



Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc.

Volume 18 Number 3

Newsletter

March 2015

AFFM Mentor Service

AFFM needs your help to spread the word!

The Resource Family Mentor Service provides new adoptive, foster, and kinship families with encouragement, and guidance through a 1 on 1 relationship with an experienced peer. The Resource Parent Mentor is available to support, encourage, and inform new resource families to effectively partner with DHHS. The mentor will inform the family of resources and community linkages intended to strengthen and preserve the family. Mentors will also encourage recruits to take part in continuing education.

AFFM is extremely thankful to current mentors for the important role they play in supporting newer families. Mentors take time from their own families and activities to insure caregivers have an increased understanding of DHHS policy & practices, utilizing non-judgmental listening support. They also serve as a link between DHHS and AFFM.

New caregivers say they appreciate the enriched feedback they receive from people who provide the insider feedback and get them in touch with others who can help. Mentors tell us, they feel valued and take pride in helping a new family learn from their experiences. Mentors say, "I wish I had a mentor when I was first starting out. I felt in the dark. I didn't know who I could go to for quick help or to just to vent my frustrations without feeling like I was being judged."

State-wide Support groups

AFFM is striving to create support groups in every county. AFFM facilitates 21 support groups through out the state. Many of the groups have free on-site childcare and mileage reimbursement for families who travel over 30 miles to attend. Each support group is unique in the way it is facilitated-in that each group location addresses the needs of its participants. Participants appreciate the opportunity to network and learn from each other. Participants also appreciate the opportunity to learn from invited experts who talk about topics that are most important to group members.

At the suggestion of DHHS, AFFM is calling families in Somerset, Waldo, & Knox counties to see if there is interest in starting support groups in those areas. If you have an interest in a support group in your area please call AFFM at 1-800-833-9786.

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Adoption Announcements!

James and Nancy Belanger of Limington, ME. are proud to announce the adoption of their daughter Jacklyn Maryann Belanger on January 21, 2015. Jacklyn joins here 9 brothers James Jr 41, Matt 37, Jason 30, Tom 24, Tim 23, James 20, Joe 19, Andrew 11 and Logan 10 and her sister Emily 9. Welcome Jacklyn to your forever Family!



In March of 2012 we met Daniel who was living in a residential facility with 24 hour a day staffing and a book that had been written about his every movement for years and years. We were told that Daniel was not ready for a family and that we would not be able to meet his needs. For 2 months my husband drove an hour to and from to pick him up on Friday, and the same trip on Sunday to return him to his school for the week. When Daniel finally moved in my youngest son decided he was not going to have any of it, and they became bitter enemies. For over a year it was like living in a war zone. Then Daniel (and Danny, our youngest) started to relax. He had tested us in every way he could think of and we were all still there. We began the process of transitioning him to regular school in 7th grade, and by 8th grade he was sitting in classes with his peers. By the end of his freshman year in HS Daniel had a beautiful girlfriend, had participated in track and football and was holding down an academic course load. He and my birth sons are a solid trio, each with separate lives and friends but a core of brotherhood and love that we are so proud of. Daniel's social worker asked if he and the youngest were still having issues and I said yes: the number of times they have woken me up with their giggling and gaming after I had seen them to bed was problematic, for me! In November of 2014 we adopted Alan Daniel Kornsey at the age of 16. We will be taking him for college tours this fall, and are excited to see where he takes this new life! He is an awesome kid with a huge heart whose path through the system inspires me every day, even when he eats all the ice cream and leaves the refrigerator open! We were lucky to have met him and taken the chance.

The Kornseys: Alan Daniel, Aly, Jim, Justin and Danny



Save the Date!

Don't Miss out on this year's "Foster Family Day at the Fort"!

May 16, 2015 11:00am-2:30pm

Fort Knox. Prospect, Maine

Come and enjoy a cookout, games, prizes, giveaways, entertainment, and much more! This a FREE event for all rain or shine! Call AFFM at 1-800-833-9786 to sign up or email info@affm.net. We look forward to seeing you again this year!

