

Family



Ties

Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc.

Volume 20 Number 4

Newsletter

April/May 2017

Tips to Managing Stress during Child Abuse Prevention Month this April

It is important to learn how to manage your stress—for your own sake and for your children. The following suggestions may help: Identify what's making you stressed. Everyone's stressors are different. Yours might be related to money, work, your surroundings (traffic, crime), your partner, your children's behavior, or health issues.



Accept what you cannot change. Ask yourself, "Can I do anything about it?" If the answer is no, try to focus on something else. If there is something you can do (look for a new job, for example), break it into smaller steps so it doesn't feel overwhelming. **Have faith.** Look back at previous times when you have overcome challenges. Think, "This too shall pass." Consider that people who attend church, pray regularly, or practice other forms of spirituality tend to have less stress. **Relax!** Try deep breathing, meditation, yoga, or listening to music. Take 30 minutes to play a board game and laugh with your kids. **Take care of your health.** Getting enough sleep can make a big difference in your stress level. So can eating healthy foods and getting some exercise. **Take time for yourself.** Take a bath, read a book, or pick up a hobby. When you can, hire a babysitter (or trade time with a friend or neighbor) and get out for a few hours. **Develop a support network.** Don't be afraid to ask for help. Older children can set the table. Your spouse or partner could take over bedtime a few nights a week. Friends might pick up the kids from school to give you a break.

Remember: Learning to manage your stress will improve your happiness and show your children that they can handle stress, too!

Tip Sheet From: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/preventing/preventionmonth/resources/tip-sheets/>

Celebrate Foster Care Awareness Month this May at Fort Knox!



Date: Saturday May 20, 2017

Time: 11:00am-3:00pm

Location: Fort Knox 740 Fort Knox Road Prospect, Maine



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

This is 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!



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 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 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 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)

AFFM's Mentor Service

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 with without feeling like I was being judged."*



Interested in being matched with a mentor? Email Jim Hatch in the Orono office jim@affm.net or Meagan Sprague in the Saco office meagan@affm.net

State Park Passes are in!

If you are a *licensed* foster home, call AFFM and we'll send a pass your way! **Please Note:** AFFM has a limited amount of passes this year so please make your request early. Also available to all resource families, the Gray's Wildlife Park pass and children's museum passes to Bangor, Portland, Augusta, and Rockland.

New Initiatives for Youth!

Our HeArts Initiative: Provide an opportunity to work with volunteer artists from York Art Association creating unique Hearts to be sold in the YAA Gallery Gift Shop in York, ME and support their "Arts for Hearts" program that encourages and provides art experiences for everyone. Youth will also take home their very own Heart masterpiece. Space is limited, lunch and all supplies are included so just bring your creative energy. Date, Time & Location TBD bases on attendees' interest.

Horse Shoe Initiative: Provide a mini 3-day 2-night horse camp opportunity at Hearts and Horses in Buxton, ME for youth to learn all about horses, with the shoe being on the other foot (or hoof), giving youth a heightened sense of how horses experiences the world around them. Space is limited, ages 11 and up and subsidies are available on a first come first served basis. Our very first mini- camp is scheduled for Memorial Day Weekend 2017.

Contact Janalee from A Place Called H.O.M.E. call/text 207-423-4281 or email janaleemoquin8@yahoo.com or at janalee@aplacecalledhome.family

For more information about A Place Called H.O.M.E visit: <http://aplacecalledhome.family/>

Upcoming Training!

Child Passenger Safety - Basic Awareness Training

May 15th (2 different classes)-South Portland
July 31st (2 different classes)-Augusta
September 19th (2 different classes)-Bangor

Description: What type of car seats are there, which one is right for the child(ren) you are transporting, and what is the correct way to install them? This Bureau of Highway Safety endorsed training will answer all of these questions for you. You will also learn about passenger safety restraint systems, injury prevention, and crash dynamics. The training provides for actual hands-on car seat installations in vehicles by all attendees. Participants are encouraged to bring the car seats they are currently using for a safety check and for answers to any questions they may have about the seat.

Presented By: Stephanie Wiken & Tim Swift, DHHS training staff

3.5 hours of training credit. Limited Seating!

Register Here:

<http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/setu/ocfs-sponsored-training.shtml>

Registration Guidelines:

The registration form is specifically used by DHHS staff, however DHHS is allowing Adoptive and Foster families to attend this specific training. When registering, keep these guidelines in mind:

1. When asking for name, (work) address, and phone number -use your name and contact information.
2. Department/Agency : write in "Foster Parent" or "Adoptive Parent"
3. TAMS Employee ID#: write in "x"
4. Employee status: click " I am not a DHHS employee"
5. For all Non-DHHS Employees, please check the appropriate service area below: choose "Foster Parent" or "Adoptive Parent"
6. Supervisor's name & email : Write in your own name and email address
7. When finished, click "submit the form"

Save The Date for The 27th Annual Teen Conference!



