

Family Ties

Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc.

Volume 24

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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 Heard About WIC?

WIC is a nutrition program for thousands of Maine families, helping Maine kids to grow up strong and healthy. WIC food benefits are available based on income guidelines and up-to-date nutrition research. WIC seeks to serve all Maine families with healthy foods, including formula, free nutrition advice, tips for staying healthy, Breastfeeding Support and supplies and resources for growing families. WIC is complete nutrition care.

WIC is open to anyone living in Maine, including migrants working in Maine. Applicants can be any of the following:

- Women who are pregnant, breastfeeding or had a baby in the last six months.
- Infants and children up to the age of five, including adopted and foster children.
 - Fathers may apply for their children.

People on SNAP, MaineCare or TANF are automatically eligible for WIC.

Visit: WWW.MAINE.GOV/WIC to learn more information!



A Proclamation on National Adoption Month, 2021

Every child deserves to grow up with a safe and loving family, with the care and support of their community. During National Adoption Month, we celebrate all of the children and families nurtured, enriched, and made whole by adoption and recommit ourselves to ensuring that every child in America can grow up in a loving and supportive home.

The COVID-19 pandemic has made it especially challenging for children in the foster care system. For thousands of young people in foster care, navigating the challenges of growing up can be especially difficult without stable family connections. Because of the added difficulties imposed by the pandemic, my Administration has implemented the substantial investments made through the Supporting Foster Youth and Families Through the Pandemic Act to help older adolescents transitioning from the foster care system maintain housing, stay in school, pay the bills, and lay a strong foundation for adulthood. My Administration encourages States to continue using these available funds to support older foster youth in every way they can.

During this month, we also acknowledge the history of injustices and racial bias in our Nation's child welfare system. To this day, Black and Native American children are more likely to be removed from their homes, more likely to stay in care longer, and less likely to be adopted than white children. To ensure the equal dignity and care of all our children, we must improve our efforts to keep families together, prevent the trauma of unnecessary child removal, and recruit and support new adoptive families — especially kinship caregivers. Finally, we must further support families who have already taken youth into their homes and invest the time and energy needed to ensure that all children — including LGBTQ+ youth whose needs are not always met in the foster care system — can find the happiness and well-being that every child and young person deserves.

This National Adoption Month, we celebrate the families who have been forged through adoption, including from foster care. We extend our gratitude to the dedicated professionals who work tirelessly to support adoptive families through compassion and hard work and to the foster families who love, care, and provide for our Nation's foster youth. Most importantly, we acknowledge the strength and resiliency of the children and youth who are still waiting to find their forever homes.

NOW, THEREFORE I, JOSEPH R. BIDEN JR., President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim November 2021 as National Adoption Month. I encourage all Americans to observe this month by helping children and youth in need of a permanent home secure a more promising future with a forever family and enter adulthood with the love and connections that are so important to their growth.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-ninth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand twenty-one, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and forty-sixth.

JOSEPH R. BIDEN JR.

DECEMBER YLAT YOUTH TRAINING

\$20 Stipend
for
Attendance

Wednesday, December
29th, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Join YLAT staff, members,
and an array
of guest experts from job
readiness programs to:

- Connect with YLAT members
- Play icebreaker activities
- Learn about local job prep resources
- Explore the first steps of how you plan for finding a job that works for *you*!

RSVP by
Thursday,
Dec. 23rd

[Join by Zoom:](#)

<https://maine.zoom.us/j/4740355606>

Contact Lily Maass at lily.maass@maine.edu or Melissa Allen at melissa.r.allen@maine.edu

OR

Your Youth Transition Specialist with questions and to RSVP

Upcoming Training

NACAC's One-Day Virtual Conference on FASD

December 8, 2021 10:30AM-4:30PM

NACAC will present a virtual conference on fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD). Presenters include knowledgeable, solution-focused experts who have lived experience with FASD.

Fetal alcohol spectrum disorders are some of the most common—yet underdiagnosed—challenges facing children and families in adoption and foster care. NACAC's conference will highlight solutions for parents and professionals related to these disorders that are 10 times more common in foster care than they are in the general population. Even if you don't know you are working with or parenting a child with an FASD, you may well be.

