

Family Ties

Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc.

Volume 24

Number 3

May & June 2021

**This May Celebrate National Foster Care Month
Let's Practice Using Strength Based Language**

Instead of

Consider Using

Case

Child or parent or family

Home

Family

Hard to place child

Safe, nurturing families are hard to find

Up for adoption

Child is ready to be adopted or needs an adoptive family

Placed in a home

Joined a family

Aging out of the foster care system

Being connected to a relationship that is safe, nurturing and enduring

Kinship Caretaker

Kinship Caregiver

Foster parent

Resource parent

Natural family or natural parent

Birth family or birth parent

Visitation

Family time

Home study

Family assessment

Home visit

In home consultation

How many placements can the home take

How many children can the family care for

Screening out or weeding out

Selecting in

Children are removed or pulled

Children are separated

How many beds does the foster home have

How many children can join the family

Recruitment, retention

Develop, support

Thank you Marcus Stallworth, LMSW and CWLA for providing the Strength Based Language resource

Resource Parent Bill of Rights

The Maine Resource Parents Bill of Rights provides foster, adoptive and kinship families and Maine child welfare staff with a document to ensure that the OCFS resource parent community is treated with dignity, respect, trust, value and consideration as a primary provider of foster, adoptive and kinship care and a member of the professional team caring for foster children. It is further recognized that the resource parent community plays an integral, indispensable and vital role in the state's effort to care for children in need of out-of-home placement.

This Resource Parent Bill of Rights is intended for all Maine families who are caring for children in the custody of Maine Department of Health and Human Services. This includes: traditional foster families, treatment foster families, kinship families, and pre-adoptive and adoptive families.

Resource Parents shall:

1. Be key partners in the care of children in state custody. Resource parents will be given the opportunity to provide their input and receive prompt notice of decision making which impacts a foster child placed in their care:

- Resource parents shall be invited to family team meetings, whenever possible.
- Resource parents shall collaborate with caseworkers regarding scheduling appointments, whenever possible.
- Resource parents shall receive a 48-hour advanced notice of any meeting to which they are invited, whenever possible.

2. Be included in the permanency planning process:

- Resource parents shall be involved in discussions prior to permanency decisions being made.
- Resource parents shall be informed of the goals and objectives of a child's permanency plan in order to support the achievement of timeframes for permanency.

3. Be included in any communication which impacts their role as a resource parent:

- Resource parents shall be informed of as much information as possible about a child (including the reason a child entered custody; school- related information; and known medical information pertaining to child).
- Resource parents shall receive information regarding Department policies related to their role or to the child in their care.

4. Provide input to the Department to identify the types of resources and services that would meet the needs of children currently in their care:

- Resource parents shall assist the Department in finding local supports and services for the children in their care.
- Resource parents shall advocate for appropriate supports and services for the children in their care.
- Resource parents shall assist in providing information during mental health, academic and medical assessments/evaluations.
- Resource parents shall communicate with other professionals who work with the child in their care including therapists, physicians, and teachers.

5. Receive supports and services that ensure success in their role:

- Resource parents shall have access to training that will increase their understanding of their role as a participant in meetings.
- Resource parents shall have the opportunity to participate in training that will assist them in making an informed decision when asked to consider accepting placement of a child.
- Resource parents shall be provided with visitation training to clarify expectations, roles, and responsibilities prior to being asked to supervise a visit.

6. Continue with their own family values, beliefs and cultures while adhering to state laws and regulations:

- Resource parents shall maintain their own family values and routines while respecting those of a child placed in their home.
- Resource parents shall be given information and training that specifically addresses the cultural needs of children, including but not limited to, information on skin and hair care and specific religious or cultural practices of the child or the child's biological family.

7. Receive prompt payment for eligible reimbursable services:

- Resource parents shall have access to the Transportation Policy (V.G-3).
- Resource parents shall have access to travel reimbursement forms.
- Resource parents shall have prompt board payments that are proportionate to the age and needs of the child and according to the Clothing & Incidental Expenses Policy (V. G-2) and the Levels of Care Policy (V.G-1). Board payments are subject to availability of funding.

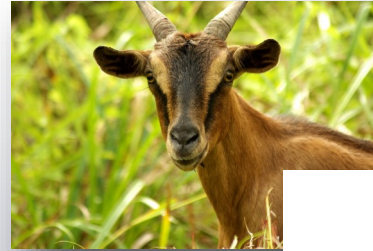
New Discount in Cumberland County!

