

Family Ties

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

Volume 25

Number 1

January 2022

Year in Review

AFFM is heading into its 25th year of operation! AFFM is grateful for the opportunity to continue supporting families throughout Maine. As we work from afar utilizing zoom, phone calls, emails, etc. AFFM is hopeful for the future and is appreciative of the work we were able to accomplish throughout the year.

AFFM's 24th Annual Spring Training Conference was held virtually on April 16th and the 17th. The theme of the year's conference was "Building Empathy, Compassion, and Trust". Friday's keynote speaker, Joree Rose, MA, LMFT spoke on the importance of mindful parenting. Saturday's keynote speaker, Marcus Stallworth, LMSW focused on the four A's approach: Awareness, Acknowledgement, Action, and Accountability. Marcus spoke on how to apply this approach when promoting diversity, equity and inclusion. The conference featured workshops presented by YLAT, Kim Stevens of NACAC, Bette Hoxie, Barbara Ford, Atlee Reilly, ESQ with Disability Rights Maine, and Corrie Hunkler, LSW. Mark your calendars for AFFM's 25th Annual Spring Training Conference on Friday April 22nd and Saturday April 23rd.

AFFM continues to collaborate with the Foster Parent College, offering families a platform to complete training hours. AFFM continues to co-partner with DHHS, the University of Southern Maine, and the Cutler Institute with an effort to provide an update on Maine's preservice training.

Brigid and Sheila have been working hard to assure C.A.R.E.S. meetings continue. AFFM offers families to meet via zoom, as well as in person at some locations. C.A.R.E.S. meeting dates can be found on page 7 of the newsletter. You can reach out to either Brigid or Sheila with questions surrounding the C.A.R.E.S. meetings. As it pertains to covid, AFFM continues to follow guidelines set in place by the CDC to keep families and youth in care safe. Thank you, Brigid and Sheila, for the continued support you provide to families. AFFM also offers support via their Facebook page.

This summer, AFFM was happy to work with camps statewide to offered scholarships to 59 children!

AFFM filled 251 backpacks through the Back to School Program. Thank you to those that donated clothing, school supplies, personal care items, backpacks, and most of all your time to this program.

On September 11th AFFM celebrated Grandparents Day with events at Pineland Farms in New Gloucester and Cole's Transportation Museum in Bangor. It was great to have an in person event to celebrate kinship families.

Beginning annually in the early fall, AFFM goes into full "Holiday" mode. AFFM's gratitude to The Ogunquit Spirit of Giving Committee as well as the community around us can not go unnoticed. Over the past two years, the challenge of filling each request has been met because of how incredibly fortunate AFFM is to collaborate with the Spirit of Giving, community members, business owners and individuals. The Holiday Gift Giving Program begins in late August and often does not wrap up until days before Christmas. So much work goes into gathering children's wishes, finding sponsors, collecting gifts, picking up and dropping off gifts, all while practicing safety protocols due to covid. In spite of all this, AFFM's Holiday Gift Giving Program provided gifts to over 1,000 children statewide. AFFM is so thankful for all those who step up each year to support the program to ensure kids have the holiday they deserve.

In lieu of the annual holiday parties in Bangor and Portland AFFM hosted a Story Time with Santa. Mr. and Mrs. Claus joined kids via zoom to read stories, and chat with kids in attendance. Thank you to Mr. and Mrs. Claus (Bill and Karen Labombarde) for joining us and of course for putting a smile on the kids' faces!

AFFM remains dedicated to supporting resource families throughout the year and continues to offer supports via C.A.R.E.S. meetings, listening support, the mentor service, allegation support, material goods, etc.

Thank you to the Board of Directors, trainers, interns, mentors, C.A.R.E.S. facilitators, childcare providers, and volunteers for your commitment and dedication to AFFM. Without your support and hard work, it would be difficult to achieve all that we have. You are all appreciated!

