

# Family Ties

Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine

Volume 16 Number 4 & 5

Newsletter

April & May 2013

## Celebrate National Foster Care Month This May at Foster Family Day at the Fort!

Each May, National Foster Care Month provides an opportunity to shine a light on the experiences of the more than 400,000 children and youth in the foster care system.



**On May 18, 2013 AFFM will host the 8th Annual Event Foster Family Day at the Fort! At Fort Knox in Prospect, Maine from 11AM-3PM Come and celebrate one of the biggest Foster Care recognition events in the country! This event is FREE for all who attend!**

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## Resource Family Support Groups Through-Out Maine

**Bangor:** Foster/Adoptive/Kinship. Meets from 6:00-8:00pm the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of every month at Adoptive and Foster Families and Maine. For more information please contact AFFM at 1-800-833-9786. Please RSVP.

**Biddeford:** Foster/Adoptive Support. Meets from 9:30-11:00 am the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of every month. For more information please contact Meredith Crain at 283-4314. Please call before you come.

**Brunswick:** Please contact Tammy Cutchen at 208-0939. Tammy also runs the Clothing Garage; give her a call for either service.

**Caribou:** Foster/Adoptive/Kinship parent support. Meets every 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 5:30PM at Caribou Middle School, 21 Glenn Street in Caribou. Child care is provided. Please contact AFFM at 1-800-833-9786 to RSVP and to reserve a spot for childcare.

**Ellsworth:** Foster/Adoptive/Kinship. Meets every 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month from 5:30pm-7:00pm at Bryant E. Moore Community Center 238 State Street Room 108 in Ellsworth. Child care is provided. Please contact AFFM at 1-800-833-9786 to RSVP and to reserve a spot for childcare.

**Houlton:** Adoptive/Kinship support. Meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of the month at 7 Cow Team Road in Sherman. Please contact Debbie Irish at 365-7133 for more information. This group does not meet during the summer.

**Lewiston:** Foster/Adoptive/Kinship. Meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month 7:00pm-9:00pm at Lewiston DHHS. Call Deb Hallowell at 783-3291 or 344-5101 or Lisa Cates at 336-3760.

**Machias:** Foster/Adoptive/Kinship. Meets every 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of the month 5:30PM-7:00PM at Rose M. Gaffney Elementary School 15 Rose Gaffney Road, Machias. Childcare is provided. Please call AFFM at 1-800-833-9786 with questions

**Skowhegan:** The group meets 5:30-8:00PM every second Wednesday of the month located at Skowhegan Federated Church 13 Island Avenue in Skowhegan. Child care is provided. Please contact AFFM at 1-800-833-9786 to RSVP and to reserve a spot for childcare.

**NEW SUPPORT GROUP IN YORK COUNTY:** Starting Thursday May 9<sup>th</sup> 6:30PM-8:30PM at York Hospital. This group will be held every 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month. Open to all resource families. Please RSVP to Meagan Stearns at meagan@affm.net or call (207)478-8025.

***AFFM is in the process of starting support groups in areas that currently do not have any. If you are interested in learning the benefits of support groups, how to become involved or would like more information on starting a support group in your area, please call AFFM at 1-800-833-9786 or email [info@affm.net](mailto:info@affm.net)***

## AFFM Receives Parent Group of the Year Award!



The North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC) has selected Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc. to receive the 2013 NACAC Parent Group of the Year Award. NACAC recognizes AFFM for the wonderful work done on behalf of foster, adoptive and kinship families. Families in Maine are so incredibly fortunate to have a support system like yours in their presence. Your commitment to serving families is truly inspiring. Each year award recipients are honored at the NACAC conference. This year's conference will be held August 8-10 in Toronto, Ontario. Director Bette Hoxie and Kinship Support Specialist, Sheila Peakall will attend the NACAC conference and accept the award on behalf of AFFM.

**Way to go AFFM!!**

## AFFM is now on shop.com Check us out!

**Adoptive & foster Families of Maine, Inc.** is participating in an exciting new fundraising program. AFFM now has its own website featuring thousands of stores including Diapers.com, Travelocity, Target, Macy's, Wal-Mart, JCPenney, Best Buy, Home Depot and many more. When you make a purchase on [www.shop.com/affm](http://www.shop.com/affm) Adoptive & Foster Families of Maine, Inc. receives royalties and you can earn up to 35% cash back on qualified purchases. The benefits don't stop there! You earn 0.5% cash back on the purchases of everyone you refer to our website. You can take advantage of the ease and convenience of Internet shopping to buy the products and services you want, while feeling good about helping AFFM.