Pineland Farms

15 Farm View Drive, New Gloucester

<https://pinelandfarms.org/>

Free admittance up to 4 people
with prior RSVP to AFFM!



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 304 Hancock St. Suite 2A Bangor, ME 04401. Forms can be found at www.affm.net

AFFM Passes

It is important that you call AFFM at 827-2331 with the date you wish to visit a museum, the wildlife park, or Pineland Farms as it's still required only one resource family attends per day. Your AFFM Discount Card* can be used as your pass for up to 6 people for a day's visit to the children's museums.

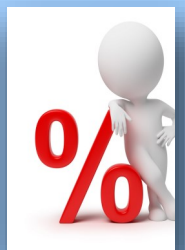
****Note, stickers for your discount card are not automatically mailed out. If you are in need of a 2021 sticker please call the office or email info@affm.net***

State park passes are still available to **licensed foster homes**. If you are interested in receiving a state park pass please contact AFFM. We ask that you have your foster care Id number (found on your license), readily available.

Due to the pandemic, the museums, Pineland Farms, and the Maine Wildlife Park may have new protocols in place for your safety. Please visit their websites for further information.

In a typical year, AFFM is gifted discount passes and admission tickets at various amusement parks and local fairs. Given the circumstances of the pandemic many are operating at reduced capacity, if at all, which limits their ability to provide such discounts and tickets. AFFM will share via list serv if any donations have been received, but at this time, AFFM does not have additional discounts/passes outside of the discount card program. Thank you for understanding!

As always, thank you to the Children's Discovery Museum in Waterville, Maine Discovery Museum in Bangor, Children's Museum and Theatre of Maine in Portland, the Coastal Children's Museum in Rockland, the Maine Wildlife Park, Pineland Farms, Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry, and all the businesses participating in the Discount Card Program for your continued support!



Feel Good Stories!

Through the years, I have watched my child struggling to be all he could be. I have been by his side through all of it, giving praise. My son has always loved baseball, it gives him the will to be the best he can be. He recently made the freshman team and we are very proud! On the day he found out he cried, I cried, and his caseworker cried! These children have all to give and live with their heart. He has grown into a wonderful young man and I am so proud of him!

Submitted By: Wanda Moor



A very happy birthday to Brooklyn! Brooklyn celebrated her 12th birthday by having a donation drive for Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine and Kinship Program!



Our son Tyler has brothers who have and are still in the Army. His teacher had asked the students what they wanted to be when they grew up. Tyler came home and announced that he wants to join the army when he grows up. His Dad told him that there were different Military options. Tyler said "I am joining the Salvation Army!"

When my son Devon Everett, was probably in 2nd grade he came up from the bus stop after school and he was upset! We asked him what was making him so mad. He said, "you know them big kids down there. I can't take it they keep making the Lord's name insane!"

Submitted By: Alisa Everett

Our two children we adopted are 8 and 10 now and they're so inventive. They make me laugh when they create something out of nothing. It never surprises me what they will do next.

Submitted By: Crystal Kennedy

AFFM is looking for "Feel Good Stories" to be featured in the next upcoming newsletter! Do you know someone who has done something kind for another? Did you read something that made you smile? Did your child say or do something that made you laugh out loud?

Email your stories to meagan@affm.net and help AFFM spread some happiness!

Adoption Announcements!



This is a family photo taken on January 25th 2021 the day we became Nathan's forever home. Nathan first became a part of our family when he was only 4 days old as our foster son he lived with us for 8 months before returning home to his Nana. We stayed a part of his and his nana's life. We offered support and respite care every other weekend and shared holidays for the past 12 years. Sadly his nana passed away two years ago of cancer and Nathan was returned to our home. Nathan has always been our son but now 14 years later it's official.

The Belanger Family

Chipper and Wendy Taggart are very happy to announce that it is official!

Eric Josiah Taggart officially became our son on January 28th 2021.

Our family is full of joy and love!

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!



