

Family Ties



Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc.

Volume 18 Number 6

Newsletter

June 2015

On May 14th at Opportunity Alliance in South Portland the Southern Maine Foster Family Recruitment Team put on a free dinner and training in honor of Foster Care Awareness Month in May. The training was titled: What Helps: Ideas and Suggestions for Resource Parents to help youth in care feel supported and connected. A panel of youth formerly in care from the Youth Leadership Advisory Team (YLAT) shared their experiences and what ways resource parents helped them to feel supported and connected to their families and communities. During the training attendees were asked to write on a slip of paper what their wishes were for youth in care. Here are a few of those wishes:

- ◇ *"My wish is for the seed of love and acceptance to be planted"*
- ◇ *"To help them transition back to their birth family"*
- ◇ *"To feel safe"*
- ◇ *"Reunification with a better functional family"*
- ◇ *"My wish is that kids coming into foster care will feel loved"*
- ◇ *"For them to grow into healthy, happy adults"*
- ◇ *"That they could understand and have trust in us"*
- ◇ *"I would wish that kids 10 and older get to choose adoption or not (permanent placement)"*
- ◇ *"My wish would be that they learn helpful skills in dealing with their past events that effected them and they go on and live normal successful lives and find happiness"*
- ◇ *"I wish the youth would find their 'forever families' that are loving, safe and healthy—in a short amount of time in the system"*
- ◇ *"I would wish kids weren't in care as long, sometimes parents make zero progress and the kids are in limbo too long"*
- ◇ *"Develop trusting relationships"*
- ◇ *"My wish is that a foster child receives love and care and becomes successful in life"*
- ◇ *"Someone to trust"*

**What are your wishes for
youth in care?**

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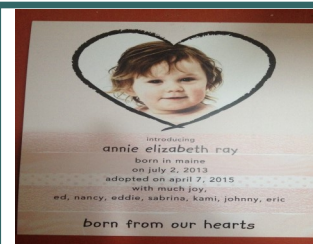
For more information about YLAT visit www.ylat.org

Adoption Announcements!



Todd and Teresa Potter of Palermo are very happy to announce the adoption of their daughter, Eliza Katherine, age 2 years old. She was adopted on May 6th at Knox County Probate Court. She is welcomed by her older sisters, Lilly age 11 years and Karen age 10 years.

Sheldon and Tammy Nelson of Presque Isle are happy to announce the adoption of their three grandchildren; Michael age 2, Jaeanna age 3, and Christopher age 9 on May 14th in Des Moines IA in the hearing room of Judge Joseph Seidlin.



The Gayton family is excited to announce the adoption of their daughter Annie Elizabeth Ray born on July 2, 2013 adopted April 7, 2015.

Have you recently legalized an adoption? Want to share the exciting news with others? AFFM would love to create an adoption announcement in the Family Ties newsletter. Send a write up and photo (if you wish) to meagan@affm.net or call 1-800-833-9786.

AFFM looks forward to hearing from you!

Kinship Corner

Who Do You Know Who May Need Support?

As many of you know, Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine & the Kinship Program provides a variety of supports and services to Adoptive, Foster, and Kinship Caregivers.

A University of Maine research team recently polled kinship caregivers in the informal system (families not involved with DHHS.) The goal of the survey was to gain a better understanding of how families found out about supports and services available to them. Families polled were all members of AFFM. There was one question that really stood out for me. Kinship families were asked, "Do you know any other families that need support and are not currently receiving any?" I was stunned to know that 1 out of every 2 families knew of another family needing support. The question for me is why that might be? If this is true for kinship families, is it also true for foster and adoptive families? Do families feel that it is not their place to inform families about available supports? Do families feel that someone else will refer a family to AFFM? Are families afraid to contact AFFM for support not knowing who will find out? Are families feeling that asking for help is a sign of weakness?

Through word of mouth, families are instrumental in helping spread the word about the supports and services AFFM can provide. AFFM provides confidential and non-judgmental support. The staff of AFFM has lived experience. We can truly say "we walk the walk and talk the talk." If you are in a position to do so, please help AFFM spread the word that it is here to support adoptive, foster, and kinship caregivers.

If you are in need of support or if you know another family that is need of support, we encourage you to call. You will be glad you did. For more information visit www.affm.net and "like" us on Facebook. Let's help each other spread the word about what AFFM does to support resource families.