AFFM's Annual Spring Conference, "*Seasons of Change; A Cohesive Approach to Transitions*" April 24th-25th at Seasons Event and Conference center in

Portland. For more information and to register online visit www.affm.net or check out AFFM's Facebook page, www.facebook.com/pages/Adoptive-and-Foster-Families-of-Maine-Inc/ or

Think Summer and keep an eye out for the 3rd Annual Mackworth Island Event, in Falmouth this June! Bring a picnic, explore the fairy houses, activities throughout the day and give always!

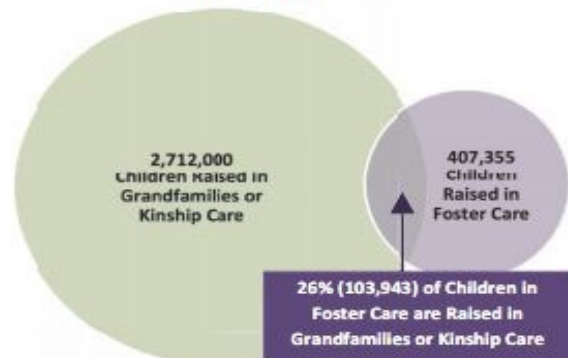
Kinship Corner

Grandfamilies are families headed by grandparents and other relatives who are sharing their homes with their grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and/or other related children. Grandfamilies save tax payers more than \$6.5 billion each year by keeping children out of foster care.

Astonishing Facts save Taxpayers money.

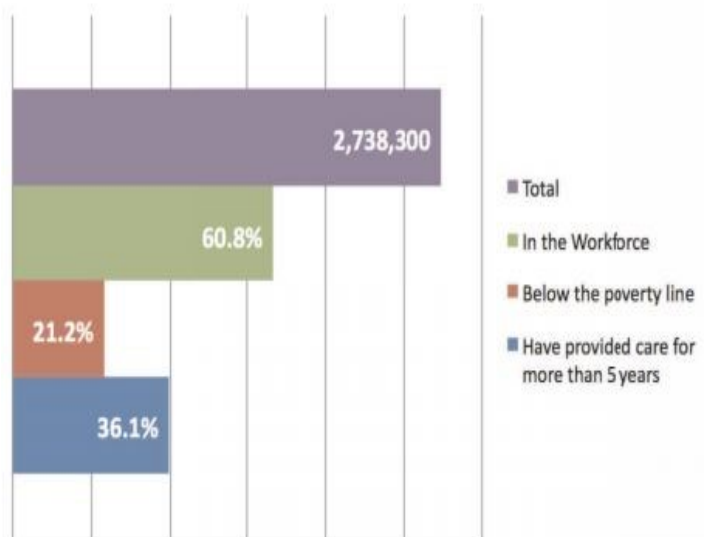
This article and information was provided by Generations United

Children Being Raised in Grandfamilies⁵ or Kinship Care⁵



Source: Stepping Up for Kids: What Government and Communities Should Do to Support Kinship Families (2012). Annie E. Casey Foundation Kids Count Data Center. Data source is Population Reference Bureau's analysis of 2009, 2010, and 2011 Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Surveys. Estimates represent three-year averages.

Grandparents Responsible for Grandchildren



Announcements

Interested in sending your child to camp this Summer?

AFFM is always willing to help in the search for scholarships and donated spots at a camp. If you have a camp in mind for your child and are unsure if they have spaces and scholarships available give AFFM a call at 1-800-833-9786 to assist in the search.

Southern Maine Resource Families check out the Summer Children's Camp Fair Sunday, March 15, 2015 from 1-4pm at East End School Gymnasium 195 North Street, Portland. Free admissions! 70 camps will be participating! Meet camp staff and find a great summer fit for your child, age range from tots to teens. Find out more information at <http://www.mainecamps.org/> or www.mainecamps.org or call: [207-518-9557](tel:207-518-9557)

Bill Giasson Memorial Music Camp Scholarship

Bill Giasson touched the lives of many families and children throughout his life. He gave freely of his time, his energy and his love. He was a teacher, family man, musician, and a friend to many. This music camp scholarship was established by members of a support group which Bill facilitated for nearly 10 years. Its members, made up of kinship providers, wanted to honor this gentle man who loved children and music and to ensure that his generous spirit would continue to have life.

