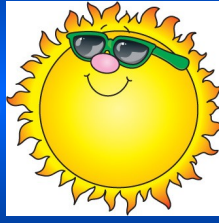


Happy Summer!

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Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc.

Volume 19 Number 6 & 7

Newsletter

June/July 2016

Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine and The Kinship Program WHO WE ARE AND HOW WE CAN HELP:

Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc. (AFFM) provides support services for adoptive, foster parents and kinship providers. AFFM provides the training, guidance; knowledge and resources needed to handle complex issues as families open their hearts and homes to children. The services are for all adoptive, foster, and kinship families who are licensed by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) or have DHHS approval to adopt. AFFM provides services to kinship families not involved in child welfare.

Child welfare is dependent upon a myriad of state and federal laws, rules and regulations. Decisions concerning families and innocent children are rarely easy, and are usually fraught with highly emotional issues. AFFM is dedicated to assisting families to help children find the security they deserve. Every situation in fostering, adoption and kinship is unique. AFFM helps prepare families for the challenges they will face, and provides many resources that are easily accessible. AFFM is available 24/7.

AFFM believes that Maine's children have the right to be a permanent member of a stable, healthy family. For adoptive, foster and kinship caregivers to provide the best parenting and in a quality home environment, they need to add to their own strengths through training and the unconditional support of AFFM. AFFM believes that when decisions are made that affect the rest of a child's life, there is no room for politics or personalities. AFFM believes that families who are willing to open their hearts and homes to provide for Maine's children, must have total support. We believe that access to services to enhance their abilities and that help them to develop new skills is imperative.

How AFFM Does It:

AFFM is supported by donations, grants, a contract with the Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). The association maintains 501 C-3 tax-exempt status.

Training Programs:

AFFM holds an annual spring training conference. The conference provides training designed specifically for families looking for unique and advanced learning opportunities. It is also an opportunity to network with families and other providers from across the state. AFFM offers numerous training programs. AFFM works collaboratively with DHHS and other agencies to sponsor workshops and trainings that are designed to meet the needs of adoptive and foster families.

Allegation Support:

AFFM provides an Allegation Support Team. Nearly every foster parent will experience an allegation at least once during their foster parenting career. Allegation Support Team members are trained to offer non-judgmental listening, a place to vent and an explanation of the DHHS investigation process. Team members can also help when preparing to meet with DHHS staff. The Allegation Support Team maintains confidentiality consistent with Maine Law.

Collaborations:

AFFM is represented on numerous child welfare, foster care, adoption and kinship related committees both statewide and at a national level.

Support Groups and Mentoring:

AFFM works to promote existing support groups as well as training to help form new support groups. AFFM's Resource Family Mentor Service is a support to help new resource families get accustomed to their new role. New foster and kinship families receive direct support, encouragement, and guidance from their more experienced peers.

Liaison Services:

AFFM Staff is available to attend meetings with foster, kinship and adoptive parents. It is often useful to have someone who is not personally caught up in the issues to provide neutral clarity after a meeting. AFFM provides non-judgmental listening support from staff that has years of experience both professionally and personally with the child welfare system.

Lending Library:

The library is a huge resource. Books, videos and DVD's on a wide range of topics related to issues of foster care, kinship and adoption are available. The library has items of interest to all ages from very young children to grandparents.

AFFM is a phone call or a "click" away, at 1-800-833-9786 or on the web at www.affm.net

DHHS Financial and 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 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)

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)

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)

If you were in foster care in Maine when you turned 18, you are now eligible for continued MaineCare coverage up **to age 26** through the Affordable Care Act. You can go to your local Office of Family Independence to apply. **Income and assets and those of anyone in your home is NOT considered in determining Eligibility:**

If questioned about income or assets, you can cite: 10-144 Chapter 332 of the MaineCare Eligibility Manual, Part 3.5: Eligibility Groups Requirements (page 8) which states:

III. Former Foster Care Children

An individual is eligible to enroll in Medicaid if he/she:

- i. Is under age 26;
- ii. Is not eligible for and enrolled in another mandatory Medicaid coverage under 42 CFR subsection 435.110 through 435.118 or 42 CFR subsection 435.20 through 435.145;
- iii. Was in foster care in the State of Maine and was enrolled in Medicaid through the State of Maine at age 18.

The income and assets of the individual (or anyone else in his/her household) is not considered to determine eligibility for the individual.

If you have questions, you can contact a MaineCare Eligibility Specialist at: [1-800-482-0790](tel:1-800-482-0790)



Upcoming Events!