Jim Hatch, Research & Program Specialist

P.S. I Love You More!—In Loving Memory of Bette Hoxie's son Jeremy David Edgar Paradis Hoxie April 10, 1990-April 20, 2015

I wander through my memories
I cry, I laugh, I pray
My darling boy is gone for now
He has taken so much joy.
He is in a better place I know
And still I miss him so!
He walks with the Angels he so longed to see
A bit of change in Heaven, Peace for my boy, heartache for me
Jeremy as you share in God's perfection
Look down on all of us
All who know and love you will treasure your antics, your amazing smile, the silly way you wore your hat
You were your own sweet style!
I miss the way you said "I love you Mom" as I said I love you more!
I'd hear you whisper "I love you more" as you loudly closed the door.
I know you are in a better space
Even as I long to see your beautiful; Oops! Your handsome face.
You walk with the God who made you
And with your two such special Dad's
Give my love to all
And as you look down from Glory
Laugh with us
As we embellish just a bit
Your never- ending story.
We will tell of your loving empathy for those you felt in need
Of the way you despised senseless and selfish greed.

All of these things and more are a part of the way you fill our aching hearts
We will tell about when you caught the biggest fish, the reading of faces in the clouds
A radio that blared and countless heart stopping wiles!
The way you loved and teased the kids
Woke Joey from a deep deep sleep
The tent poles that somehow twisted,
The steam roller ride in church parking lot
Baseball games, football, swimming across the lake.
Trying to scale the neighbor's 12 foot gate!
Always looking for that very special and perfect outdoor spot!
Letters telling of us how God was sharing things you couldn't understand.
Knowing you were destined for a somehow better plan.
All these things and more my son we'll tell and tell some more!
I will hold you in my memory forever
Until we meet again
Rest well in the Precious love of Jesus
Free from all your demons, free from all your pain
I love you forever and yes in my memory I will hear you say
"Mom I love you more!"
With all my love,
Mom
PS I love you more!
My Family and I want to thank all who have a part in Jeremy's never-ending story.
Thank you for your prayers, kind thoughts, food, flowers, and all the many ways you have shared in the pain of our loss. Just as joy shared is doubled; pain shared is cut in half.
Sincerely and with love,
Bette and Family

New Businesses Added to the Discount Card!

Perry's Home Furnishing & Design
111 Belmont Ave.
Belfast, ME 338-3610
www.perrysfurniture.com
10% off mattresses



**Massi's Gift
"Children's Re-Sale Store"**
61 Jefferson Street Suite
Biddeford, ME
Monday-Saturday 10am-6pm
25% off purchase

If you have a suggestion for a business or organization that AFFM can approach to participate in the discount card program, please contact AFFM or visit <http://www.affm.net/services/discount-card-program/> to submit a business with the discount information or to mention a business that we should approach.

Have you Heard About the WIC Program?

Maine CDC WIC Nutrition Program

What is WIC?

WIC is a nutrition and health program for growing families that offers:

- ◆ Nutrition education
- ◆ Health screening
- ◆ Checks to buy healthy foods such as:



- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| ◆ Milk | ◆ Peanut Butter |
| ◆ Fruits and vegetables | ◆ Whole grain breads, tortillas, or brown rice |
| ◆ Juice | ◆ Infant formula |
| ◆ Eggs | ◆ Tofu and Soy Milk |
| ◆ Cheese | |
| ◆ Cereal | |
| ◆ Dry or canned beans | |
| ◆ Baby foods | |
| ◆ Canned Fish | |

WIC Local Agencies in Maine

Aroostook County Action Program

Serving Aroostook County

Presque Isle 1-800-432-7881 or 768-3026

Bangor Public Health & Community Services

Serving Piscataquis and Penobscot Counties

Bangor.....1-800-470-3769 or 992-4570

MidCoast Maine Community Action

Serving Knox, Lincoln, Sagadahoc and

Waldo Counties

Bath.....1-800-221-2221

Belfast338-1267

Rockland594-4329

Maine Family Planning

Serving Hancock and Washington Counties

Ellsworth.....1-800-492-5550 or 667-5304

Calais454-3634

Machias.....255-8280

MaineGeneral Community Care

Serving Kennebec and Somerset Counties

Augusta.....621-6202

Waterville861-3580

Skowhegan.474-7463 or 1-888-942-6333

The Opportunity Alliance

Serving Cumberland County

Portland.....1-800-698-4959 or 553-5800

Windham553-5800

Western Maine Community Action

Serving Franklin, Oxford and Androscoggin Counties

East Wilton...1-800-645-9636 or 645-3764

Auburn.....1-877-512-8856 or 795-4016

York County Community Action Corp.

Serving York County

Sanford.....1-800-965-5762

Biddeford.....1-800-644-4202



If a child under 5 years of age is in your care and is receiving MaineCare, they are eligible to receive WIC benefits.

Please give your local WIC agency a call to set up an appointment to get your child enrolled today!

Ready Set Go to Learn Program!

IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN FOR THE READY SET GO to LEARN BACK TO SCHOOL PROGRAM!

Is your child in need of back to school items? A backpack, school supplies, a new outfit for school? The Ready Set Go to Learn Program is here to help. Ready Set Go to Learn is a part of Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine and the Kinship Program and the Clothing Garage and is here to serve youth in care in need of these items.

If you are in need please call AFFM at 1-800-833-9786 or send Meagan Sprague an email at meagan@affm.net and we'll be happy to take your request. Please make sure to have clothing sizes and specific needs your child may have when calling.

Interested in helping out with the Ready Set Go to Learn Program? Call 1-800-833-9786 or email meagan@affm.net

***Please have your request in no later than: July 24th**



Sign up Today for the 3rd Annual Mackworth Island Gathering!

Explore the fairy house village, enjoy the beautiful beaches and scenery, give aways and much more!! Activities will be scheduled throughout the day, treats and beverages will be provided. Bring a picnic, blanket or folding chairs. This event is open to all resource parents, DHHS staff, private agencies and all advocates for Maine's youth in care! This event offers time for caregivers to meet as a group while kids are busy with supervised activities. This is part of AFFM's commitment to providing an enhanced network of support.

Sign up today!

Saturday June 20th, 2015

This is a FREE event hosted by AFFM

Mackworth Island

Falmouth, Maine

12PM-3PM

RSVP to: Meagan Sprague at

meagan@affm.net or call 207-827-2331



Post-Secondary Opportunity Success Initiative

The Post-Secondary Success Opportunity Initiative is designed to empower youth in care to make informed decisions about their continued education plans and to prepare students for a successful transition to post-secondary education.

As part of this Initiative, Maria Russell (JMG Transition Specialist) will be working with youth in order to:

- Build pathways to post-secondary education or job training programs.
- Identify community resources, opportunities, and services that can support foster youth as they achieve their post-secondary education and career goals.
- Identify necessary supports that will ease the transition toward and into post-secondary education, helping to increase enrollment and retention.



Maria Russell is currently accepting referrals for foster care youth who are sophomores, juniors, and seniors in high school or alternative school, as well as young people who are currently enrolled in a post-secondary education or training program in Cumberland and York Counties. If you have young people on your caseload who may benefit, please contact her at mrussell@jmg.org or 207-624-1705.

Maria Russell
Opportunity Youth Transition Specialist
Jobs for Maine's Graduates
207-624-1705
mrussell@jmg.org



Adoptive & Foster Families of Maine, Inc. & The Kinship Program

State-Wide Resource Family Support Groups

At times meetings are cancelled due to weather and other unforeseen circumstances, cancellation notices are sent out via the AFFM email list serve. Families are urged to call or email info@affm.net to be added to this service. The email list serve also provides information about available donated goods, social family activities, training events, DHHS and legislative updates, and more.

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

Augusta – Foster/Adoptive/Kinship: Meets the 1st Wednesday of the month from 6:00 – 7:30 pm 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 St. Suite 2B. Free on-site childcare is 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 the month at the Calvary Chapel Church, 147 Waldo Ave in the rear entrance of the Wentworth Building. For more information, please 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 – 12:00 pm support group. Sorry childcare is not available at this time.

Biddeford – Kinship: 3rd Tuesday of the month from 10:00 – 11:30 am at the J Richard Martin Community Center, 189 Alfred St. Free on-site childcare is available with advanced notice. Please contact Diane Loranger at 423-2543 or call 1-800-833-9786 or email Meagan@affm.net to RSVP. Please RSVP.

Bridgton – Foster/Adoptive/Kinship: 3rd Monday of the month from 6:30 – 8:30 pm at the Community Care (Behind Reny's) 15 Depot St. 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: 4th Tuesday of the month from 5:30 – 7:00 pm at St Paul's Episcopal Church, 25 Pleasant St. On-site childcare is available with advanced notice. Please contact AFFM at 1-800-833-9786 to RSVP.

Caribou – Foster/Adoptive/Kinship: 1st Thursday of the month from 5:30 at Caribou Adult Education Building on Bennett Drive in between Caribou Rec and the gas station. Childcare is not provided at this time. Please contact AFFM at 1-800-833-9786 or email info@affm.net to RSVP.

Dover-Foxcroft – Foster/Adoptive/Kinship: 2nd Tuesday of the month from 6:00 – 7:30 pm at Mayo Regional Hospital, Borestone and Sebec conference room. On-site childcare is available with advance notice. Please contact AFFM at 1-800-833-9786 or email sheila@affm.net to RSVP. Please call before you come.