A day devoted to Maine's youth in foster care and those who care for them

June 28, 2017 at Thomas College

Visit YLAT.ORG and Facebook.com/MaineYLAT for more information.

Have Fun!

Meet New People!

See Old Friends!

Learn New Skills!

Together as One

Adoption Announcements!



Annabelle Joy Jellison was adopted by Andrea Jellison on 3/1/17. She joins big sister Kay and big brother Nate. Congratulations!



The Balfour's are excited to announce the adoption of Irelyn on December 1st. She joins one brother here in Maine and another brother and sister who live in Maryland and frequently visit.

We are all so excited to finally be sharing a last name!

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

During AFFM's Annual Spring Conference, on Friday April 21st 2-4pm Donna Butts & The Kinship Panel will be presenting on:

Retirement VS. Raising Grandchildren: Opiates and Options

This workshop will provide a state and national perspective about the increase in kinship care (indicatively due to the increase use of opiates). The panel will consist of kinship family advocates, a kinship parent, and a lawyer versed in kinship legal issues.

The panel will share their life experiences and provide information as to what worked well for them. During this training participants will receive guidance and resources on how to approach some of the most difficult situations experienced by kinship families.

Register for the conference today and sit in on this amazing workshop!



Resource Family Appreciation Events

AFFM is partnering with DHHS District staff to hold a resource family appreciation event to recognize and say thank you for all the amazing work resource parents do for Maine's youth in care! Keep an eye out for more information and an invite from your district soon!

*Thank
you*

"Hannaford Helps" Reusable Bag Program



AFFM is excited to have a continued partnership 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!

Register for AFFM's Conference Today!

AFFM Presents the 20th Annual
Spring Training Conference:


April 21st to April 22nd

Hilton Garden Inn

250 Haskell Rd, Bangor, ME 04401


Register Today!

[https://www.affm.net/event/
annual-spring-conference/?
instance_id=3132](https://www.affm.net/event/annual-spring-conference/?instance_id=3132)



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

Improving Communication Today;
Offering Hope for Tomorrow



AFFM's 20th Annual Spring Conference

This Conference is designed for:

Kinship Providers, Foster Parents, Adoptive Parents, Social Workers, Clinicians,
Adoption Workers, CASA Volunteers, Judges, Attorneys, Educators, and other
child & family advocates



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/CC: 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. Facilitated by AFFM staff. 2nd Tuesday of the month from 6:00-7:30 PM Location: Redeemer Lutheran Church, 540 Essex St. Bangor

Belfast— F/A/K/CC: 2nd Monday of the month from 6:00-7:30pm at U. Maine Hutchinson Center (rooms 133 & 129) 80 Belmont Ave.

Berwick— F/A/K/CC: 3rd Wednesday of the month from 6:00-7:30pm at Berwick Town Hall (11 Sullivan St.)

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

Bridgton – A/F/K/CC: 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.

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 5:30 – 7:30 pm at Moore Community Center (133 State St.) RSVP Mindy Kane, CHCS 263-2014 or 461-8878

Farmington – A/F/K/CC: every 3rd Tuesday of the month from 6 – 7:30 pm @ Roberts Learning Center (room 107, 203 & 207), 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.

Machias – A/F/K/CC: 3rd Thursday of the month from 6:00 – 7:30 pm @ University of Maine Machias Torrey Hall Rooms 228 & 230

Norridgewock— A/F/K/CC: 2nd Tuesday of the month from 6:00-7:30pm at First Congregational Church (36 River Road).

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 6:00-7:30pm 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: 4th Monday of the month at 6:00PM-7:30PM @ the Rockland Public Library (80 Union St)

Saco—A/F/K/CC: 4th Wednesday of the month from 5:30PM-7:00PM at AFFM's Saco office (333 Lincoln Street).

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.

South Paris— A/F/K/CC: 1st Thursday of the month from 5:30-7:00PM at the University of Maine Cooperative Extension (9 Olson 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

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.

NON-PROFIT

U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

OLD TOWN, ME

PERMIT NO. 65



**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

After Hour Emergency Support: 207-745-4159

Website: www.affm.net

Like us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Adoptive-and-Foster-Families-of-Maine-Inc/>

Scan to sign up for our email

List serve

