

# Family Ties

Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine

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Newsletter

October 2012

## National Adoption Awareness Month 10 Ways to Celebrate this November

- Begin Adoption Awareness Month by celebrating your family's story! Don't forget to also write it down and add it to your lifebook/scrapbook.
- Light a candle as a family for children in foster care who are still waiting for adoptive families. Set the candle outside in a safe place. Ask your neighbors to join you by lighting a candle as well.
- Contact your local paper and/or news media about National Adoption Month. Encourage them to run a positive story about adoption - consider sharing your own story.
- Write out a family mission statement. Ask each member to write down ideas that they feel are important for a great family to have like respect, sharing, and/or honesty. Include goals and dreams.
- Look for events in your area celebrating National Adoption Month. (Check out the Calendar on page 6 for upcoming events celebrating Adoption Awareness Month!)
- Read adoption themed poems as a family. Consider writing your own to place in a lifebook and/or to send in to Family Ties Newsletter!

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- Work on your life books together. Get out those stacks of pictures and saved school papers and add them in. Make a goal for each family member to complete 2 pages. (If you're attending the NEFCA Conference Oct. 12-14th take part in the workshop "If You Don't Write Your Own Story, Someone Else Will" and learn more about Life Books and their value!)
- Write a thank you note to a foster care agency and thank them for the work they do to help children. If your child was in foster care consider writing to the social worker or judge from his/her case.
- Join an adoptive parent support group in your area. If there isn't any, call AFFM for more information on starting one.
- Take a family photo. Have a copy framed for each member of the family to be placed in his/her room.

## Announcements/FYI

### New Businesses added to the Discount Card Program!

~ Snip-Its Haircuts for Kids is offering 20% off Hair Services! Snip-Its is located at 209 Western Ave. South Portland, Maine. Call 774-5437 or visit [www.snipits.com](http://www.snipits.com) make an appointment today!

~ Maine Indoor Karting is offering \$5 off Junior Racing and \$10 off Junior Racers Class. Ages 8-15 are required to take the junior class prior to racing. Maine Indoor Karting is located at 23 Washington Ave. Scarborough, Maine. Call 885-0058 to make a reservation or visit [www.maineindoorkarting.com](http://www.maineindoorkarting.com) for more information.

### Join AFFM at the Hall of Flags to Raise Awareness about Adoption!

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 8th, 2012 from 10-1pm 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 snacks, speakers, raffles, information tables, and more. 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](mailto:meagan@affm.net)

### OCTOBER is survey month for Opportunity Passport™ participants!!

**Between October 1 & 31** go to: <http://transition.fosterclub.com/>. On the right side of the page, click "take the Opportunity Passport™ Survey" (square below the purple "donate" button). Enter your user ID (sent to you by mail & email) and your password.

If you FORGOT your password, have questions, or need help doing the survey by phone, please email [dbechard@jmg.org](mailto:dbechard@jmg.org) or call Debbie Bechard at 620-7180 ext. 212.

### Newly Licensed Drivers Under age 18 and Transporting Foster Children

The Maine Bureau of Motor Vehicles law for Licensed Drivers under the age of 18 concerning carrying passengers reads as follows:

If a license is issued to a person under the age of 18, that person will receive an "**Intermediate License**" which prohibits the licensee from the following:

- Carrying passengers, except immediate family (grandparent; step grandparent; parent; stepparent; spouse; child; stepchildren; brother; sister; stepbrother; stepsister; a foreign exchange student that is living with the immediate family) unless accompanied by a licensed driver who is at least 20 years of age and has held a valid license for the past 2 years and is occupying the seat beside the driver for six months after licensure.

**The law does not specify if foster children are included as immediate family. Do you feel this law discriminates against youth in care? Let us know what you think. Send your comments to [info@affm.net](mailto:info@affm.net)**



## Foster Parent Insurance

Foster parenting and providing respite care are difficult jobs. This program of self insurance, which has now been in force for many years, helps protect the financial interest of these important caregivers. This program is paid for by the State of Maine and is for the benefit of certain DHHS licensed foster parents and respite care providers. It basically insures against claims made by:

- Third parties against foster parents and respite care providers because of the acts of a foster child or respite care client;
- A foster child or a respite care client against foster parents and respite care providers which arise directly out of foster parent or respite care provider activities;
- Foster parents or respite care providers for damages or losses caused by a foster child or respite care client to the property of the foster parent or respite care provider.