### Getting started is Easy!

- Visit our website at [www.shop.com/affm](http://www.shop.com/affm)
- Register as a Preferred Customer
- Click "Sign in" in the upper right hand corner
- Select the "No I am a new customer" option
- Follow the prompts and enter [info@affm.net](mailto:info@affm.net) where it asks who referred you
- You are now eligible to earn up to 35% on qualified purchases

### Go Shopping!

- Use the search box at the top of the screen to find a specific item or type of product you're looking for
- Use Shop Partners to find a specific store like Best Buy or Wal-Mart
- Use "Shop All Departments" to shop via category
- Use Hot Deals to find special deals and coupons to save even more money
- Look for the icon to find out exactly how much cash back you'll earn from purchases made from that store or on a particular product!

Shop & Save Now! 

- Click  to bring you to the actual store site.

**As always, thank you for all your support and all you do for  
Maine's youth in care!**

# DHHS Financial Supports for College/Training at a Glance:

## Adoption

## Permanent Guardianship

## V9 Agreement

**FAFSA**—must be completed to access other funds. **Financial Aid given on a first come/first served basis.** Must be completed every year. Must get a PIN before or during the application process. Beginning in Jan. (<http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>)

**Independent Student Status (FAFSA)**—through the College Costs Reduction Act, any youth adopted on or after their 13<sup>th</sup> birthday is considered “independent” on the FAFSA and does not have to provide parent info (income) or signatures.

**ETV Funds**—available through DHHS for youth adopted on or after their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday. Must complete FAFSA. The college or training program must be accredited. Student must be in good academic standing. Some federal restrictions for use of funds. Awards vary depending on available funds & student need after other financial aid, scholarships and student refunds are determined, up to \$5000. Youth who receive ETV funds at age 21 can receive them until age 23. Contact Dulcey Laberge 624-7928, [Dulcey.laberge@maine.gov](mailto:Dulcey.laberge@maine.gov)

**Tuition Waiver**—youth who were adopted from foster care AND whose parents are receiving an adoption subsidy from DHHS can apply for one of the 30 waivers that can be used at State of Maine Universities, Community Colleges, or Maine Maritime. Awarded on first come, first served basis—apply early. Must be a Maine resident. Must reapply each year. Available for undergraduate degrees only, up to 5 years. Application available Feb. 1. Administered through FAME ([www.famemaine.com](http://www.famemaine.com))

**FAFSA**—must be completed to access other funds. **Financial Aid given on a first come/first served basis.** Must be completed every year. Must get a PIN before or during the application process. Beginning in Jan. (<http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>)

**Independent Student Status (FAFSA)**—through the College Costs Reduction Act, any youth in Permanent Guardianship on or after their 13<sup>th</sup> birthday is considered “independent” on the FAFSA and does not have to provide parent info (income) or signatures.

**ETV Funds**—available through DHHS for youth who enter permanent guardianship on or after their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday. Must complete FAFSA. The college or training program must be accredited. Student must be in good academic standing. Some federal restrictions for use of funds. Awards vary depending on available funds & student need after other financial aid, scholarships and student refunds are determined, up to \$5000. Youth who receive ETV funds at age 21 can receive them until age 23. Contact Dulcey Laberge 624-7928, [Dulcey.laberge@maine.gov](mailto:Dulcey.laberge@maine.gov)

**Tuition Waiver**— youth who were adopted from foster care AND whose parents are receiving an adoption subsidy from DHHS can apply for one of the 30 waivers that can be used at State of Maine Universities, Community Colleges, or Maine Maritime. Awarded on first come, first served basis—apply early. Must be a Maine resident. Must reapply each year. Available for undergraduate degrees only, up to 5 years. Application available Feb. 1. Administered through FAME ([www.famemaine.com](http://www.famemaine.com))

**FAFSA**—must be completed to access other funds. **Financial Aid given on a first come/first served basis.** Must be completed every year. Must get a PIN before or during the application process. Beginning in Jan. (<http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>)

**Independent Student Status (FAFSA)**—through the College Costs Reduction Act, any youth in foster care on or after their 13<sup>th</sup> birthday is considered “independent” on the FAFSA.

