

Family Ties

Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc.

Volume 19 Number 3

Newsletter

March 2016

Highlighted below are two of the numerous events/activities AFFM hosts throughout the year. These are examples of AFFM's commitment to providing an enhanced network of support. Families are able to meet in an informal setting and children have a sense of understanding that they are not the only ones in care.



“Foster Family Day at the Fort”!

May 21, 2016 11:00am-3:00pm

Fort Knox

740 Fort Knox Road

Prospect, Maine

Come and enjoy a cookout, games, prizes, giveaways, entertainment, and much more!



This a FREE event for all!

Call AFFM at 1-800-833-9786 to sign up or email info@affm.net.

We look forward to seeing you again this year, rain or shine!



KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR THE 4TH ANNUAL MACKWORTH ISLAND GATHERING THIS JUNE!

Explore the fairy house village, enjoy the beautiful beaches and scenery, give awards 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.



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DHHS Financial Supports for College/Training at a Glance:

Adoption

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 13th 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 16th 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

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)

Permanent Guardianship

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 13th 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 16th 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

Tuition Waiver— youth who entered Permanency Guardianship from foster care AND whose guardian is receiving a PG 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)

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 in foster care on or after their 13th 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)

Adoption Announcement!



Tristen was in our home in foster care for 715 days. Our family has loved him from the minute he entered our home! My husband Joe, myself and our 8 year old son Jacob were extremely excited on January 22, 2016 when the adoption was legalized! ~The Labrador family

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
AFFM looks forward to hearing from you!

Kinship Corner

Are you Familiar With the Supports AFFM Offers Kinship Families?

Experienced staff whom walk the walk and talk the talk guide and direct kinship families to such things as:

- Referrals to appropriate legal representation,
- Assistance with finding appropriate mental health providers
- Assistance navigating DHHS system, (including understanding of differences between guardianship through probate court, foster care, permanency guardianship, adoption and simple power of attorney)
- Legal training and education related to kinship parenting
- Clothing items and other material goods
- Assistance in getting children ready for school with our Ready Set Go to Learn Program
- Holiday Gift Giving Program (check out page 3 for more information!)
- Holiday parties in Skowhegan, Bangor and Portland
- Vacation activities such as roller parties, children's museum passes, tickets to fairs, Portland Sea dogs, Wildlife park passes, etc.
- Monthly Family Ties newsletter
- Kinship specific support groups
- Non-judgmental listening support
- Mentors



visit <http://www.affm.net/2014/10/resource-family-mentor-service/> for more information about AFFM's mentor service.

This is just the tip of the iceberg of support offered to kinship families. To learn more call [1-800-833-9786](tel:1-800-833-9786) or [207-827-2331](tel:207-827-2331) or visit www.affm.net

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month



April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month, a time to recognize that we all can play an important role in making meaningful connections with children and families in the communities.

Check out: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/preventing/preventionmonth/resource-guide/tip-sheets/> for child abuse prevention tip sheets.

New Business Added to the Discount Card Program!

Vacationland Bowling & Recreation Center

U.S. Route 1, 812 Portland Road

Saco, Maine

284-7386



Monday-Friday 9AM-5PM \$3 a string and FREE shoes!

There is still time to register for AFFM's 19th annual spring conference:

Children are our Capital Concern!

April 15th and 16th

Augusta Civic Center

76 Community Drive, Augusta Maine

For more information and to register visit:

<http://www.affm.net/2016/01/affm-spring-conference/>

Or call AFFM 1-800-833-9786



Glass Half Full?

Are you a person who can give youth encouragement and extra support to make better decisions? Call Community Health and Counseling Services now!

We are looking for dedicated people to provide 6-9 months of care to help get a teen back on track.



Training support/\$525 weekly.

Resource families must live within a 60 minute drive from Augusta.



Call Melodie at 213-2164

Mattress Firm Foster Kids

AFFM is excited to announce our newest partner Mattress Firm Foster Kids!

The Mattress Firm Foster Kids program holds donation drives at select stores to collect essential items such as pajamas, clothing, shoes, holiday gifts and school supplies for foster children in need.

“Mattress Firm Foster Kids, through its Ticket to Dream Foundation™, a recognized 501(c)3 non-profit, was launched in December 2015 to make a positive impact on the lives of thousands of foster children in need. Our program is designed to provide both in-kind and monetary contributions to non-profit foster care organizations. Our purpose is to support worthy charitable causes and non-profits, with particular emphasis on charities related to foster children.”