Applications for the Bill Giasson Music Camp Scholarship are now available and may be obtained by contacting a member of the Kinship Support Group: Donna Lufkin 582-6583, Jan Partridge 495-3864, or Jan Strout 582-5784. Awards will range from \$150.00 to \$300.00 and will be sent directly to the camp, once the applicant has been enrolled at the music camp of his or her choice.

Those interested in applying for the scholarship must meet the following criteria for eligibility

1. Maine Residency
2. Financial Need
3. Demonstrated Musical Interest
4. Applicant must participate in the musical enrichment program at the camp of their choice
5. Applicant accepts responsibility for writing thank you notes to the sponsoring organizations

Priority will be given to applicants living in kinship homes.

"A good education is especially critical for me as a kid in foster care. I see education as the tool that can allow me to become the adult I want to be." Mariah at age 14

School Attendance Matters

Did you know that students who attend school regularly in kindergarten and first grade are more likely to do better in reading and math by third grade? And students who attend regularly in elementary, middle and high school have scored higher on national tests and more likely to stay in college than students who consistently missed 2 or 3 days every month.

Count ME In! Together we can increase student attendance, engagement and achievement.

What YOU Can Do! Everyone can play a positive role in ensuring children and youth attend school regularly. You can

- Support homework and bedtime routines for students of all ages
- Set an example for your child by showing that attendance matters to you
- Avoid medical appointments when school is in session
- Turn to the school for help-talk to teachers, principals and social workers if you have any questions or concerns
- Spread the word about the positive impact of good school attendance leading to graduation and better jobs

Attending school regularly helps children feel better about school and themselves. Good attendance will help children do well in high school, college and work.

For additional resources on school attendance go to the Count ME In website www.countmeinmaine.org or if you have any questions contact Susan Lieberman directly at slieberman@countmeinmaine.org

Susan Lieberman ~ Director, Count ME In: Attending School, Preparing for Life

Phone: [207-747-9059](tel:207-747-9059)

www.countmeinmaine.org

Join AFFM's List Serve Today!

AFFM'S LIST SERVE IS THE FASTEST WAY TO RECEIVE UPDATED INFORMATION MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU!

What you may see on the list serve: Monthly newsletter, DHHS updates, legislative updates, donated items, training opportunities, free social events, and more!

The Advantages of Adding your Email: Never miss out on great opportunities, keep informed of new developments important to you, receive consistent support, help AFFM support even more families in need.

For Those Who Don't Have a Computer, you Don't Have to Miss Out! Consider asking a friend or relative to receive emails for you, consider using your local library, use your work email account.

It's Simple to Sign up! Call 1-800-833-9786, email info@affm.net, or go to www.affm.net to register!

Please Note: You may receive multiple emails per day, Even though AFFM does its best to filter content, emails may not always pertain to you. AFFM understands and accepts the responsibility of caring for Resource Families private information. This information will not be shared.

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

The theme for this year's National Child Abuse Prevention Month continues to be "Making Meaningful Connections." When we make meaningful connections with the children, youth, and families in our communities, we can help parents build the knowledge and skills and access the resources necessary to raise happy and healthy children. Everyone can play a role in preventing child abuse and neglect and promoting child and family well-being. Get involved to strengthen your community!

Baby steps

- Meet and greet your neighbors
- Go to a parents meeting at your child's school
- Participate in an activity at your local library or community center

Small steps

- Set up a playgroup in your community at homes or local park (consider inviting people who may not have children at home, like local seniors)
- Organize a community babysitting co-op
- Volunteer at your child's school through the school's administration or the parent's organization
- Encourage local service providers to produce a directory of available services that are easy to find in the community

Big steps

- Organize a community event (a block party, father/daughter dance, parent support group)
- Run for an office in the parent organization at your child's school
- Attend local government meetings (city council or school board meetings) and let them know how important resources are in your community. Let them know how parks, strong schools, and accessible services help to strengthen your family and other families.