**ETV Funds**—available through DHHS for youth who have a signed V9 agreement. Must complete FAFSA. The college or training program must be accredited. Student must be in good academic standing. Some federal restrictions for use of funds. Awards vary depending on available funds & student need after other financial aid, scholarships and student refunds are determined, up to \$5000. Youth who receive ETV funds at age 21 can receive them until age 23. (Contact your local Youth Transition Worker or Caseworker)

**Tuition Waiver**— youth who were in foster care at the time of graduation or GED can apply for one of the 30 waivers that can be used at State of Maine Universities, Community Colleges, or Maine Maritime. Awarded on first come, first served basis—apply early. Must be a Maine resident. Must reapply each year. Available for undergraduate degrees only, up to 5 years. Application available Feb. 1. Administered through FAME ([www.famemaine.com](http://www.famemaine.com))



## College Scholarship Opportunity

### College Scholarships Are Available for Youth Adopted at 12 and Older from U.S. Foster Care

UMPS CARE Charities has partnered with The Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption (DTFA) and Slate XP to offer the UMPS CARE Charities All-Star Scholarship. All-Star Scholarships are open to children adopted from U.S. foster care at the age of 12 years or older. Funding will provide \$5,000 scholarships for a two-year institution or \$10,000 scholarships for a four-year institution.

**The application deadline is May 17, 2013.**

Application can be found at: <http://umpscare.com/AllStarScholarship.html>

## Upcoming Trainings

### The Bangor Resource Parent Training Collaborative Presents:

#### The GAL/CASA Role and the Child Welfare Legal System

Understanding the child welfare legal system can be daunting and frustrating for even the most seasoned resource parent. Wayne Doane and Wendy Hatch, local lawyers and Guardian ad Litem, and Libby McCullum, the Maine CASA Program Manager, will explain the roles of GALs and CASAs and answer any questions you may have the child welfare legal system.

**DATE:** Tuesday, May 7, 2013

**TIME:** 10:00AM-12:00PM

**LOCATION:** Community Health and Counseling Services (CHCS)

42 Cedar Street, Bangor

SORRY, NO CHILDCARE AVAILABLE

2 Credit Hours Available to Foster Parents

Please RSVP by May 1, 2013

to Margaret Warman at 1-800-833-9786

or email: [margaret@affm.net](mailto:margaret@affm.net)

#### *Attention Southern Maine Resource Families:*

*The Resource Parent Training Collaborative will soon be in Southern Maine! Keep an eye out for upcoming trainings through AFFM's list serve, Facebook page, website and Family Ties newsletters! Email [meagan@affm.net](mailto:meagan@affm.net) with trainings you would like to see offered!*

## 19th Annual Maine Child Welfare Conference

**SAVE THE DATE!**

**June 20th, 2013**

*Hot Topics in Child Welfare*

*Keynote Speaker: Lynn K. Sheets, MD*

*"Missed Opportunities for Prevention: Sentinel Injuries in Infants"*

*Also Presenting:*

*Robert Madden, LCSW, JD*

*Marjorie Withers, LCPC*

*Lawrence Ricci, MD*

*Janet May, M. Ed.*

**The Wells Conference Center-University of Maine, Orono**



## Jazzmin

Meet Jazzmin, a talented, fun-loving and gifted gymnast who is tall, lean and full of energy! She attends gymnastic lessons and recently participated in her first gymnastics competition. Future plans include her becoming a professional gymnast when she is an adult. On a sunny day you can find Jazzmin outside listening to her IPOD, practicing her gymnastic routine or running. Being a star gardener Jazzmin is also known for her "lucky" green thumb. She enjoys working in her community's green house.

Like most teenagers her age, Jazzmin enjoys music; especially One Direction and Justin Bieber. She is a typical 14 -year old young lady with beautiful brown eyes and a warm infectious smile. When talking about herself she shares, "I love to dance" and she enjoys watching movies. "My favorite movie is the Neverending Story." Entering the 8<sup>th</sup> grade in the fall of 2012, Jazzmin states she enjoys recess, reading, music and choir activities.

Jazzmin continues to show great resilience in relation to the trauma she experienced during her childhood. She is a true survivor who uses writing in her journal as a positive way to express her feelings. Her individual and group therapy is also a support to her and has allowed her to be hopeful for her future. She believes the "right" family is out there for her; and that family is described as a two-parent home with experienced parents who have dealt with trauma and loss. Jazzmin understands the importance of being part of a family and is excited about sharing everyday household activities such as baking and helping with chores. Other than the dreaded "meatloaf" Jazzmin is not a picky eater who will eat all sorts of fruits and vegetables (especially broccoli) and she loves to have pineapples and pizza!