The conference features the following sessions:

- Welcome and Introduction with Phyllis Stevens, foster and adoptive parent — In this session, Phyllis will share her experience of realizing belatedly that her daughter had FASD and how understanding FASD changed their relationship.
- Making the Connection Between the Brain and Behavior in Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders with Dan Dubovsky, MSW, therapist, experienced FASD trainer, and parent — Because the effects of prenatal alcohol exposure on the developing brain often lead to challenging behaviors, it is essential that solutions begin with understanding the brain basis of FASD. Dan connects the dots between brain functioning and behaviors and stresses the importance of implementing a positive focused system of care.
- Living and Thriving with FASD with Hope & Tyler Martindale-Davis and Mark Martindale; facilitated by Phyllis Stevens — In this session, a young adult who has an FASD, her husband, and her father will share their story of living with FASD and loving someone with an FASD. The panelists will share strategies and approaches that have helped them learn to thrive as individuals and in their relationships.
- Strategies and Solutions for Children with an FASD with Barb Clark and Ed Morales, MPP, MSW, LICSW, parents/professionals — Understanding what FASD is and how it affects a child are the first steps to becoming FASD competent, but we can't stop there. This session will give supporters—both professionals and families—an understanding of why typical approaches often don't work with FASD. Learn to think outside the box, using approaches that promote relationship and emotional well-being.
- Registration is \$50 per person (or couple viewing sessions together) for NACAC members or \$60 for non-members. Attendees can participate live or listen to a recorded version of workshops.

[Register Here https://www.nacac.org/get-training/upcoming-trainings/](https://www.nacac.org/get-training/upcoming-trainings/)

Positive Discipline

TUESDAY & THURSDAY DECEMBER 14 & 16, 2021 6:00pm-8:00pm

(ATTENDING BOTH DAYS IS REQUIRED FOR FULL CREDIT)

The two most significant challenges children face are learning acceptable social behaviors and being able to control their own actions. And there lies the vital importance of taking time to teach and guide children in learning how to make effective choices and manage their own behavior over time. This can start as early as possible. This workshop will cover the definition of discipline along with 7 principles of discipline which are introduced through group work and class discussion. These principles of discipline will give you tools to use at home.

[Register Here https://affm.net/calendar/](https://affm.net/calendar/)

Understanding Boundaries as a Resource Parent

TUESDAY DECEMBER 7, 2021 7:00pm-8:30pm

In this training, you will understand setting boundaries for healthy relationships. This training will answer some of the common issues and concerns when setting boundaries, and how to recognize when there is an issue with a boundary.

[Register Here https://affm.net/calendar/](https://affm.net/calendar/)

Feel Good Stories!

My feel good story is recently a two year old girl joined our home. Being in a strange place, she would stand next to our big window in the living room, crying for her mother. I really didn't know what to do only to just pick her up and comfort her, telling her everything was going to be okay.

The little girl seems to be more comfortable in our home now, as she is going around the house giving us kisses, and that for me is rewarding!

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!

New Discount in Kennebec County!

Bearly Used Boutique
104 Kennedy Memorial Drive, Waterville
242-9613
20% off total purchase

**Bearly Used
Boutique**
High Quality Consignment

If you have a suggestion for a business or organization that AFFM can approach to participate in the Discount Card Program email info@affm.net

AFFM's Holiday Gift Giving Program

A friendly reminder, AFFM's Holiday Gift Giving Program will no longer take requests after November 19th. A staff member of AFFM will call families to let them know when gifts are ready for pick up at their designated location closer to the second week of December. Thank you for your patience during this time as we do our best to connect with the many families who have signed up! Thank you to the individuals and businesses who supported the program and helped make a child's holiday wish come true!

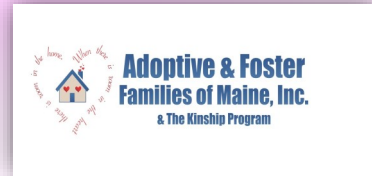
Kinship



Corner

AFFM has partnered with the University of Maine to help survey kinship 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!