For more information on Mattress Firm visit <http://www.mattressfirmfosterkids.org/>



“Hannaford Helps” Reusable Bag Program



In October, AFFM partnered with the “Hannaford Helps” Reusable Bag Program. The program was developed in order to further support Hannaford’s values by making it easy for customers to contribute to their local community and support the environment. Each time the blue “Hannaford Helps” Reusable Bags were purchased at \$2.29, Hannaford donated \$1 to AFFM! The goal of the program is to partner with customers to support local nonprofit groups and to reduce needless paper & plastic bag use.

AFFM would like to thank Hannaford for their support and to all who purchased a reusable bag. Your support is very appreciated!

The JOY Program

Jumpstart Our Youth – JOY – is a statewide youth philanthropy program that enables more than 3,000 Maine middle and high school students to make meaningful grants in their local communities. As part of their Jobs for Maine’s Graduates (JMG) school curriculum, students study the roles of nonprofits and philanthropy through making grants to local organizations serving youth and families. An emphasis on community service and volunteering helps students understand how time and talent complement their “treasure”. Grant funds are provided by collaborating foundation and corporate donors.

AFFM is thrilled to have received the JOY grant that will be used towards our Ready Set Go to Learn Program to add boots to our back to school bundles. Thank you to Barbara Jewett and your class for partnering with AFFM and supporting Maine’s youth in care!



Upcoming Training

WORKING WITH LGBTQ YOUTH IN CARE – TRAINING OPPORTUNITY WITH NATIONAL EXPERT GARY MALLON

The Muskie School is partnering with the Office of Child and Family Services to present a clinical training entitled, “Working with LGBTQ Youth in Care.” Research has shown that LGBTQ Youth in Care are more likely to age out of the system and to experience homelessness and other adverse outcomes following foster care than youth who do not identify as LGBTQ. (Cite). The needs of LGBTQ Youth are often not fully understood or appreciated by caseworkers and resource families which can contribute to adverse outcomes. This training will be designed to present some of the issues confronting LGBTQ youth, identify some of the ways in which caseworkers, resource parents, and others working with LGBTQ youth in care can best support them, and offer an opportunity for a conversation with young LGBTQ who are themselves alumni of the foster care system. Following the youth panel presentation, audience participants will be challenged to create an action plan and have a conversation about how they can implement some of the suggestions identified by the keynote speaker and the panelists.

The keynote speaker for this presentation will be Gerald P. Mallon, DSW, who is the Julia Lathrop Professor of Child Welfare and Executive Director of the National Center for Child Welfare Excellence at the Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College in New York City.

For more than 38 years, Dr. Mallon has been a child welfare practitioner, advocate, educator, and researcher. Dr. Mallon is the Senior Editor of the professional journal, Child Welfare and the author or editor of more than twenty-three books. In his role as the Executive Director of the NCCWE, Dr. Mallon has traveled to all 50 states, territories and tribes to improve outcomes for children, youth, and families and to build organizational capacity with child welfare systems. Dr. Mallon has written and lectured extensively on the issues relevant to LGBTQ youth and youth in care, and has worked extensively with programs designed to give foster and homeless gay youth places to focus on their sexuality and other issues so that they can prepare to live in a world that is not always as welcoming.

He has lectured and worked extensively throughout the United States, and internationally in Australia, Canada, Cuba, Indonesia, Ireland, and the United Kingdom. He earned his doctorate in Social Welfare from the City University of New York at Hunter College, was awarded his MSW from Fordham University and graduated with his BSW from Dominican College, and he puts his money where his mouth is as he has been a foster parent and is an adoptive parent.

TO REGISTER FOR THIS FREE PRESENTATION, PLEASE CLICK ON THE LINK FOR THE DATE/ LOCATION YOU WOULD LIKE TO ATTEND. ALL TRAINING WILL BE FROM 9-4. Because training is limited to OCFS personnel, you will need to enter a password on the training link. **The password for these events is OCF SMAINE.**

Tuesday, March 29th, Lee Auditorium, Wishcamper Building, USM Campus, Portland
<http://www.eventbrite.com/e/supporting-lgbtq-youth-in-care-tickets-20529498282>

Wednesday, March 30th, Jewett Hall, UMA Campus, Augusta
<http://www.eventbrite.com/e/supporting-lgbtq-youth-in-care-tickets-20530421042>

Thursday, March 31st, Spectacular Events, Griffin Road, Bangor
<http://www.eventbrite.com/e/supporting-lgbtq-youth-in-care-tickets-20530695864>



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 and Facebook. Families are urged to call or email info@affm.net to be added to this service. For more information and to RSVP for the support groups please call AFFM @ 1-800-833-9786 or 827-2331. AFFM asks families to RSVP 3-4 days in advance so the facilitator and childcare provider can plan accordingly.

