

Family Ties

Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc.

Volume 22 Number 4

Newsletter

April 2019

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.



Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc. (AFFM) provides support services for adoptive, foster and kinship families. This includes kinship families in the informal system (not working in conjunction with DHHS).

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. AFFM understands every situation in fostering, adoption and kinship care is unique and families will face challenges. AFFM strives to continue to be a resource for families and is available 24/7.

AFFM believes that Maine's children have the right to be a member of a healthy, safe and stable family.

AFFM believes that all adoptive, foster and kinship families deserve to have unconditional support to help build on their strengths and to provide the best quality home environment possible.

AFFM believes that access to services to enhance families abilities and develop new skills is imperative.

AFFM believes all families who open their homes to Maine's children deserve unbiased support.

Have you attended a C.A.R.E.S. Meeting?

At an AFFM C.A.R.E.S. Meeting, people may find others that are in a similar situation as their own. Members of a meeting may share their personal experiences and offer one another emotional comfort and moral support. C.A.R.E.S. provide practical advice and tips to help families cope with challenges and joys of being a resource family. These meetings allow for families to make connections and form relationships with other families that can last a lifetime. The meetings also allow for kids to interact with other kids as child care is provided for all meetings. Youth benefit from knowing they are not alone, and others are experiencing similar situations. Training opportunities are also available at C.A.R.E.S. Meetings!

***Check out page 7 for a C.A.R.E.S.
Meeting near you!***

Learn more about the support services AFFM offers by calling 207-827-2331 or visit www.affm.net

NEW Section: Feel Good Stories!

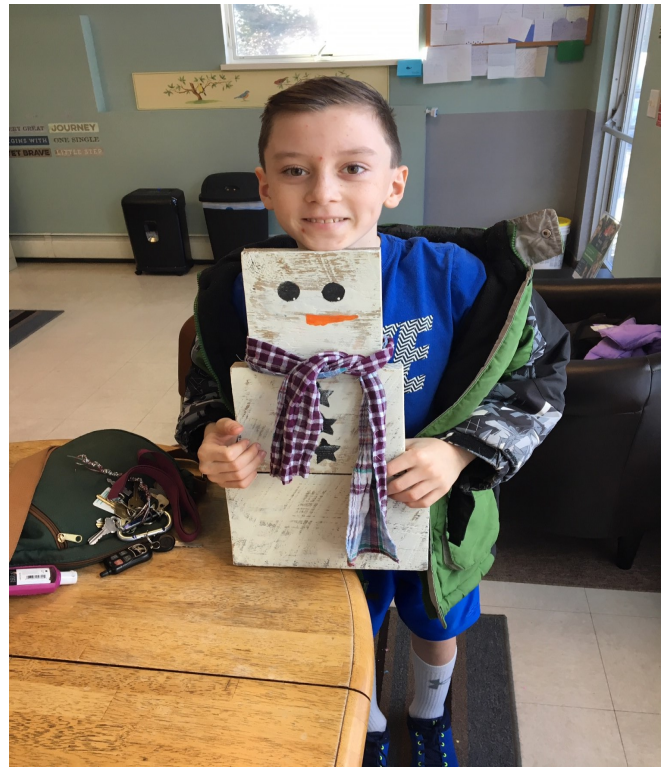
AFFM would like to kick off the first of hopefully many “Feel Good” stories with Nate Snow!

Nate initially began making snowmen as Christmas gifts for his teachers, but soon he was getting requests from others to make them. With the help of his uncle and Mom, a little business took off.

"One of the teachers I work with got him into a last minute craft fair in Bridgton," his mother Sandra Snow said. "He sold 11 there."

The money he made went towards supplies and his savings account, as well as AFFM! Nate donated one dollar of every sale to Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc.

Nate has already raised \$100 dollars for AFFM!



Do you have a “Feel Good” story you’d like to share? Please email Meagan at meagan@affm.net and it could be featured in a future newsletter!