4th Annual Mackworth Island Gathering

RSVP: Meagan Sprague by emailing Meagan@affm.net or call 207-827-2331

When: Saturday June 25th, 2016 from 12pm-3pm

Where: Mackworth Island, Falmouth, Maine

Explore the fairy house village, enjoy the beautiful beaches and scenery, giveaways 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 of Maine's youth in care.



Rock and Ride for the Kids!

When: Saturday July 9, 2016 from 11am-5pm

Where: The Field of Dreams Unity, Maine

The Red Knights Motorcycle Club Maine Chapter 9 and Chris and Brandy Bowles are organizing "Rock and Ride for the Kids" to benefit AFFM. *For more information check out AFFM's Facebook page, website and email list serve.*



July 29, 2016: Family Fun and Training Day! A Foster Parent Appreciation event for Hancock and Washington county families. If you live in either county and would like more information, visit www.affm.net

August 20, 2016: Join AFFM at the 36th Hampden Children's Day! Families are invited to join in the parade with their decorated bikes or scooters. For more information check out the Facebook page, www.facebook.com/HampdenChildrensDayMaine

August 27, 2016: Join the New Balance Family 5K at the New Balance Factory Store, 12 Walnut Street Skowhegan to benefit Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine and The Kinship Program! Registration begins at 8:00AM. For more information visit www.affm.net.

September 11, 2016: Celebrate Grandparents Day with AFFM by joining pizza parties in Orono, Portland and Bangor for kinship families. Keep an eye out in future newsletters for further details.

Fort Knox 2016

Thank you to all who attended and made this year's Foster Family Day at the Fort a success! The sun was shining for the over 300 in attendance. All enjoyed a barbecue, games, music, a bounce house, and an amazing petting zoo! Thank you to the following businesses and individuals for another great year:

- The Friends of Fort Knox
- Tom and Mary Polley
- Sam's Club in Scarborough
- Pony X-Press Zoo of Waterville
- Poland Springs
- Coca Cola Company
- Taylor Rental in Bangor
- Tom and Pat Locke
- Maine State Police K-9 Unit
- Bobbi Johnson, OCFS
- Joe Hoxie & Kayla Jackson
- Staff and Board of AFFM
- Charlene Coleman
- Searsport Dunkin Donuts
- Rana O'Connor and Spurwink
- Susan Lasselle and A Family for ME
- KidsPeace staff
- Gloria Flewelling and Frances Thibodeau
- Fou from The Anah Temple Shriners
- Winterport Baptist Church
- Ed and Barbara Ford
- Sandra Snow and family for the popcorn
- OHI
- Mary & Kevin McLaughlin
- Linda Brissette, OCFS
- Lynn Nye
- LA Bree's Bakery



Adoption Announcements!



Bailey is our Great-grand-daughter. She is 7 and we have adopted her. May 3rd was the big day. We have been blessed. We have been kinship foster care for over 2 years and while it has been a heart breaking journey we are so proud to be able to provide Bailey with the love and support. She has brought the joy of youth to us and the wonderful opportunity to view life through her eyes!

~Sandy and Jerry Nichols & Bailey Jordan



Shawn and Katie Richards would like to announce the adoption of their daughter, Gabriella Faith, on May 25, 2016. She is welcomed by big brother Jonathan and big sister Mckayla. She has truly been a blessing to our family!



Deanna Vachon is excited to announce on April 12th she legalized the adoption of her niece Shaylee and nephew Dillon! She is happy it's over and they can now begin their journey together!



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!

Maine Law: All-Terrain Vehicle Safety

The Minimum age requirement: An ATV operator must be at least ten years old. To ride unsupervised an ATV rider must be 16 years old or possess a safety certificate.

Safety Education Certification Requirement: Riders between the ages of 10 and 15 years must have a safety certificate to ride ATVs in the state of Maine

Helmet and/or Eye Protection Requirement: Riders under age 18 years must wear an approved helmet.

For more information contact the Recreational Safety Division Office (207)-287-5220 or visit:

<http://www.state.me.us/ifw/education/safety/>

In Loving Memory of Louise Hamilton

Minot— Louise M. (Magno) Hamilton, 63 passed away Wednesday May 18, following a brief illness, at her home and surrounded by loved ones. Louise was the daughter of Oren H. and Winifred (Maguire) Magno of Auburn. She was educated in Auburn schools and graduated from the University of Maine in 1976. Following graduation, Louise returned to the Auburn area to pursue her career, initially working at the Pineland Training Facility before moving on to pursue a career in child welfare casework with DHHS in Lewiston. Louise also worked for International Adoption Services, Inc., of Gardiner before returning to DHHS in 2006 where she had been employed as a case-work supervisor until her untimely death. She is survived by son, Thomas M. Hamilton of Auburn; granddogs, Remi and Rossi; brother, Michael and wife, Leslie Magno, as well as by fiancé and life partner, Thomas Hoffman. Louise has been an active volunteer in Androscoggin County with the Auburn Ski Association, the Dempsey Challenge, Tri-County Mental Health Services and Androscoggin Home Care and Hospice. There are not enough words to adequately communicate the breadth and depth of the relationships Louise developed with her family, friends and professionals. She is missed by all who loved her and whose lives have improved as a result of being touched by Louise.