Risk Management Division provides DHHS with a supply of insurance policy copies for distribution to new foster parents and respite care providers during the licensing process. State of Maine foster parents and respite care providers may also obtain a copy of the policy by contacting Risk Management Division directly. **(1-800-525-1252)**

Like all insurance policies, this policy contains certain coverage limits, exclusions, and conditions. Persons insured under this policy are encouraged to read it thoroughly. Questions regarding the policy should be directed to the Risk Management Division. **(1-800-525-1252)**

It is important to note that the policy has claims reporting requirements which must be followed in order not to jeopardize coverage and these are spelled out in the policy. Here is a brief summary of these requirements:

- For damages or losses to the property of a foster parent or respite care provider caused by a foster child or respite care client, a claim will need to be submitted in writing to Risk Management within 45 days of the loss. All reasonable steps to prevent further damage to the property must be taken and damaged property should not be disposed of until permission to do so is given by Risk Management.
- For claims made by others against a foster parent or respite care provider (typically a lawsuit or the threat of one), ask for the Liability Claim Reporting Form. Be sure to forward any legal document received (such as, demands, notices, summons, pleadings or other documents) to Risk Management and call within 72 hours of receipt of such documents for further instructions.
- Cooperate fully with us or our representative and provide such information and documents as is requested. Do not voluntarily make a payment, assume any obligation, or incur any expense, other than for first aid without our express approval.

When making a claim, foster parents and respite care providers should understand that this policy and program is excess to any other applicable insurance. For example, if a loss involves damage to a car, the insurance covering that car will need to be considered in the claims process.



## Halloween Health and Safety Tips

For many people, autumn events like Halloween and Harvest Day are fun times to dress up in costumes, go trick-or-treating, attend parties, and eat yummy treats. These events are also opportunities to provide nutritious snacks, get physical activity, and focus on safety. Below are tips to help make the festivities fun and safe for trick-or-treaters and party guests.

- S** Small children should always be accompanied by an adult
- A** Avoid trick-or-treating alone. Walk in groups or with a trusted adult.
- F** Fasten reflective tape to costumes and bags to help drivers see you.
- E** Examine all treats for choking hazards and tampering before eating them. Limit the amount of treats you eat.
- H** Hold a flashlight while trick-or-treating to help you see and others see you. Always walk don't run from house to house.
- A** Always test make-up in a small area first. Remove it before bedtime to prevent possible skin and eye irritation.
- L** Look both ways before crossing the street. Use established crosswalks wherever possible.
- L** Lower your risk for serious eye injury by not wearing decorative contact lenses.
- O** Only walk on sidewalks whenever possible, or on the far edge of the road facing traffic to stay safe.
- W** Wear well-fitting masks, costumes, and shoes to avoid blocked vision, trips, and falls.
- E** Eat only factory-wrapped treats. Avoid eating homemade treats made by strangers.
- E** Enter homes only if you're with a trusted adult.
- N** Never accept rides from strangers.



## Adoption Announcements!

The Cathcart family including, brother Dakota, welcomed Tony Lancaster Cathcart to the family on July 17th, 2012. Congratulations!

Lisa Swett is excited to announce the adoption of Jaddah age 9, Dominick age 8, and Elexis age 5 on August 15th, 2012!

Sallie Deitz, Douglas & Colby (6 1/2 yr) Flagg are full of pride and joy to announce the adoption of Kaitlynn Allene (2 3/4 yr). "She joined our family on September 10, 2012 Forever and ever and always."



### I Don't Understand.....

I Don't Understand why kids argue  
with teachers,  
They win anyway.  
Why adults don't work,  
Or have a place to stay  
Why people give up chances  
They blow them away  
But most of all  
Why people are so cruel to earth  
Why dogs whine to go outside  
Then to come in  
Why parents don't like children  
To who they gave birth.  
What I do understand is why some care  
For kids in need  
Why God did not have some greed,  
And why I wrote this poem,  
for the world to read.

Liana, age 9



### I Remember.....

I remember the day I was adopted,  
I remember the shine in my  
mother's eyes  
That I felt like an animal  
Caged and now free  
How the Judge took my hand  
And how I shook with glee.  
The type of gift not able to buy,  
The most wonderful gift,  
It made my mother cry.  
Even the ride home  
I tried to hum,  
Knowing the best memories are  
yet to come!

Liana, age 9



## Upcoming Training

### The Great Behavior Breakdown

**When: October 27, 2012**

**Time: 9am-4:30pm**

**Location: CHCS 42 Cedar Street Bangor, Maine**

This training will address the most difficult behaviors that parents can face and will give an eye-opening and heart-opening understanding of the causes of these behaviors. The training will give participants a practical way to work on strengthening the relationship rather than trying to control the behavior. It will address the root of the problems and not just the symptoms.

**Presenter:** Kimberly J. Plourde LCSW has worked in a variety of settings with a focus on child and family development/attachment, since 1990. Her passion is supporting children and families as they grow and work together building supportive environments where individuals can grow, learn and experience loving secure relationships.