Kinship Corner

Understanding Guilt in Kinship Care

Guilt is a simple word that is associated with the act of wrong-doing, but when guilt is expressed as an emotion, it is anything but simple. Kinship families often face the same challenges of traditional foster parents, but they also experience enormous changes to family dynamics. Family get-togethers may become a thing of the past. They may be blamed for their involvement or lack thereof when children are removed and placed with them. The list goes on and on and can vary from family to family and as time passes. All of this can create a tremendous roller coaster of emotions; of which, guilt is almost always on the forefront.

For a Kinship family, guilt can come from many directions. Perhaps there is guilt about the upbringing of the biological parent and whether it had any impact on the decisions they made as an adult. There may be guilt in feeling like they should have done something sooner; before so much damage was done. And then there is the guilt that comes from divided loyalty; such as, having to choose between helping their adult child or stepping in to raise their grandchild, etc. Sometimes we are not even aware of how much underlying guilt we have or the ways it impacts us and those around us.

It is important for Kinship Families to take a step back and identify the ways they may be feeling guilt. If we go back to the meaning of the word guilt (an act of wrong-doing), we will likely find that in most cases, we are not guilty. Regardless of the past, we did not make the decisions that caused the children to be removed and placed into our care. When we reasonably ask ourselves if our guilt is justified or not, we are able to work on finding ways to let our guilt go and focus on the child who needs us.

Carey Pierson
Kinship Specialist, Saco

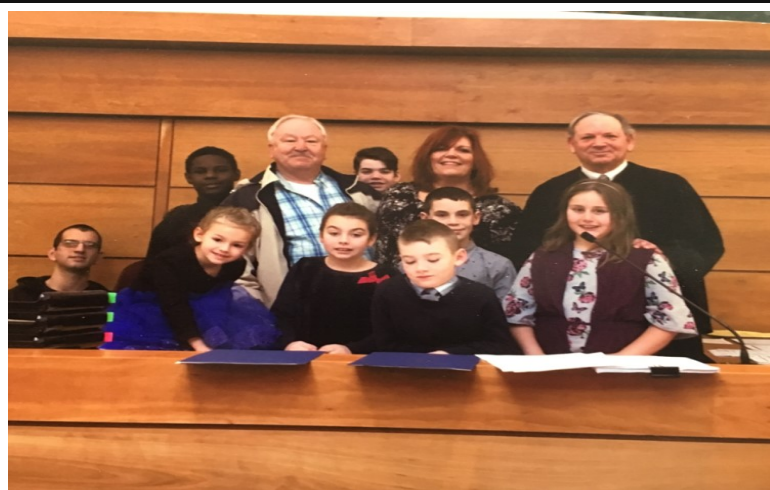
Adoption Announcements!

It is with great joy that we welcome Cate and Jack into our family, officially, on November 9, 2018. It was wonderful to have them share their adoption day with each other, a bond they will always share between them. Jack is the full biological sister to our adopted daughter Maeve and we are so grateful to have them together forever now! We could not have done this without the help and support of AFFM, DHHS, the support of other local foster families, our workers, GALs, friends, family, our attorney and church family. They join their parents Jen and Jay and siblings Logan, Patrick, Ryan, Hope, and Maeve.

We feel truly blessed!
The Duffy Family



Kevin and Lisa Orben of Wells, Maine adopted Kaden and Kailey on 1/16. Kaden and Kailey join siblings Caitlyn, Jason, Zach, Anna, skylar, Sarah, Dj, Kyle. Leo, and Sydney. Kaden and Kailey are a wonderful addition to our family.



After 1128 days in DHHS Custody Madison's adoption by Charlie & Sheena Villard was legalized on Sept. 5th, 2018!

Adoption ANNOUNCEMENTS CONTINUED!