Article from: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/preventing/preventionmonth/>



& The Kinship Program

State-Wide Resource Family Support Groups

At times meetings are cancelled due to weather and other unforeseen circumstances, when this happens you will be directed to a call in number for support by phone. This information will be sent out via the AFFM email list serve. Families are urged to call or email info@affm.net to be added to this service.

Augusta – Kinship only: Meets on the 3rd Wednesday of every month from 6:00 - 8:00 pm, The Buker Community Center, 22 Armory Drive, Augusta. Free on-site childcare available. For more information, please call Jan Partridge at 207-495-3864

Augusta-- Foster/Adoptive/Kinship. Meets on the 1st Wednesday of every month from 6:00PM-7:30PM at Magic Years Center (25 Industrial Drive). Onsite childcare is available with advanced notice. Please call 1-800-833-9786 or email: Jim (jim@affm.net) to RSVP. (3-4 days in advance).

Bangor– Kinship only: 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month from 6:00 - 8:00 pm, Families And Children Together, 304 Hancock Street, Suite 2B. Free on-site childcare available. For more information, please call Maine Kids-Kin at 207-941- 2347 or 1-866-298-0896.

Belfast- Foster/Adoptive/Kinship. A faith based support group that meets on the 3rd Friday of every month at the Calvary Chapel Church in Belfast 147 Waldo Ave. in the rear entrance of the Wentworth Building. Contact: BraveFamilies@gmail.com to RSVP and visit www.facebook.com/bravefamilies for more information. 10:00 AM prayer & Devotion (optional), 10:30 AM coffee/social, 10:45-12 PM support group. Sorry child care is not available at this time.

Biddeford- Kinship. Meets on the 3rd Tuesday of every month from 10:00AM-11:30AM at the J Richard Martin Community Center, 189 Alfred Street Biddeford. Onsite child care is available with advanced notice. Please contact Diane Loranger at 423-2543 or call 1-800-833-9786 or email Meagan (meagan@affm.net) to RSVP. Please RSVP before you come.

Bridgton- Foster/Adoptive/Kinship. Meets every 3rd Monday of the month at 6:30PM-8:00PM at the Community Center (Behind Reny's), 15 Depot Street Bridgton. Childcare is not provided at this time. Please RSVP to Vanessa at 647-2317 or AFFM at 1-800-833-9786 before you come.

Brunswick- Foster/Adoptive/Kinship. Meets on the 4th Tuesday of every month at 5:30PM-7:00PM at St. Paul's Episcopal Church (25 Pleasant Street, Brunswick). Onsite child care is available with advanced notice. Please contact AFFM at 1- 800-833-9786 or email Meagan (meagan@affm.net) to RSVP.

Caribou- Foster/Adoptive/Kinship parent support. Meets on the 1st Thursday of every month at 5:30PM at Caribou Adult Education Building on Bennett Drive in between Caribou Rec and the gas station. Child care is not provided at this time. Please contact AFFM at 1-800-833-9786 or email: Jim (jim@affm.net) to RSVP.

Dover-Foxcroft- Foster/Adoptive/Kinship. Meets on the 2nd Tuesday of every month from 6PM-7:30PM at Mayo Regional Hospital, Borestone and Sebec conference room. Onsite child care available with advanced notice. Please contact AFFM at 1-800-833-9786 or email: Sheila (sheila@affm.net) to RSVP. Please call before you come.

Ellsworth- Foster/Adoptive/Kinship. Meets on the 3rd Tuesday of every month from 5:00pm-7:00pm at Ellsworth Elementary/Middle School 20 Forest Ave. in Ellsworth. Onsite Child care available with advanced notice. Please contact Mindy Kane, Community Health and Counseling Services (CHCS), at 263-2014 or 461-8878 or email MKane@chcs-me.org to reserve a spot for child-care. Thanks to a local grant awarded to CHCS, AFFM is able to provide mileage reimbursement for families traveling more than 30 miles from home.

