOUGH NUTS

Your kids will go nutty for these clever fall treats, which look like acorns but taste a whole lot sweeter.

Ingredients:

- Chocolate Frosting or Peanut Butter
- Donuts
- Crumbled Toffee
- Pretzel

Instructions:

- Frost a third or so of a plain or glazed doughnut hole with chocolate frosting or peanut butter.
- Roll the frosted top in crumbled toffee (look for it in the baking section of grocery stores), then add a small piece of a pretzel for the stem



Grant Opportunity!

The Collaborative Youth Committee (CYC) offers grants to support youth in foster care or youth transitioning from care. The goal of this grant program is to support innovative projects and partnerships that will assist youth in foster care and the systems that serve them. Agencies, businesses, schools, individuals, and social service organizations are encouraged to apply.

For additional information about the partners involved in the Creative Opportunities Grant and for a more detailed description of the priority areas please refer to our website at www.ylat.org.

Maximum Award: \$2,000

Priority Areas

Funding will be given to projects focused on creating resources and opportunities for youth in the following areas:

1. 1. Steady employment
2. 2. Education and training in support of stable employment
3. 3. Safe, stable and affordable housing
4. 4. Access to transportation to work and school
5. 5. Physical, dental and mental health care
6. 6. Supportive relationships in the community
7. 7. Permanent and lifelong connections

Eligible ideas include, but are not limited to:

- Outreach and special events (ex. fairs, conferences, promotional/educational materials etc)
- Apprenticeships and career training programs
- Mentoring and tutoring programs
- Life skills training and support programs
- Education and career awareness events (such as college visits)
- Initiatives related to transportation (e.g., driver's license support, driver's education, discounted bus tickets)
- Initiatives that reduce living expenses (including utility costs for youth in transition)
- Initiatives related to improving health and wellness
- Housing support or placement

Previous Grant Recipients

- New Beginnings, Lewiston: To add recreational and cultural activities to the existing program to assist youth in making more connections with supportive adults, other youth, and local resources.
- Central/Western Workforce Development, Augusta: To offer the WorkReady™ program, a 60-hour work preparation training to youth in care.
- Community Care, Bangor: To expand the reach of the "Turning Points" program, which normalizes the stress that teens face in decision making about their lives, teaches practical life skills, and helps youth gain confidence in their innate strengths.
- Camp To Belong, Maine, statewide: To support youth scholarships for camp and to convene a team to design an array of sibling reunion events for brothers and sisters across Maine who have been separated by foster care, adoption or other out- of-home placement and to help with scholarships to Camp To Belong, Maine.
- Three former youth in care, statewide: To establish a Maine Chapter of the Foster Care Alumni Association of America group.

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



Improving the
well being
of our
community

Serving Maine's Aroostook, Hancock and Washington Counties

AMHC has been providing services to Aroostook County communities since 1964. We have offices throughout Aroostook County, located specifically in Fort Kent, Madawaska, Caribou, Presque Isle, and Houlton. At these locations, clients have access to comprehensive services including Psychiatric Evaluations and medication management, Psychological Evaluations, Therapy, Family Support Services, Home and Community Treatment, Substance Abuse Services, 24-hour Emergency Services, and a wide array of Outpatient Group Services. We are actively recruiting for Therapeutic Foster Parents in all areas, specifically for the Central and Northern areas of Aroostook County. We also offer Targeted Case Management Services that can be initiated once the TFC child reaches permanency and transfers out of the Foster Care Program. This ensures consistency, and that there isn't a disruption in services. If you are interested in becoming a Therapeutic Foster Parent with AMHC, please reach out to Bobbie Chasse at 207-498-6431 or at bchasse@amhc.org.

Remember your Halloween Safety:

1. Small children should always be accompanied by an adult
2. Use flashlights, bright costumes or decorations to make trick or treaters more visible
3. Try to frequent the same limited area each year or limit visits to friends and families
4. Remind children not to eat candy until they get home and have moms and dads check and approve
5. A safe costume should not block or restrict a child's vision or interfere with mobility. Make sure costumes are of a safe length so as not to trip the child.



