

Family Ties



Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine

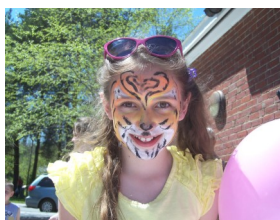
Volume 15 Number 6

Newsletter

June 2012



Fort Knox 2012



The sun was shining, the temperature high and the setting was perfect for the recognition event held at Fort Knox State Park and Historic Site. Over 100 families, guests, entertainers, and helpers made up the nearly 500 individuals at the Fort in Prospect, Maine on Saturday May 19th.

Foster Day at the Fort has become the single biggest foster care recognition event in the country. The picnic and fun day is sponsored annually by Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc. and Kinship Program. AFFM is happy to partner with the Friends of Fort Knox administrator's and their Board of Director's who welcome the group to this special event.

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AFFM was pleased to have two special guests. Mary Mayhew, the Commissioner of Maine Department of Health and Human Services, attended and shared a few words of greeting including her thanks and encouragement to the families that open their hearts and homes to children who for a variety of reasons are unable to safely reside in their birth homes.

The Commissioner received a huge round of applause when she shared that respite care has been restored to the DHHS budget. Respite care is vitally important to the families who care for children on a regular basis and who on occasion need a break from the daily caretaking to re-fuel and energize themselves to go on with the special work they provide.



Another special guest was Representative James Gillway. Like the Commissioner Rep. Gillway, shared a greeting and thanked the families who care for Maine's abused and or neglected children.



In addition to a picnic with grilled hot dogs, salads, watermelon, chips, soft drinks, coffee, hot chocolate, bottled water, baked beans, chili and tons of homemade pastries and desserts, one cake was a work of art! The cake weighing approx. 60 pounds was made to look like the best picnic basket ever! The cake was made and donated by Rebecca Haskell. Rebecca is the proprietor of Rebecca's Cake Designs.



Interactive entertainment for the day included a huge bounce house from the Maine Jump, workshop kits from Home Depot, an interactive Maine wild life display by Fields Pond Audubon, cotton candy, hula hooping, face painting, a bubble blowing center, Coin in the Hay game, raffles that included items from Roger's Market in Hudson and handmade quilts by Debbie Irish and much more!



While the activities were a lot of fun, equally entertaining was the music provided by Planet Pan. The teens in this kettle drum band were magnificent and had everyone's toes tapping and their hands clapping. (A few were dancing as well!) Also the Star Wars characters were there in full regalia and were joined by an amazing Made in Maine R2 D2 robot. Smokey the Bear received tons of hugs as did the two Shriner clowns who blew up loads of balloons and created numerous balloon toys for their captive though not so patient audience.



The staff, Board and management of AFFM along with numerous volunteers were joined by several private non-profit organizations to make this day a huge success.



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.



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.
- Maine Care accepted.



Be the Difference- Volunteer

We are looking for people who want to be a Court Appointed Special Advocate called a “CASA” Volunteer. Anyone that is at least 21 years of age is welcome to apply. A CASA is a trained citizen appointed by a judge to speak for a child who has been abused or neglected. As a CASA Volunteer, you are the child’s voice in the legal and social service system.

If you want to make a difference in a child’s life, be a CASA Volunteer.

Since the inception of CASA, volunteers nationwide have helped more than two million children find safe, permanent homes in which they can thrive. In Maine we currently have over 100 volunteers who come from all walks of life to speak for Maine children in courts across the state. You don’t need to have any special educational background. We will provide you with the training you will need.

In an overburdened social welfare system, abused and neglected children can slip through the cracks if they don’t have someone to give them a voice.

CASA volunteers change that.

You can make a difference. Lift up a child.

For more information:

Maine CASA

171 State House Station

Augusta, ME 04333

Phone: 207-287-5403

e-mail: CASA@courts.maine.gov

To learn more about the program and download our application, please visit our website at:

http://www.courts.state.me.us/maine_courts/family/casa/index.shtml

To learn more about National CASA, please visit:

<http://www.nationalcasa.org>

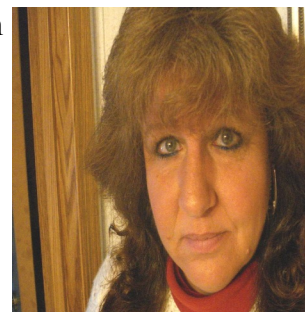
Meet the Staff of AFFM!

On March 22nd AFFM welcomed our new Administrative Assistant, Cindy Lilley. Cindy has 25 years of experience in administration from working at the University of Maine. Cindy has been a volunteer fire fighter for the Hudson Fire Department for the past 15 years, as well as, a first responder.