Farmington- Foster/Adoptive/Kinship. Meets on the 3rd Wednesday of every month from 6:00pm – 7:30pm at the Roberts Learning Center (Rooms 201 & 205), University of Maine at Farmington. Onsite childcare is available with advanced notice. Please call 1-800-833-9786, or email: Sheila (sheila@affm.net), to RSVP. Please RSVP 3-4 days in advance.

Houlton- Foster/Adoptive/Kinship support. Meets on the 2nd Thursday of every month from 5:30pm-7:30pm at Houlton CHCS 2 Water Street. Onsite Child care available with advanced notice. Please contact AFFM at 1-800-833- 9786 or email: Jim (jim@affm.net) to RSVP. Please call before you come.

Lewiston- The Tri-County Adoptive Foster & Kinship Assoc. meets on the 4th Tuesday of every month 6pm-8pm at CMHC (12 High St. entrance). The group offers training, as well as local support & resources. On- site childcare is provided with advanced notice. Call Denise Gove at 782-1138 or email her at drgove@aol.com to RSVP.

Machias- Foster/Adoptive/Kinship. Meets on the 1st Friday of every month 5:30PM-7:30PM at Rose M. Gaffney Elementary School 15 Rose Gaffney Road, Machias. Onsite Child care available with advanced notice. Please contact Mindy Kane, Community Health and Counseling Services, at 263-2014 or 461-8878 or email MKane@chcs-me.org to RSVP. Thanks to a local grant awarded to CHCS, AFFM is able to provide mileage reimbursement for families traveling more than 30 miles from home.

Old Town- Foster/Adoptive/Kinship. Meets from 6:00-8:00 PM on the 3rd Monday of every month at 294 Center Street, Old Town. Onsite Child care available with advanced notice. Please contact AFFM at 1-800-833-9786 or email: Bette (bette@affm.net) to RSVP. Please call before you come.

Presque Isle- Foster/Adoptive/Kinship. Meets on the 3rd Tuesday of every month from 6:30pm-7:30pm at the Wesleyan Church 387 Centerline Rd. Presque Isle, ME. Onsite child care available with advanced notice. RSVP by contacting AFFM at 1-800-833-9786 or email: Jim Hatch (jim@affm.net)

Sherman- Adoptive/Kinship support. Meets on the 1st Monday of every 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.

South Paris- Foster/Adoptive/Kinship support. Meets on the 1st Thursday of every month from 6:00PM-7:30PM at the Paris Public Library, 37 Market Square, South Paris. Sorry, no childcare available at this time. Please call 1-800-833-9786 or email: Meagan (meagan@affm.net) to RSVP. (3-4 days in advance).

South Portland- Foster/Adoptive/Kinship support. Meets 5:30PM-7:30PM. This group will meet every 2nd Tuesday of the month. Please contact Meagan at meagan@affm.net or call 1-800-833-9786 to RSVP and for location information. Please call before you come.

Waterboro- Massabesic area foster and adoptive support group. Meets on the 4th Thursday of every month on 6:30pm at Waterboro Town Hall. 24 Townhouse Road, East Waterboro. Please contact Brigid at Brigid.MAAFFSG@gmail.com.

Wiscasset- Foster/Adoptive/Kinship. Meets on the 4th Monday of every month from 6:00pm – 7:30pm at St. Philip's Episcopal Church, 12 Hodge Street. No childcare available at this time. Please call 1-800-833-9786 or email: Sheila (sheila@affm.net), to RSVP. Please RSVP 3-4 days in advance.

Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc.
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The North American Council on Adoptable Children
National Foster Parent Association
Generations United

Partnering With: Department of Health and Human Services

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COMMENTS TO: EDITOR, FAMILY TIES, AT THE ADDRESS ABOVE.

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OLD TOWN, ME

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New Resource Families Welcome! You are now receiving the Family Ties newsletter as part of your complimentary membership to AFFM! Learn more about AFFM and services offered by calling 1-800-833-9786 or visit www.affm.net

Locations: 294 Center Street, Suite 1 Old Town, Maine
& 333 Lincoln Street, Saco. Maine

Phone: 1-800-833-9786

Email: info@affm.net

After Hour Emergency Support: 207-745-4159

Website: www.affm.net

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