Natalie's adoption was legalized on March 1, 2019. Our family is like a big beautiful patchwork quilt. Each of us different yet stitch together by love.
Love the Kimball-Michaud Family

Congratulations to Steve Leeman and Tammy Cutchen on the adoption of their son Cruz Leeman on March 19th. Cruz is welcomed by his 16 siblings!



Have you recently legalized an adoption? Would you like 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.

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!

Mark Your Calendars for these Upcoming Events!



Foster Family Day at the Fort!

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

Saturday May 18, 2019

11:00AM to 3:00PM

740 Fort Knox Rd. Prospect, ME

RSVP by calling 827-2331 or email info@affm.net

Family Fun Day at Ferry Beach!

Entertainment will be provided by Sparks' Ark!

Enjoy a cookout, games, prizes, giveaways, and more!

Saturday June 29, 2019 from Noon to 3:00PM

5 Morris Ave, Saco

RSVP by calling 827-2331 or email info@affm.net



New Discounts!

Penobscot County:

Appliance Doctor INC.

www.ApplianceDoctor1980.com

207-327-1000

20% off appliance service



York County:

Get Fired Up

883 Main Street Ste:2 Sanford, ME

207-490-FIRE (3473)

20% off one item per visit

York County Discounts Needed. If you know of a business that would like to provide a discount to families in York county please contact AFFM or feel free to reach out on AFFM's behalf. As always, Thank you!

If you have a suggestion for a business or organization that AFFM can approach to participate in the discount card program, please email info@affm.net. You can also print off and send a completed business application form to 34 Main St. Orono, Me 04473. Forms can be found at www.affm.net

Camp to Belong Maine, Inc.

Camp To Belong Maine is happening again this summer at the New England Golf and Tennis Camp, in Belgrade Maine! Dates for the campers are August 12th-17th and for volunteer counselors' dates will be August 10th-17th. Registration will be open for campers, counselors, and day volunteers in the beginning of April, as soon as the link is available, it can be accessed on Camp To Belong Maine's website, camptobelongme.org

In the meantime there will be two events going on that will help raise additional funds for camp to make sure it is the best experience for the campers as possible and that accommodations can be made for all the siblings that want to come!

Camp To Belong is currently doing a vacation raffle- \$2500 travel voucher from AAA- \$10 a ticket or \$25 for 3 tickets, \$50 for 6 tickets and so on. Only 750 tickets will be sold this year and they are going fast!

There are several people from the board and committees that have tickets for sale in the Portland, Augusta, Lewiston, Ellsworth/Bangor area- Jennifer Bloom, Tim Swift and Catherine Carter from DHHS, Seanna Macomber from Community Care in Bangor, and Sharon Dadmun with Smart Agency In the Portland area.

Drawing will be at the end of April or if the tickets are sold sooner, Camp To Belong will announce a drawing date a few days before the drawing on their Facebook page @CampToBelongME. The drawing will be live.

Camp To Belong will also hold the first (hopefully annual) 5k walk/run and Fun Run, lovingly dubbed "Run to Belong". It will be May 5, 2019- starting at the YMCA in Augusta, utilizing the rail trail and ending back at the YMCA. The race will be officially timed by Competitor ME. Volunteers and of course participants for the race are always welcome!

For more information and to sign up visit www.runsignup.com and search for Camp To Belong Maine 5k



Would You Like to Contribute an Article to the Family Ties Newsletter?

AFFM would love to hear from you! Do you have an upcoming event or activity that you'd like to share? Are you a professional that is interested in sharing information pertaining to the child welfare system? Please send all submissions to meagan@affm.net and you may be featured in an upcoming newsletter!

AFFM Statewide Support Groups



At times meetings are cancelled due to weather and other unforeseen circumstances, cancellation notices are sent out via AFFM 's 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 @ 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 PG= Permanency Guardianship CC= Childcare

Auburn— A/F/K/CC: 4th Tuesday of the month from 6:00 – 8:00 pm at Opportunity Enterprises, *use the back door* (400 Center St. Auburn)

Augusta— Kinship only/CC: 3rd Wednesday of the month from 5:30 – 8:00 pm at the Augusta Elks Lodge (397 Civic Center Dr.) call Jan Partridge at 207-495-3864. A potluck is provided at this group.