Key: A= Adoptive, F=Foster, K= Kinship, CC= Child care is available upon request

Augusta – Kinship only: 3rd Wednesday of the month from 5:30 – 8:00 pm at the Buker Community Center (22 Armory Drive Augusta) call Jan Partridge at 207-495-3864.

Augusta – A/F/K/CC: 1st Wednesday of the month from 6:00 – 7:30 pm at Magic Years Center (25 Industrial Drive).

Bangor – Kinship only/CC: 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month from 6—8 pm.304 Hancock St. Suite 2B. 1-866-298-0896.

Belfast—A/F/K/CC: 2nd Monday of the month from 6:00-7:30PM @ Parish House St. Margaret’s Episcopal Church (95 Court St.)

Biddeford – Kinship only/CC: 3rd Tuesday of the month from 10:00 – 11:30 @ J Richard Martin Community Center, 189 Alfred St.

Bridgton – A/F/K: 3rd Monday of the month from 6:30 – 8:30 pm at the Community Care (Behind Reny’s) 15 Depot St. RSVP Vanessa Jones 647-2317

Brunswick – A/F/K/CC: 4th Tuesday of the month from 5:30 – 7:00 pm at St Paul’s Episcopal Church, 25 Pleasant St. Meetings are not held during Summer.

Caribou – A/F/K: 1st Thursday of the month from 5:30 at Caribou Adult Education Building on Bennett Drive in between Caribou Rec and the gas station.

Dover-Foxcroft – A/F/K/CC: 2nd Tuesday of the month from 6:00 – 7:30 pm at Mayo Regional Hospital, Borestone & Sebec rm.

Ellsworth – A/F/K/CC: 3rd Tuesday of the month from 5:00 – 7:00 pm at Ellsworth Elementary Middle School, 20 Forest Ave.

Farmington – A/F/K/CC: every 3rd Tuesday of the month from 6 – 7:30 pm @ Roberts Learning Center (room 201 & 205), UMF.

Houlton – A/F/K/CC: every 2nd Thursday of the month from 5:30 – 7:30 pm at Houlton CHCS, 2 Water Street.

Lewiston – A/F/K/CC: every 4th Tuesday of the month from 6:00 – 8:00 pm at B Street Community Center in Lewiston.

Lincoln – A/F/K/CC: 1st Thursday of the month from 6:00–7:30PM at the Community Evangel Temple, 124 River Rd. .

Machias – A/F/K/CC: 4th Thursday of the month from 6:00 – 7:30 pm @ Rose M Gaffney Elementary School, 15 Rose Gaffney Rd

Orono – A/F/K/CC: 3rd Monday of the month from 6:00 – 8:00 pm at AFFM (34 Main Street Orono).

Portland– A/F/K/CC: 2nd Tuesday of the month from 5:30-7:30pm at 901 Washington Ave. Portland.

Presque Isle – A/F/K/CC: 3rd Tuesday of the month from 6:30 – 7:30 pm at the Wesleyan Church (387 Centerline Rd.)

Rockland—A/F/K/CC: 3rd Monday of the month at 6:00PM-7:30PM at the Knox Center-Pen Bay Healthcare (6 White Street)

Saco—A/F/K/CC: 4th Wednesday of the month from 5:30PM-7:30PM at (333 Lincoln Street, AFFM Saco Office).

Sherman – A/F/K: 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.

Skowhegan— A/F/K/CC: 2nd Tuesday of the month from 6:00-7:30pm at New Horizon Church (31 East Madison Road).

Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc.
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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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COMMENTS TO: EDITOR, FAMIY TIES, AT THE ADDRESS ABOVE.

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OLD TOWN, ME

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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: 34 Main Street, Orono, Maine

& 333 Lincoln Street, Saco, Maine

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