In Loving Memory
**Louise M.
Hamilton**

Wednesday, July 23, 1952
to
Wednesday, May 18, 2016

AFFM Seeking Volunteers

Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc. & The Kinship Program is seeking volunteers to assist in the following areas:

- Picking up and dropping off donated materials
- Coordinating donations
- Organizing donations
- Community outreach
- Family fun events
- Assembling monthly newsletters
- Office tasks and more



If you have 2 or more hours per month to volunteer and live in the greater Bangor or Saco area, Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc. & The Kinship Program would enjoy having you as part of their team. For more information please contact Travis by e-mail travis@affm.net or by phone: 207-817-6064. For those Who live in or near Saco and would like to volunteer please contact Meagan by e-mail meagan@affm.net or by phone 207-710-2037.

Update to the Foster Parent Reimbursement Form

The updated Foster Parent Reimbursement Forms (G31) can now be found on the Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS) website:

<http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/cw/fosterparenting.shtml>

Ready, Set, Go to Learn!

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

Ready, Set, Go to Learn (RSGTL) provides a new backpack, grade-appropriate school supplies, personal care items, and two new school outfits to children in need grades pre-K to 12th. If you feel your child will be in need this upcoming school year, 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 29th***



New Discount!

Restyled
8 Main St, Dexter
924-3900
restyled.consignment@gmail.com
20% off



If you have a suggestion for a business or organization that AFFM can approach to participate in the discount card program, please contact AFFM. You can also print off and send a completed business application form to 34 Main St. Orono, Me 04473. application found at: <https://www.affm.net/services/discount-card-program/>

Kinship Corner

Bette Hoxie, Executive Director of Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine and the Kinship Program was recently selected along with approximately 20 other individuals from across the nation as a "Super Advocate". This advocacy group is a cooperative endeavor between the North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC), the National Foster Parent Association (NFPA) and Generations United GU). It is sponsored by the Annie E Casey Foundation.

The advocates are all foster parents including relative foster parents, and adoptive parents who have or are providing foster care or kinship care or adoptive parents to children from the foster care system with extreme medical, mental health and behavioral challenges.

Bette is the birth mother to 3 children, adoptive mother to 8 and has 6 former foster children who consider her their mother and her home as theirs. She has 38 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren. She is raising one of her grandsons who is now 17 and has been with her since infancy. Bette is a strong and passionate advocate for children and their families and has worked to increase services to foster, adoptive and kinship families for many years. Bette feels honored and proud to serve in this position and looks forward to collaborating with the Maine Department of Health and Human Services, the general population of caregivers, AFFM and public at large in Maine to achieve more positive outcomes for children and their families.

The super advocates were selected through an application process. They will receive training through webinars and conference calls and in person at a gathering in June in Washington D.C. After the training they will conduct visits with congressional representatives.

Each will share their unique stories in a way that emphasizes the need for more supports for families. They will also be asked to recruit others to join them to do visits with their federal representatives in their own state.

Essay/poem contest for youth in kinship care!

Submit to AFFM an essay or poem on "What I think of kinship care" and AFFM will publish the winning essay or poem in September's Family Ties Newsletter in honor of Grandparents Day on September 11th and provide a \$25 gift card to the winner! Please submit entries to: info@affm.net by August 5, 2016





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.

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: Last 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.

NEW **Damariscotta — F/A/K: 1st Thursday of the month from 5:30-7:00 PM at the Skidompha Library (184 Main St).

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 200 Main Street Lewiston.

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

NEW **Lincolntonville — F/A/K/CC: 2nd Monday of the month from 6:00-7:30pm at the Lincolntonville Central School (523 Hope 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-7:00PM 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.
34 Main Street, Orono, ME 04473

Phone: 1-800-833-9786 or (207) 827-2331
After Hour Emergency Support: (207)745-4159
Fax: (207) 889-6978
On the Web: www.affm.net
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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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.



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

Phone: 1-800-833-9786

Email: info@affm.net

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Website: www.affm.net

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