Ellsworth – Foster/Adoptive/Kinship: 3rd Tuesday of the month from 5:00 – 7:00 pm at Ellsworth Elementary Middle School, 20 Forest Ave. On-site childcare is 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. 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: every 3rd Tuesday of the month from 6:00 – 7:30 pm at the Roberts Learning Center (room 201 & 205), University of Maine at Farmington. On-site childcare is available with advance notice. Mileage reimbursement for families traveling more than 30 miles one way. Please call 1-800-833-9786, or email Sheila (sheila@affm.net). Please RSVP 3-4 days before.

Houlton – Foster/Adoptive/Kinship: every 2nd Thursday of the month from 5:30 – 7:30 pm at Houlton CHCS, 2 Water Street. Onsite childcare available with advanced notice. Please contact AFFM at 1-800-833-9786 or email info@affm.net to RSVP. Please call before you come.

Lewiston – Foster/Adoptive/Kinship: every 4th Tuesday of the month from 6:00 – 8:00 pm at CMHC (12 High Street entrance) in Lewiston. The Tri-County Adoptive Foster & Kinship Assoc. offers trainings, as well as local support & resources. On-site childcare is provided with advanced notice. Call Denise Gove at 782-1138 or email her at dgrove@aol.com to RSVP.

Lincoln – Foster/Adoptive/Kinship: every 1st Tuesday of the month from 6:00 – 7:30 pm at Health Access Network (175 West Broadway) in Lincoln. Onsite childcare is available with advanced notice. Mileage reimbursement for families traveling more than 30 miles one-way. Please call 1-800-833-9786 or email: Jim@affm.net 3-4 days in advance to RSVP.

Machias – Foster/Adoptive/Kinship: every 1st Friday of the month from 5:30 – 7:30 pm at Rose M Gaffney Elementary School, 15 Rose Gaffney Road, Machias. On-site childcare is available with advance 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: every 3rd Monday of the month from 6:00 – 8:00 pm at 294 Center Street, Old Town. On-site childcare is available with advance notice. Please contact AFFM at 1-800-833-9786 or email info@affm.net to RSVP. Please call before you come.

Presque Isle – Foster/Adoptive/Kinship: Meets on the 3rd Tuesday of the month from 6:30 – 7:30 pm at the Wesleyan Church (387 Centerline Rd). On-site childcare is available with advance notice. Please contact AFFM at 1-800-833-9786 or email Jim@affm.net to RSVP. Please remember to RSVP before you come.

Rockland—Foster/Adoptive/Kinship: Meets the 3rd Monday of the month at 6:00PM-7:30PM at the Knox Center-Pen Bay Healthcare (6 White Street, Rockland). On-site childcare is available with advance notice. Please RSVP by calling AFFM at 1-800-833-9786.

Sherman – Adoptive/Foster/Kinship: every 1st 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 in the summer.

South Paris – Foster/Adoptive/Kinship: every 1st Thursday of the month from 6:00 – 7:30 pm at the Paris Public Library, 37 Market Square, South Paris. On-site childcare is available with advance notice. Please call 1-800-833-9786 or email Meagan (Meagan@affm.net) to RSVP, please call 3 to 4 days in advance.

South Portland – Foster/Adoptive/Kinship: every 2nd Tuesday of the month from 5:30 – 7:30 pm please contact Meagan at 1-800-833-9786 or email Meagan@affm.net or info@affm.net to RSVP. Please call before you come.

Waterboro – Foster/Adoptive: every 4 Thursday of the month from 6:30 – 7:30 pm at Waterboro Town Hall, 24 Townhouse Road, East Waterboro. Please contact Brigid at brigid.maaffsg@gmail.com.

AFFM is Conducting a Satisfaction Survey –Starting Now!

Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine and Kinship Program is seeking feedback from all Resource Families who are receiving services at this time. (This includes all families currently receiving the Family Ties newsletter). It will not take a lot of time to complete. Your **confidential** responses are extremely important to us. Please take a few minutes to complete this 15 question survey.

Your feedback helps us in the following ways:

- ◆ Helps us evaluate our current services
- ◆ Helps us identify what services are needed but not currently offered or available.
- ◆ Helps potential funding sources understand the needs of families and the families' perceptions of AFFM.

Families can complete the survey by either:

1. Clicking on the link sent to your email address
2. Complete the survey by going to the following website address: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/affmsurvey>

If we don't have your email address, please let us know. We will add it and send you the survey link.

If you do not have access to a computer:

Go to your local library

Ask a friend or family member to use their computer

To help assure confidentiality, AFFM will not be taking responses to the survey over the phone.

AFFM will post the overall results of the survey at www.affm.net

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
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E-Mail: info@affm.net

Affiliated With:
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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**Adoptive & Foster
Families of Maine, Inc.**
& The Kinship Program

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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