**Join AFFM at Fort Knox
Saturday May 15th to
celebrate! Keep an eye out for
a listserv announcement for
more information!**

Kinship



Corner

AFFM has partnered with the University of Maine to help survey families who receive support from AFFM. Please keep an eye out for survey mailings (by mail or e-mail) from the University. Surveys will arrive about 3 months after your first call or service from AFFM. This will help AFFM document the impact of our work with families and identify areas for improvement. Thank you for helping AFFM with this important effort!



Have a Question or Concern Related to Kinship Care? Reach Out to Your Local Kinship Specialist!

Kinship Supervisor Bette Hoxie bette@affm.net (District: 4, 5 & 6 Counties: Knox, Waldo, Lincoln, Sagadahoc, Kennebec, Somerset, Penobscot, & Piscataquis)

Kinship Specialist Carey Pierson carey@affm.net (District: 1 & 2 Counties: York & Cumberland)

Kinship Specialist Jessica Richards jessica@affm.net (District: 3 Counties: Franklin, Oxford, & Androscoggin)

Kinship Specialist Mindy Kane mindy@affm.net (District: 7 & 8 Counties: Hancock, Washington, & Aroostook)

SAVE THE DATE

JUNE 10, 2021



CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN

A FULL-DAY VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

VIA ZOOM

FEATURING KEYNOTE SPEAKER
DAVID FINKELHOR, PhD

DIRECTOR, CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN RESEARCH CENTER
CO-DIRECTOR, FAMILY RESEARCH LABORATORY
PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY, U. OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

Dr. Finkelhor has studied the problems of child victimization, child maltreatment, and family violence since 1977. He is the co-founder of several large national data collection efforts including the National Survey of Children Exposed to Violence (NatSCEV) and the National Incidence Study of Missing, Abducted, Runaway and Thrownaway Children (NISMArt).



C.A.R.E.S.

Connect . Advice. Resources. Education. Support

AFFM C.A.R.E.S. Meetings Offered Online During the Months of May & June!

(C.A.R.E.S. Meetings will resume normal meeting dates and times after the social distancing order has been lifted.)

AFFM is aware if you receive the printed version of the newsletter some dates listed below may have passed. Please know the groups will continue to meet on a rotating schedule. Please email sheila@affm.net or brigid@affm.net if you have questions.

***STATEWIDE C.A.R.E.S. MEETING: Tuesday May 11th & June 8th from 10-11:30 A.M.**

Southern Maine C.A.R.E.S. Meetings:

District 1 (York County): Wednesday May 19th, June 16th 6:30PM-8:00PM and Tuesday May 25th, June 22nd 10:00AM-11:30AM

District 2 (Cumberland/Sagadahoc County): Tuesday May 11th, June 8th 7:00PM-8:30PM, Thursday May 27th, June 24th Noon-1:30PM (*For Permanency Guardianship/Adoptive families*), Tuesday May 4th, June 1st 10:00AM-11:30AM

District 3 (Androscoggin/Franklin/Oxford County): Thursday May 20th, June 17th 10:00-11:30AM and Thursday May 27th, June 24th 7:00-8:30PM

Notices regarding C.A.R.E.S. Meetings are sent out via AFFM's email listserv. Please make sure you are signed up to receive emails from AFFM. RSVPs are required to obtain login information. Any questions or comments please email brigid@affm.net

Northern Maine C.A.R.E.S. Meetings:

District 4 (Knox/Lincoln/Waldo county): Saturday May 15th, June 19th 1:00-3:30PM

District 5 (Kennebec/Somerset county): Wednesday May 5th, June 2nd 6-7:30PM

District 6 (Penobscot/Piscataquis county): Monday May 17th, June 21st 6-7:30PM

District 7 (Hancock/Washington county): Thursday May 20th, June 17th 6-7:30PM

District 8 (Aroostook county): Tuesday May 25th, June 22nd 6-7:30PM

****Kinship Only: Tuesday May 11th, June 8th 7:30PM-9:00PM**

Notices regarding C.A.R.E.S. Meetings are sent out via AFFM's email listserv. Please make sure you are signed up to receive emails from AFFM. RSVPs are required to obtain login information. Any questions or comments please email sheila@affm.net

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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, FAMILY TIES, AT THE ADDRESS 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:

304 Hancock Street Suite 2A, Bangor, ME 04401
333 Lincoln Street, Saco. Maine 04072

Phone: 207-827-2331

Email: info@affm.net

Website: www.affm.net

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

[Save a tree, sign up for the E-Newsletter!](#)