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

Augusta-- A/PG/CC: 2nd Friday of the month from 6:00-7:30 pm at the Buker Community Center (22 Armory Street).

Bangor— A/PG/CC: 2nd Tuesday of the month from 6:00-7:30 PM at the Redeemer Lutheran Church (540 Essex Street).

Belfast— A/F/K/CC: 2nd Monday of the month from 5:30-7:00pm at Christ The King Church Room 330 (9 Field Street).

Biddeford— Kinship only/CC: 3rd Tuesday of the month from 10:00–Noon at J Richard Martin Community Center (189 Alfred Street).

Bridgton— A/F/K/CC: 2nd Wednesday of the month from 6:30 – 8:30 pm at the Community Center (Behind Reny's) (15 Depot St)

Brunswick— A/F/K/CC: 4th Tuesday of the month from 6:00 – 7:30pm at St Paul's Episcopal Church (27 Pleasant St).

Caribou—A/F/K: 4th Monday of the month from 10:00am-noon at Caribou CHCS, 7 Hatch Drive #120. No RSVP needed.

Damariscotta— A/F/K: 1st Thursday of the month from 5:30-7:00 PM at the Lincoln County Assembly of God Church (672 Main Street).

Dover-Foxcroft— A/F/K/CC: 2nd Thursday of the month from 6:00 – 7:30 pm at Mayo Regional Hospital, Borestone & Sebec conference room (897 W Main Street).

Ellsworth— A/F/K/CC: 3rd Tuesday of the month from 5:30 – 7:30 pm at Moore Community Center (133 State St.)

Farmington— A/F/K/CC: every 3rd Tuesday of the month from 6 – 7:30 pm at the Gwilym R. Roberts Learning Center (by the administration office), UMF rooms 001 and 003

Houlton— A/F/K: 3rd Monday of the month from 10:00am – noon at Houlton CHCS, 2 Water Street. No RSVP needed.

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

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 (116 Obrien Ave).

Old Orchard Beach— A/F/K/CC: 3rd Wednesday of the month from 5:30-6:45pm at the Edith Belle Libby Memorial Library (27 Staple Street).

Orono— A/F/K/CC: 3rd Monday of the month from 6:00-7:30pm at the Orono United Methodist Church (36 Oak Street).

Presque Isle— A/F/K/CC: 3rd Tuesday of the month from 6:00 – 7:30 pm at the Wesleyan Church (387 Centerline Road).

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.)

Rumford— A/F/K/CC: 3rd Thursday of the month from 6-7:30PM at the Rumford Public Library (56 Rumford Ave.)

Sanford— A/F/K/CC: 3rd Wednesday of the month from 6:00PM-8PM at Curtis Lake Church (38 Westview Drive)

Skowhegan— A/F/K/CC: 2nd Thursday of the month from 6:00-7:30pm at the Federate Church in the Sunday school and nursery rooms (13 Island Ave.)

South Portland— A/F/K/CC: 2nd Tuesday of the month from 6:00-7:30pm at Eastpoint Church (345 Clarks Pond Pkwy).

Wells— A/F/K/CC: 4th Tuesday of the month from 6:00-7:30pm at Wells Congregational Church (1695 Post Road).

Windham—A/PG/CC: 4th Thursday of the month from 6-7:30pm at the Windham Assembly of God (1050 Roosevelt Trail).

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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ABOVE.

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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! Below are all the ways you can connect with AFFM and learn more about services offered.

Locations: 34 Main Street, Orono, Maine

& 333 Lincoln Street, Saco, Maine

Phone: 207-827-2331

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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