Cindy was born and raised in Maine. She enjoys camping, reading and spending time with her family and friends. She is a mother of two boys and a proud ‘mammie’ to her 1 year old granddaughter, Natalie.

AFFM is thrilled to have Cindy on board! Cindy’s talent in getting donations is adding a whole new dimension to AFFM’s ever increasing number of vendors. When you call AFFM tell Cindy thank you for adding to the resources offered to adoptive, foster and kinship families.

You will recognize Cindy by the easy manner with which she says, “Thank you for calling Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine”.



Upcoming Trainings

Workshops for Parents put on by G.E.A.R Parent Network and NAMI Maine Difficult Situations, De-Escalation & Building Resiliency in Youth & Children

Dealing with a child in crisis can be one of the most challenging aspects of raising and working with children. Using concepts from Social Emotional Learning, the biology of emotions and behavior and effective communication, this interactive workshop engages participants in a discussion about how to best use ourselves when helping young people to deescalate while building stronger relationships with them and helping them become more resilient. This includes topics on the prevention, intervention and the communication skills necessary to effectively intervene in crisis.

In Bath: 9:00am-11:00am on Thursday June 21, 2012 at Mid-Coast Maine Community Action
34 Wing Farm Parkway

In Rockport: 6:30pm-8:30pm on Thursday, July 19, 2012 Physicians Building, Conference Room D (Ground Floor, Penobscot Bay Medical Center, 4 Glen Cove Drive

Workshops are free to parents/guardians of children with behavioral health needs.

You may register by email at nleblanc@crisisandcounseling.org; by telephone at 721-0161 or 1-800-264-9224 or fax completed registration form to 207-621-6228 Attn: Carol Tiernan

Kinship Corner

A Few Announcements

- Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc. and the Kinship Program have had another successful year with assisting kinship families in finding camp scholarships. As of now, Seasonal Activities Coordinator, Amanda Keegan, has assisted many families in finding camps for the children in their home. If you are interested in signing your child up for summer camp please try and get your request in by **June 15th**. Please be prepared to provide information about your child's interest, special needs and/or medical needs so Amanda can find a camp that is best suited for him/her.
- AFFM, FFTA, DHHS and the NEFCA planning committee are gearing up for the New England Foster Care Association conference October 12-14th, 2012. Keynote speakers will include motivational speaker and former foster child, Derek Clark, as well as, kinship specialist Dr. Joseph Crumbley. The first 20 kinship families to register will receive free registration as well as free hotel charges if they are traveling over 50 miles to the conference. Brochures and registrations forms coming soon!
- As a result of the Maine Kinship Connections Grant and members of the Maine Kinship Advisory board there is now a website online that offers guidance and support for kinship caregivers. Check out this great resource at <http://grandfamiliesofmaine.org/index1.html>

Adoption Announcement!

Congratulations to Kristie Deschesne and family for the adoption of 18 month old son Gage Maxwell Deschesne!



Building care and understanding in the communities we serve

Thank You to our wonderful **Community Care Foster Families** who provide such great care to our foster children and teenagers. You are **GREAT!**

For more information on **Community Care** please call 1-888-236-2273 or on the web: www.comcareme.org

Community Care is proud to be nationally accredited by COA.

Boosters are for Big Kids

If your child is under 4'9", they need a booster seat.

If your child isn't using a booster seat, try this simple test:

The 5 Step Test

1. Does the child sit all the way back against the auto seat?
2. Do the child's knees bend comfortably at the edge of the auto seat?
3. Does the belt cross the shoulder between the neck and arm?
4. Is the lap belt as low as possible, touching the thighs?
5. Can the child stay seated like this for the entire trip?

If you answered "no" to any of these questions, your child needs a booster seat.

Maine Bureau of Highway Safety in cooperation with Maine CDCP– Injury Prevention, Safe Kids Maine, MaineDOT, Maine Turnpike Authority, Maine Chiefs of Police Association, Maine Sheriffs' Association, Maine State Police
www.maine.gov/dps/bhs

You Hold the Key!

It's a fact kids are safer in the back!

Maine Law Says...

A child who is less than 12 years of age who weighs less than 100 pounds must ride in the back seat if possible.

A child who weighs less than 40 pounds must ride in a child safety seat.

A child who weighs at least 40 pounds but less than 80 pounds and who is less than 8 years of age must ride in a federally approved child restraint system,

For your child's safety...

Children must ride rear facing until they are at least 1 year of age and weigh at least 20 pounds.