Turning Points Presents: On Your Own, but not Completely: Healthy Relationships, Community, and Public Safety

Date: October 10, 2011

Time: 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Location: Community Care, 40 Summer Street, Bangor

Community Care is partnering with Spruce Run and the Bangor Police Department to bring youth a full-day workshop about personal relationships and the impact of relationships on everyone in our community.

Please join us. The workshop is free for any youth in care between the ages of 13 and 19. Lunch will be provided and the day will be filled with activities. There will also be door prizes!

RSVP @ mcallaway@comcareme.org or call Meg Callaway at (207) 299-1103





Upcoming Trainings

Common Sense Approach to Children and Sexuality

Facilitated by: Virginia Holmes

In this workshop, we will explore normal paths of development in terms of sexual/bodily awareness and interest. We will talk about different age groups from toddlerhood through adolescence and describe the spectrum of normal and abnormal behaviors that can and do occur. We will explore different kinds of behaviors and how to know when to worry and what to do when you are worried.

You will leave this training feeling more secure that you know how to think about physical and sexual behaviors, how to tell if a behavior is a problematic sexualized behavior and how to respond in either case.

WHEN: Wednesday, October 12th, 2011

TIME: 9:00am to 12:00pm

WHERE: Families and Children Together (FACT) 304 Hancock Street Bangor, Maine

Space is limited

Sorry, no childcare available

Please RSVP to Debbie Rossignol at 974-1508 (Direct line) or 1-866-662-2739 or email drossignol@caseyfamilyservices.org by October 7th.

(3 credit Hours Available to Foster Parents)

Substance Abuse: Signs, Symptoms and Solutions

Presented by: Christine Theriault, LSW

This workshop will provide a brief overview of substance use and abuse including comparisons between the adult and adolescent population. Information will be presented regarding addiction and brain development, adolescent and adult substance use in Maine, phases of use, signs and symptoms of adolescent substance use and prevention and treatment.

WHEN: Wednesday, October 26th, 2011

TIME: 9:00am to 12:00pm

WHERE: Families and Children Together (FACT) 304 Hancock Street Bangor, Maine

Space is limited

Sorry, no childcare available

Please RSVP to Debbie Rossignol at 974-1508 (Direct line) or 1-866-662-2739 or email drossignol@caseyfamilyservices.org by October 21st

(3 credit Hours Available to Foster Parents)

Kids, Computers and the Internet

Facilitated by David Plourde, Senior Computer System Expert, Currently working for the state of Maine
Office Information Technology

David will present a practical look into computers being used by kids in your home. We will discuss the educational benefits, confidentiality on the internet and the enjoyment computers can provide while keeping our kids safe. We will talk in plain English without all the techno jargon. It will be interactive with plenty of chances to answer questions.

WHEN: Monday, November 7th, 2011

TIME: 6:30pm to 8:30pm



WHERE: Families and Children Together (FACT) 304 Hancock Street Bangor, Maine

Space is limited

Sorry, no childcare available

Please RSVP to Debbie Rossignol at 974-1508 (Direct line) or 1-866-662-2739 or email drossignol@caseyfamilyservices.org by November 2nd

(2 credit Hours Available to Foster Parents)



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

www.facebook.com/caseyfamilyservices

www.caseyfamilyservices.org

www.twitter.com/caseyfamily

Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine would like to extend a thank you to the following businesses and individuals who helped support Maine's youth in care by donating school supplies to kick off the school year right!

♦ ♦ Wal-Mart

* Ruth's Reusable Resources

*Land's End

♦ ♦ Sam's Club

* Marie Barbieri

♦ ♦ Big Lots

* Roxanne Godin

♦ ♦ L.L. Bean

* Tammy Cutchen

♦ ♦ K-Mart

* Penobscot Community Dental Clinic



Kinship

Grandparents Raising Grandkids Go to Washington

C Advocates rally at the Capitol to draw attention to the needs of older relatives who are raising children

A crowd of more than 500 people gathered in front of the U.S. Capitol on September 15 to draw attention to the needs of the growing number of grandparents who are raising grandchildren.

