

Family Ties



Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc.

Volume 21 Number 1

Newsletter

January/February 2018

AFFM's mission is to provide the training, guidance, knowledge and resources needed to handle the complex issues encountered by resource families as they open their hearts and homes to children in need.

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

Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc. (AFFM) provides support services for adoptive, foster parents and kinship providers. The services are for all adoptive and foster 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 in the formal system. 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 is a resource that is 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: AFFM holds an annual spring training conference in April. 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, foster and kinship families. Many resource families use the conference to receive training hours needed for re-licensing.

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.

Support Groups: AFFM offers support groups in each county to all resource families. The support meetings allow for families to make connections and form relationships with other families in similar situations. The support group meetings also allow for kids to interact with other kids as child care is provided for most locations with advanced notice. A support group meeting is a great resource for the whole family.

Mentor Service: 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, training, and guidance from their more experienced peers.

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. The listing of Lending Library materials can be found on the AFFM website.

Direct Support: 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 offers a 24/7 warm-line. Resource families can call anytime when there is an urgent need to talk with our staff. AFFM's e-mail list serve is the fastest way to inform and notify families of topics and information that is important to them.

Kinship Support: AFFM provides specific supports to kinship families who are caring for children in DHHS custody and when there is no DHHS involvement at all.

Welcome Packet: All new resource families of AFFM receive a Welcome Packet that includes a discount card, information about free passes to the children museums, support group listings, pass to the Maine Wildlife Park in Gray, the latest Family Ties newsletter, and AFFM's brochure.

Announcements

Maine Women, Infants and Children Nutrition Program

is a supplemental nutrition program helping Maine kids to grow up strong and healthy. The WIC Program's primary goal is to promote and maintain the health and well being of nutritionally at risk eligible women, infants and children.

What does WIC provide?

Services	Foods such as....	Referrals.....
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checks for healthy foods • Health Screening • Individual nutrition advice • Support families making changes for better health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bread • Cereal • Milk • Eggs • Cheese • Juice • Peanut Butter • Beans • Fresh Fruits and vegetables • Infant Formula • Baby Foods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and Oral Healthcare • Home visiting programs • Head Start • Immunizations and Lead tests • Food Assistance

If a child under 5 years of age is in your care they may be eligible to receive WIC benefits!

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

1-800-437-9300 or 207-287-3991 or visit us online at: Wicforme.com



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

SAVE THE DATE!

AFFM'S ANNUAL SPRING TRAINING CONFERENCE

FRIDAY APRIL 6TH AND SATURDAY APRIL 7TH

PORTLAND MARRIOTT AT SABLE OAKS

200 SABLE OAKS DRIVE

SOUTH PORTLAND, MAINE 04106

**KEEP AN EYE OUT ON EMAIL LIST SERVE,
WWW.AFFM.NET AND AFFM'S FACEBOOK PAGE
FOR MORE INFORMATION.**

Sugar Supply Co.

PRESENTS...

FOSTER LOVE 2018

OUR SECOND ANNUAL FUNDRAISER IS UP AND
RUNNING FOR VALENTINE'S DAY!

PLEASE CONTACT
SUGAR SUPPLY CO.

TO PLACE YOUR CUPCAKE ORDER

EMAIL -- SMNTHSBD@GMAIL.COM

FACEBOOK -- [@SUGARSUPPLYCO](https://www.facebook.com/sugarsupplyco)

LEMON Sugar

Alumni Transition Grant Program

Maine's Alumni Transition Grant Program (ATGP) supports eligible alumni of Maine's foster care system with higher education up to the age of 27. ATGP was established by state law and began in 2015. This program provides financial support and assists eligible students to complete postsecondary education and training programs.



Apply now and let us help you fund your education & training programs!

Program Basics:

- ATGP is awarded on a first-come, first-served basis, to no more than 40 students at one time.
- ATGP funds are awarded only after all other free financial aid and wages are considered.
- ATGP navigators will be provided to every ATGP recipient.

Who is eligible?

An eligible recipient must have:

- Aged out of Maine's foster care system at age 18;
- and exited Maine's Voluntary Extended Care and Support (V9) Agreement at age 21;
- and was enrolled in a postsecondary education program making satisfactory progress when their V9 ended at age 21;
- and has not yet attained their 27th Birthday.

What is a Navigator?

- ATGP Navigators are OCFS Youth Transition Specialists who provide support to students based on the needs that the student identifies.
- Support includes assistance to access both campus-based resources, such as student assistance programs and community-based resources, such as counseling services, when needed.

Recipients of ATGP funds agree to:

1. Show proof of enrollment in a postsecondary education undergraduate program.
2. Sign relevant release of information.
3. Provide grades and progress reports.
4. Meet with the ATGP Navigator at least 3 times per semester.
5. Provide contact information to the ATGP Navigator.
6. Sign a participant agreement each semester.
7. Complete a renewal application each semester.
8. Complete an exit interview upon graduation.