Never place a rear facing child safety seat in the front of an air bag.

For more Information...

Maine Child Passenger Safety Program

1-800-698-3624 ext. 4288
www.mainepublichealth.gov

Safe Kids Maine 1-800-649-1304
www.safekidsmaine.org

Important Information Regarding Respite Care

As of July 1st, 2012 the Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS) will provide funding for up to 14 days of respite each year for all resource families providing foster care.

When foster parents wish to take respite, they may, in coordination with and approval by the case-worker, arrange for the child to go to an appropriate respite placement and OCFS will pay that child's level of care per diem rate to both the primary and respite placements for those days.



www.mainekids-kin.org

1-866-298-0896

JUNE GROUP MEETINGS

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, giving the children an opportunity to meet and socialize with other children in similar situations.

Please contact us if you would like to receive a phone call reminder for your local group meeting.

Augusta

Wednesday, June 20th at 6:00 pm, The Children's Center, 1 Alden Avenue. *Please contact Meaghan at F.A.C.T. at 941-2347 to reserve childcare.*

Bangor

Tuesday, June 5th at 6:00 pm, Families And Children Together office, 304 Hancock Street. *Please contact Meaghan at F.A.C.T. at 941-2347 to reserve childcare.*

Tuesday, June 19th at 6:00 pm, Families And Children Together office, 304 Hancock Street. *Please contact Meaghan at F.A.C.T. at 941-2347 to reserve childcare.*

Belfast

Thursday, June 14th at 10:30 am meeting at the Belfast Free Library on High St. in the first floor conference room (*on the right as you enter the library*). Parking available on Spring and Miller Streets. **This will be the last Belfast group before we take a break for the summer.**

Dover-Foxcroft

Monday, June 11th at 6:30 pm, Penquis, 50 North St. *Please contact Meaghan at F.A.C.T. at 941-2347 to reserve childcare.*

Westbrook

Thursday, June 14th at 6:00 pm, Maine Kids-Kin, 869 Main Street, Suite 900. *Please contact Nancy at F.A.C.T. to reserve childcare at 591-6278.*

Tuesday, June 26th at 9:00 am, Maine Kids-Kin, 869 Main Street, Suite 900. *Please contact Cathy at F.A.C.T. to register at 591-6278.*

Wednesday, June 27th at 6:00 pm, Maine Kids-Kin, 869 Main Street, Suite 900. See Page 1 for more information. *Please contact Nancy at F.A.C.T. to reserve childcare at 591-6278.*

Announcements

A Note of Thanks From Mary Lake

Mary wishes to thank Toni and Alex Jackson for their generous donation. The funds made it possible for her to purchase material and make several more little girls dresses.

Thanks also for the photo. Most of all thank you for caring that other little girls will smile as they twirl around in front of the mirror as they admire how lovely they look in their new Mary Lake dress.

Sincerely,
Mary Lake



Big Bear Bed Bonanza Campaign

Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine (AFFM) and Maine Kids-Kin at Families and Children Together (FACT) have partnered with 97.1 The Bear in an effort to get beds for families in need.

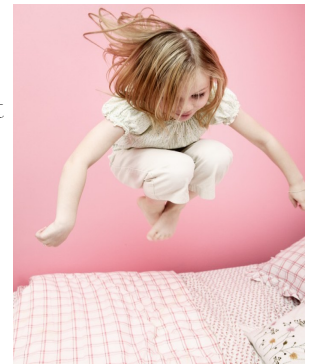
This project will expand the two agencies capacity to assist families who provide care to children and youth in out of home placements and or families in the greater Bangor area who may need bed/beds for their children. Children should not have to sleep on the floor!



This event will take place June 30th in the parking lot of Sam's Club in Bangor from 9-3.

Bring your new or gently used beds sizes toddler to full to the lot and the group will get it to the family /families in need.

AFFM and FACT plan to make it a fun event. Plan to bring your kids to enjoy treats, face painting and a variety of games. Prizes and gift certificates will be given away hourly throughout the day.



Come and bring your children and lots of friends!



Congratulations goes out to AFFM's Seasonal Activities Coordinator, Amanda Keegan and intern, Rachel Smart for graduating on May 12, 2012! Amanda and Rachel are proud alumni's of UMA Bangor and both earned an associates in

Mental Health and Human Services.

Volunteer, Sarah Spade also started school at UMA Bangor last semester and has done an amazing job!! Nice work ladies!

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National Foster Parent Association

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AT THE ADDRESS ABOVE.

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AFFM would like to wish you a

Happy Father's Day on June 17th!