Jazzmin likes to be on the go and an active family is the right fit for this teenager. The adults in her life affirm she is an appreciative young lady with good manners. She is an animal lover so pets are welcome; however, she prefers smaller dogs! Jazzmin is originally from Connecticut but resides in Maine and because of this we strongly encourage licensed families in both states to respond.

Please consider opening your heart and home to this wonderful young lady who will enrich your family and bring joy to your life!

**Contact: Jane Pertillar, (860)550-6678 or [Jane.Pertillar@ct.gov](mailto:Jane.Pertillar@ct.gov)**  
**Adoption Resource Exchange**  
**Department of Children and Families,**  
**505 Hudson Street, Hartford, CT 06106**  
**[www.ctfosteradopt.com](http://www.ctfosteradopt.com)**

## Treatment Foster Care Agency: SMART Child & Family Services

Smart Child and Family Services, better known as “SMART”, was founded in 1995 by a few foster parents. Since its conception, SMART has been committed to excellence in foster care. SMART’s family-centered approach focuses on professional development and intensive support for foster parents and children. Our goal is to provide a therapeutic family experience for children who have lived through abuse, neglect, and trauma. Our foster families model healthy relationships and coping skills and work with community resources to help improve the youth’s functioning and promote their social and emotional well-being. SMART was founded on the principal that foster parents are professionals and an integral part of the child’s treatment team.

We strive to support both the children and the foster parents. We offer weekly contact with our caseworker (in the home at least twice a month), 24/7 support and crisis intervention, professional training opportunities, monthly support groups (during the day or evening for your convenience), caseworker support at DHHS and school meetings, a daily tax-free stipend, and fun things, such as family bowling, roller skating, foster parent appreciation dinner, a Christmas party with great entertainment, etc. Our physical office is in North Windham. However, our catchment area covers many counties, including York, Cumberland, Androscoggin, southern Oxford, Sagadahoc, and southern Kennebec. If you wonder if you are in our catchment area, please call.

We have added numerous programs to enhance our foster care program and to help meet the needs of the surrounding communities. Those programs include: outpatient counseling for children, adolescents and adults; children’s targeted case management (TCM); home and community based treatment (HCT); medication management; substance abuse and chemical dependency services; and veteran’s services. If you are interested in joining SMART’s treatment foster care family, please call Jo Bradeen at 893-0386. If you are interested in any of the other programs, please call 893-0386, and you will be directed to the appropriate person for the program you want.

# Kinship Corner

***“Kinship care is the full time care, nurturing and protection of children by relatives, members of their tribes or clans, godparents, stepparents, or any adult who has a kinship bond with a child. This definition is designed to be inclusive and respectful of cultural values and ties of affection. It allows a child to grow to adulthood in a family environment.”***

The number of children who are living with a grandparent or other relative has increased dramatically in the past two decades. More than 5 percent of all children in the United States live in such arrangements. Rising divorce rates, teenage pregnancy, child abuse or abandonment, and parental substance abuse, health problems, death, or incarceration are some of the factors linked to this trend.

AFFM is also aware of the increase in kinship care, as well as the importance of the role kin providers play in their relatives lives. AFFM is responding to at least 2 new kinship clients per week. AFFM is aware that 40% of DHHS placements are placed in kinship care and mindful of the need to have supports in place for kin providers.

Visit [www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/worklife/reference-materials/kinship-care/](http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/worklife/reference-materials/kinship-care/) for a compilation of resource materials including information to help people understand kinship care, and information about organizations that support grandparents and other relatives raising children; publications; videotapes; support groups; talking points for preparing proposals and speeches; related websites; and work/life programs in the Federal Government.



Taken from: [www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/worklife/reference-materials/kinship-care/](http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/worklife/reference-materials/kinship-care/)

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](http://www.affm.net)  
E-Mail: [info@affm.net](mailto:info@affm.net)

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

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

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



# Save the Date!



**Come Explore the Land of Fairies!**

**June 1st, 2013  
For this FREE event on  
Mackworth Island  
Falmouth, Maine  
12PM-3PM**

**Take a walk through The Mackworth Island permanent Fairy Houses Village and discover the world of fairies! Bring a picnic and enjoy the beautiful beaches and scenery, give aways, treats and much more!!**



**RSVP: [meagan@affm.net](mailto:meagan@affm.net) or call Meagan at  
207-478-8025**