Kinship In the News

The new issue of *GRAND Magazine* is out. It includes an article from Generations United's Deputy Executive Director Jaia Peterson Lent on grand parenting in the time of COVID-19. It highlights a national survey of families with young children.

[Read the Article Here.](https://www.nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/grand/2021fall/index.php#/p/39)

<https://www.nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/grand/2021fall/index.php#/p/39>

Thank You!

Thank you to Jody Dickey, Connie Lozier, Peggy Hunt, Paula Lowney and Jackie Bussiere who donated 8 children's quilts to AFFM.

They belong to the Hampden Highland Quilters, which is a chapter that belongs to a state quilt guild called Pine Tree Quilt Guild. Each quilt has a picture of an animal.



Thank you to Sanford Sewing Machine for donating 250 beautifully handcrafted bags! Each made with donated 100 yards of fabric, and 50 yards donated by a customer.



C.A.R.E.S.

Connect . Advice. Resources. Education. Support

AFFM C.A.R.E.S. Meetings Offered Online During the Month of December

(C.A.R.E.S. Meetings will resume normal meeting dates and times tentatively in October. Some groups are beginning to meet in person this month, following CDC guidelines) 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. 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.

***STATEWIDE C.A.R.E.S. MEETING: Tuesday December 14th from 10-11:30 A.M**

***STATEWIDE Kinship C.A.R.E.S. MEETING: Tuesday December 14th from 6:00PM-7:30PM**

Friday With Friends, Friday December 17th from 6:00 AM-7:00AM

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

District 1-3 Daytime Tuesday, December 7th from 10-11:30am

District 1-3 Evening Wednesday, December 8th from 7-8:30pm

District 1-3 Afternoon Thursday, December 16th from 12-1:30pm

District 1-3 A/PG Tuesday, December 21st from 12-1:30pm To expand your village and find support with other families post adoption or permanency guardianship.

Please email brigid@affm.net with questions regarding C.A.R.E.S. Meetings in District 1, 2, & 3

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

District 4 (Lincoln, Knox, Waldo county) Rockland- Wednesday December 1st from 5:30-7:00PM at the Salvage Church (formerly Grace Bible Fellowship), 30 Sherer Lane, Rockland. On-site childcare is available with advance notice. RSVP IS REQUIRED. Meeting led by Pat Tavernakis, AFFM Trainer.

Damariscotta -Thursday December 2nd from 5:30-7:00 PM at the Lincoln County Assembly Of God Church (672 Main Street). Onsite childcare is available with advance notice. RSVP IS REQUIRED. Meeting led by Pat Tavernakis, AFFM Trainer.

Knox- Monday December 13th from 5:30PM-7:00PM at Knox Ridge Baptist Church (115 Knox Ridge Road North, Knox).

District 5 (Kennebec/Somerset county): Virtual Wednesday December 1st from 6:00PM-7:30PM

District 6 (Penobscot/Piscataquis county): Virtual Thursday December 2nd from 6:00PM-7:30PM & Monday December 20th from 6:00PM-7:30PM

District 7 (Hancock/Washington county): Ellsworth- Tuesday December 14th from 5:30PM-7:00PM at the United Baptist Church (28 Hancock Street). Onsite childcare is available with advance notice. RSVP IS REQUIRED. Meeting led by Mindy Kane, AFFM Kinship Specialist. *Masks required by all attendants ages 2 & up.

Cherryfield- Thursday December 16th from 5:30PM-7:00PM at the Cherryfield Academy Community Center (53 Main Street). Onsite childcare is available with advance notice. RSVP IS REQUIRED. Meeting led by Mindy Kane, AFFM Kinship Specialist. *Masks required by all attendants ages 2 & up.

District 8 (Aroostook county): Tuesday December 28th from 6:00PM-7:30PM at the Wesleyan Church (387 Centerline Road Presque Isle). Onsite childcare is available with advance notice. RSVP IS REQUIRED. *Masks required by all attendants ages 2 & up.

Please email sheila@affm.net with questions regarding C.A.R.E.S. Meetings in District 4, 5, 6, 7, & 8

Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc.

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

Phone: (207) 827-2331

Fax: (207) 573-3023

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, 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!](#)