**Space is limited. Sorry, no childcare available**

**Please RSVP to Meagan Stearns at 827-2331 or e-mail [meagan@affm.net](mailto:meagan@affm.net) by 10/24/12**

# Kinship Corner

The calls have been rolling in as kinship caregivers sign up for the Holiday Gift Giving Program! AFFM will be taking requests up until the end of October so if you haven't put your request in yet make sure you give the office a call at 1-800-833-9786 to sign up!

Please be ready to provide your child's name, gender, clothing size, and an idea for a special gift when calling. 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!

Also, Keep an eye out for notices on AFFM's annual Kinship Holiday Party held in Portland and Bangor. More information coming soon!

# National Adoption Awareness Month Calendar

## November 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				<b>1</b> Blaine House Tea 2-3:30 1-800-833-9786	<b>2</b> Ask your schools to speak or teach about adoption	<b>3</b> Talk about adoption on AFFM's Facebook page
<b>4</b> Visit your library for adoption related books	<b>5</b> Adoption Legalizations all over the state!!	<b>6</b> Have an 'Adoption get-together''	<b>7</b> Brainstorm & create a new family tradition	<b>8</b> Hall of Flags event Statehouse 10-1pm Call 1-800-833-9786	<b>9</b> Call AFFM @ 1-800-833-9786 ask about foster parenting	<b>10</b> Bake cookies for those who helped you through the adoption process
<b>11</b> Perfect day for a scrapbooking project....or just look at family pictures!	<b>12</b> Write a letter to the editor about your adoption experience	<b>13</b> Read an Adoption specific book	<b>14</b> Mentor a foster child close to 'aging' out of the system	<b>15</b> Have a cake and light one candle for each member of your family	<b>16</b> Donate clothing, toys, books to youth in care 1-800-833-9786	<b>17</b> <b>NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY!</b>
<b>18</b> Find adoptive families in your church & Invite them for lunch	<b>19</b> Attend a foster parent informational meeting	<b>20</b> Find your state Representatives who support Adoption policies	<b>21</b> Learn positive adoption language <a href="http://www.adoption.com">www.adoption.com</a>	<b>22</b> Thanksgiving is a day for family!! Give thanks for all adoptions	<b>23</b> Watch an adoption related movie with your family	<b>24</b> Celebrate your child's heritage in a fun way!
<b>25</b> Kinship Holiday Party Ramada Inn Bangor 1-4pm 1-800-833-9786	<b>26</b> Create hand made Christmas Cards for an Adoptive family	<b>27</b> Visit <a href="http://Adoptuskids.org">Adoptuskids.org</a> And search Maine kids available for adoption	<b>28</b> Create a Holiday ornament as a gift	<b>29</b> Go to a place that your Family loves to visit	<b>30</b> Write a note to your child letting him or her know how grateful you are that he or she is part of your family	

### 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 5th**– 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 8th** - Hall of Flags, Augusta State Capitol at 10-1pm Adoption Celebration & information event call 1-800-833-9786
- November 17th**– National Adoption Day!





Be Informed  Find Support  Make Connections  
1-866-298-0896  [www.mainekids-kin.org](http://www.mainekids-kin.org)

## Grandfamily Group Meetings

When you attend 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 free, on-site childcare, which gives 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, October 17<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm, The Children's Center, 1 Alden Drive.  
**Please call Maine Kids-Kin at 1-866-298-0896 to reserve childcare.**

**Bangor-** Tuesday, October 2<sup>nd</sup> at 6:00pm, Families and Children Together office, 304 Hancock Street. **Please call Maine Kids-Kin at 1-866-298-0896 to reserve childcare.**

**Bangor-** Tuesday, October 16<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm, Families and Children Together office, 304 Hancock Street. **Please call Maine Kids-Kin at 1-866-298-0896 to reserve childcare.**

**Belfast-** Thursday, October 11<sup>th</sup> at 10:30am, Belfast Free Library, High Street.

**Dover-Foxcroft-** Monday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> at 6:30pm, Penquis, 50 North Street. **Please call Maine Kids-Kin at 1-866-298-0896 to reserve childcare.**

**Ellsworth-** Tuesday, October 16<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm, Bryant E. Moore School, 125 State Street.  
**Please call Linda at Downeast Health Services to register and reserve childcare at 667-5304.**

**Westbrook-** Wednesday, October 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm, Maine Kids-Kin, 869 Main Street, Suite 900. **To register and reserve childcare, contact Mindy at 591-6278 or [mwilliams@mainekids-kin.org](mailto:mwilliams@mainekids-kin.org).**

**Westbrook-** Wednesday, October 24<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm, Maine Kids-Kin, 869 Main Street, Suite 900. **To register and reserve childcare, contact Mindy at 591-6278 or [mwilliams@mainekids-kin.org](mailto:mwilliams@mainekids-kin.org).**

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AT THE ADDRESS ABOVE.

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