The fourth national GrandRally, sponsored in part by AARP, aimed to educate members of Congress about the importance of family caregivers and the challenges they face. This year, the focus was on the crucial role that Social Security plays in supporting grandfamilies.

Youth shared lessons they had learned from family members who selflessly gave of themselves to care for them and their siblings. Hundreds of grandmothers were in attendance and a few took to the stage to tell their stories of raising kin and providing for them when their biological parents were unable to. Senator **Chuck Grassley (R-IA)** addressed the need for legislation that reflects the growing number of grandparents raising their kin. Representatives **Mike McIntyre (D-NC)** and **Karen Bass (D-CA)** were also in attendance and spoke about the importance of saving programs like Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid that help support caregivers raising their relatives. Following the rally, the caregivers departed from the lawn to participate in over 150 hill visits scheduled with their respective members of Congress.



Nearly 7.8 million children live in households headed by a grandparent or other relative. More than 2.5 million grandparents report they are responsible for grandchildren living with them — a third with no parent present.



National Adoption Awareness Month Calendar

November 2011

National Adoption Day is a national day of celebration of adoptive families and an opportunity for courts to open their doors and finalize the adoptions of children from foster care. Since 2000, more than 35,000 children have had their adoptions finalized on National Adoption Day.

On November 19, 2011, families, adoption advocates, policymakers, judges and volunteers will come together and celebrate adoption in communities large and small all across the nation.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Blaine House Tea 2-3:30 1-800-833-9786	2 Read an Adoption specific book	3 Visit your library for adoption re- lated books	4 Ask your schools to speak or teach about adoption	5 Talk about adoption on AFFM's Facebook page
6 Create a prayer team at your place of worship for those awaiting adoption	7 Adoption Legalizations all over the state!!	8 Have an 'Adoption get-together'	9 Brainstorm & cre- ate a new family tradition	10 Send thank you cards to your local foster care office	11 Call AFFM @ 1-800-833-9786 ask about foster par- enting	12 Bake cookies for those who helped you through the adoption process
13 Perfect day for a scrapbooking pro- ject....or just look at family pictures!	14 Write a letter to the editor about your adoption experience	15 Hall of Flags event Statehouse 10-12 am Call 1-800-833-9786	16 Mentor a foster child close to 'aging' out of the system	17 Adoption Legaliza- tions in Oxford County!	18 Donate clothing, toys, books to youth in care 1-800-833-9786	19 NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY!
20 Find adoptive families in your church & Invite them for lunch	21 Attend a foster parent informational meeting	22 Find your state Representatives who support Adoption policies	23 Learn positive adoption language www.adoption.com	24 Thanksgiving is a day for family!! Give thanks for all adoptions	25 Watch an adop- tion related movie with your family	26 Celebrate your child's heritage in a fun way!
27 Kinship Holiday Party Ramada Inn Bangor 1-4pm 1-800-833-9786	28 Create hand made Christmas Cards for an Adoptive family	29 Visit Adoptuskids.org And search Maine kids available for adoption	30 Create a Holiday ornament as a gift			

Schedule of Events for November

November 1st– Blaine House Tea,

Celebrating National Adoption Awareness at the Blaine House,

The Governors' Mansion 2–3:30 pm Call 1-800-833-9786 for more information

November 7th– Adoption Legalizations all across the State at Maine's Children's Museums and in selected districts

-Maine Children's Discovery Museum-Bangor, Event will begin at 8:30am

-Maine Children's Museum & Theatre– Portland, Event will begin at 11:30am

Other legalizations being planned across the state.

November 15th - Hall of Flags, Augusta Statehouse

10-12pm Adoption Celebration & information event call 1-800-833-9786

November 17th– Adoption Legalization at Oxford High School



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

Phone: 1-800-833-9786 or (207) 827-2331
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.

NON-PROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
OLD TOWN, ME
PERMIT NO. 65



Celebrate National Adoption Awareness Month
in November!