For more information contact:
Dulcey Laberge,
dulcey.laberge@maine.gov
or 207-624-7928

View more information online at www.YLAT.org/rights-resources/college-supports

Adoption Announcements!

Ryker Greenier, now 6 years old, joined Reta and Brian Greenier on November 14, 2017. Ryker first met his new parents when he 5 months old. This adoption celebration blesses our extended family with his unconditional love!



Todd, Stephanie, David, and Emma Moores are excited to announce the adoption of Lacie Moores on October 5th 2017!



Kelly and Scott Brown would like to announce the addition of their daughter Trinity to their family. The Browns adopted her on December 7th. She joins their older daughters Madison and Malarie.



Did you know that after you've adopted you are still able to access AFFM's support services? Call AFFM today to learn about post adoption support!

Kinship Corner

Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc. and the Kinship Program, (AFFM) celebrates and applauds grandparents who open their hearts and homes to parent their grandchildren every day all year long.

AFFM is a non-profit organization that partners with DHHS to provide support, training, education, listening support, referrals and materials goods to resource parents (foster, adoptive and kinship). The services are also available to families who are not involved with DHHS.

If you or someone you know is parenting one or more of a relative's children, AFFM has special resources to help you meet the needs of the children. The people you talk to when you call have "walked the walk and talked the talk". Our trained staff is sensitive to the complexities of families who have members that struggle and have found parenting overwhelming and need the support of extended family members to aid them until they are able to handle whatever keeps them from successfully providing for their children.

Parenting a second and or third generation of children requires more of everything from the caregiver. AFFM can help you navigate the systems you may encounter as you travel this often twisting and sometimes seemingly endless road. The systems you may encounter may include: child protection, education, special education, corrections and the court system.

Call toll free 1-800-833-9786 or locally 207-827-2331. We are a state-wide non-profit association and our services are free to those who provide kinship care either in the formal or informal system. You may also email us at info@affm.net or visit our website www.affm.net.

February Vacation Events!

Join Saco AFFM at Joker's

Location: 100 Larrabee Road, Westbrook

Date: Wednesday February 21, 2018

Time: 10AM-12PM

Admissions Includes:

10 tokens for children under 12

25 tokens for children over 12

A bracelet for the playhouse for children 12 and under

1 activity ticket per child

1 slice of pizza and 1 drink per child

Socks are required.

Space is limited to the first 80 registrations. Please include number of children and ages. Call 1-800-833-9786 or email meagan@affm.net to RSVP



Join Orono AFFM at

Bangor Brewer Bowling Lanes

Location: 534 Wilson Street, Brewer

Date: February 21, 2018

Time: 11AM-1PM

Admissions Includes:

Unlimited bowling

Shoe Rental

\$3.00 Meal Ticket

Socks are required.

Space is limited to the first 80 registrations. Please include number of children and ages. Call 1-800-833-9786 or email sheila@affm.net to RSVP



Announcements/FYI

NEW DISCOUNT IN CUMBERLAND COUNTY!

On the Road Again Automotive
55 Lamb Mill Rd, Naples ME 04055
207-333-0187
10% off labor costs

SAVE THE DATE!

FOSTER FAMILY DAY AT THE FORT!

SATURDAY MAY 19, 2018

740 FORT KNOX RD. PROSPECT, ME.

*KEEP AN EYE OUT ON EMAIL LIST SERVE,
WWW.AFFM.NET AND AFFM'S FACEBOOK PAGE FOR
MORE INFORMATION.*

AFFM would like to thank the following businesses for making the Holiday Gift Giving Program so successful:

- * Ogunquit Spirit of Giving
- * Bangor International Airport
- * Northeast Seal Harbor Church
- * Toys for Tots
- * Saint Paul and The Apostle Church in Bangor
- * Williston Immanuel church in Portland
- * Tyler Technologies
- * Ron from A-Copi
- * Sheena Villard
- * Lots of Tots Daycare in Princeton ME
- * Brewer Youth Hockey
- * St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Brunswick
- * St. Charles Borromeo Church in Brunswick
- * WPOR Portland Radio Group
- * Santa Cause
- * Bull Moose in Bangor
- * Christmas Tree Shop Corp.
- * Mary Lake for making baby blankets

AFFM has been contacted by resource parents with the question around who is approved to babysit for the youth in their home. Keeping the Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standard in mind, Resource parents are able to choose their own babysitter, as long as the sitter is responsible and can handle the children's needs. The sitter does not have to be over 18.

To learn more about the Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standard visit: <http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/cbhs/provider/parenting-standard.shtml>

Support for Teens

The Youth Leadership Advisory Team (YLAT) is a program provided to Maine's youth or former youth in care, by The Maine Department of Health and Human Services, and the Muskie School at University of Southern Maine. YLAT's primary purpose is to improve the short-term and long-term outcomes for youth in foster care. The youth draw on their personal stories and experiences in an effort to improve the system. Teens are able to share their stories with other youth who have walked in their shoes. They feel safe in sharing their story and know that they not only will receive validation and support to help them in their current situation, but they also know they are a part of improving the experiences of others who enter the system. Many youth come away from the YLAT meetings and events with an increased sense of self-esteem, confidence, and pride that they have not experienced before. Any teenager who is 14 or older and is currently in, or had been in foster care can join.

Statewide Calendar 2017-2018

Aroostook-Houlton (TBD)

Please contact Angela DeLong for more information



The Youth Leadership Advisory Team

YLAT is a youth & adult partnership committed to improving the short-term experiences and long-term outcomes for youth who are currently in foster care or have been in care.

Get connected!

With youth, former youth, and adult partners who want to improve the child welfare system.

Be heard!

We know you've heard it before...but we get asked for input all the time. Your voice is valuable!

Have fun!

Have good food, great friends, and amazing conversations.

Make a difference!

Your story about your experiences in foster care could impact other youth in care.

Challenge yourself and others!

YLAT challenges us all to keep learning about what it means to grow up in foster care ... and about how we all can contribute to the solutions.

Rockland

(2nd Wednesday, 3:00-5:00 pm)

September 13* • October 11 • November 8 December 13* • January 10 • February 14 • March 14 • April 11 • May 9*

All meetings are @ Pope Memorial Humane Society at 25 Buttermilk Lane, Thomaston

Southern Maine

(3rd Wednesday, 3:45-5:45 pm)

September 20* • October 18 • November 15 December 20* • January 17 • February 21 • March 21 • April 18 • May 16*

All meetings are @ USM Gorham at 37 College Ave

Bangor

(2nd Wednesday, 3:30-5:30 pm)

September 13* • October 11 • November 8 December 13* • January 10 • February 14 • March 14 • April 11 • May 9*

All meetings are @ Bangor DHHS at 396 Griffin Rd

Waterville

(3rd Wednesday, 3:30-5:30 pm)

September 20* • October 18 • November 15 December 20* • January 17 • February 21 • March 21 • April 18 • May 16*

All meetings are @ Pleasant Street United Methodist Church at 61 Pleasant Street

Lewiston

(2nd Wednesday, 3:45-5:45 pm)

September 13* • October 11 • November 8 December 13* • January 10 • February 14 • March 14 • April 11 • May 9*

All meetings are @ Lewiston DHHS at 200 Main Street

**For More Information
about YLAT visit
www.ylat.org or
[www.facebook.com/
MaineYLAT](https://www.facebook.com/MaineYLAT)**

Visit www.ylat.org or www.facebook.com/MaineYLAT for updates or changes to the calendar throughout the year!



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 5:00-6:30 PM Location: Redeemer Lutheran Church, 540 Essex St. Bangor
- Belfast**— F/A/K/CC: 2nd Monday of the month from 5:30-7:00pm at 9 Field Street, Belfast (Room 330).
- 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 Center (Behind Reny's) 15 Depot St. RSVP Vanessa Jones 647-2317
- Brunswick** – A/F/K/CC: 4th Tuesday of the month from 5:30 – 7:00pm at St Paul's Episcopal Church, 25 Pleasant St. Meetings are not held during summer.
- Caribou** — A/F/K: 4th Monday of the month from 10:00am-noon at Caribou CHCS, 7 Hatch Drive #120. No RSVP needed.
- Damariscotta**— F/A/K: 1st Thursday of the month from 5:30-7:00 PM at the Lincoln County Assembly of God Church (672 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: 3rd Monday of the month from 10:00am – noon at Houlton CHCS, 2 Water Street. No RSVP needed.
- Lewiston** – A/F/K/CC: 4th Tuesday of the month from 6:00 – 8:00 pm at 200 Main Street Lewiston. (Lewiston DHHS)
- 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 – 7:30pm at the Orono United Methodist Church (36 Oak Street).
- Portland**— A/F/K/CC: 2nd Tuesday of the month from 6:00-7:30pm at 345 Clarks Pond Pkwy South 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: 1st Wednesday of the month from 5:30PM-7:00PM @ Grace Bible Fellowship (30 Sherer Lane).
- Richmond**— A/F/K/CC: 4th Tuesday of the month from 5:30PM-7:00PM at Isaac F. Umberhine Public Library (86 Main St.)
- Saco**—A/F/K/CC: 4th Wednesday of the month from 5:30PM-7:00PM at AFFM's Saco office (333 Lincoln Street).
- Sanford**— A/F/K/CC: 3rd Wednesday of the month from 5:30PM-8PM at Curtis Lake Church (38 Westview Drive).
- South Paris**— A/F/K/CC: 1st Thursday of the month from 6:00-7:30PM at the University of Maine Cooperative Extension (9 Olson Road).
- Wells**— A/F/K/CC: 3rd Tuesday of the month from 6:00-7:30pm at Wells Congregational Church (1695 Post Road, Wells).

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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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

Website: www.affm.net

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

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