Thank you to AFFM's dedicated staff;

Travis Bryant, Executive Director

Bette Hoxie, Kinship Supervisor

Monica Bushey, Training Coordinator

Heather Crooker, Resource Family Specialist

Carey Pierson, Kinship Specialist

Mindy Kane, Kinship Specialist

Jessica Richards, Kinship Specialist

Hether Anderson, Resource Family Trainer

Ann Stephenson, Resource Family Trainer

Carrie Rapp, Resource Family Trainer

Meagan Sprague, Regional Program Manager

Holly White, Administrative Assistant

Sheila McDougal, Resource Support Coordinator

Shelly Anderson, Accountant

Brigid Torberg, Resource Support Coordinator

Sarah Hatt, Resource Family Specialist

Beth Gilboy, Resource Family Specialist

Pat Tavernakis, Resource Family Trainer

Penni Theriault, Community Kinship Specialist D7

Melinda Corey, Resource Family Trainer

**AFFM wishes you all a
healthy and happy New Year!**

Thank You!

The month of December always goes by in a blur for AFFM and there was no exception this year. AFFM's Holiday Gift Giving Program provided over 1,000 kids, statewide, with gifts. AFFM could not have done this alone and we are so unbelievably thankful for the incredible support from businesses and individuals who donated to this program! Each holiday season, our community comes together and blows us away with their generosity. AFFM is Indebted to each and every one of you for the love and support provided. We wish nothing but the best to you and your families as we move forward in the New Year!

Thank you to Maine Parent Federation, Rockland DHHS, Skowhegan DHHS, Caribou DHHS, Houlton DHHS, Ellsworth DHHS, and Machias DHHS for allowing families to pick up their gifts at your locations.

- ◆ Lucy Ditzel & Atlantic Federal Credit Union
- ◆ Lauren Manera
- ◆ Maine Life Real Estate
- ◆ Brian and Susan MacDonald at Coastal Jeweler
- ◆ Chris Main and Oldcastle Lawn & Garden
- ◆ Lisbon Community Federal Credit Union
- ◆ Jordan's Furniture
- ◆ Tina and Richard Fitzgerald, Devan's Purple Closet
- ◆ Cheryl LaFlamme
- ◆ Ogunquit Spirit of Giving
- ◆ Paulin's Tire and Auto
- ◆ Mary Arterton
- ◆ Friends of Pack 311 Saco
- ◆ Gorham Savings Bank
- ◆ Erica Plourde
- ◆ Rebecca and Mark Curtis
- ◆ Ticket to Dream
- ◆ Susan Peters
- ◆ Gail Mazzone
- ◆ Chrisanna Greeley
- ◆ The Torberg family
- ◆ Sue Hughes
- ◆ Girl Scout Troop 22
- ◆ Kristy Krasnavage and Hollands Variety Drug, MtBlue Drug, and Belfast Drug Company
- ◆ Charlene Coleman

- ◆ Yvonne Michaud and The Lighthouse Knitting Guild of Maine
- ◆ Glorijane Winslow and Volk Packaging
- ◆ Caitlin and Justin Geishaker
- ◆ Donna and Michael Whalen
- ◆ Aimee Harris
- ◆ Hannah Magee
- ◆ Pam Wing and The Beacon
- ◆ Angela MacDonald
- ◆ Kim Williams
- ◆ Melanie Crane and Keller Williams Realty
- ◆ Mia and Ella Wrisley
- ◆ Laura Ingerson and Sippy Cup Consignment Shop
- ◆ Janet Caskin and Downeast Credit Union
- ◆ Octavia Herrick
- ◆ Jenifer Damon and Norway Savings Bank
- ◆ Lisa Leahy
- ◆ Michelle Whitten-Sawyer & Dean Sawyer
- ◆ Kristen Kresge and WPOR Portland Radio Group
- ◆ Haley's Metal Shop, Inc.
- ◆ Linda Wyman
- ◆ United Way of Aroostook County
- ◆ Foundations Academy
- ◆ Bangor International Airport
- ◆ Cynthia Sabin

- ◆ Deadriver Company in Brewer
- ◆ Harvest Moon Deli
- ◆ Girl Scout Troop 883
- ◆ Tensegrity Health
- ◆ Maine Auxiliary
- ◆ Bangor Federal Credit Union
- ◆ Tyler Technologies
- ◆ Toys for Tots
- ◆ Tanya Emery
- ◆ Alex & Friends
- ◆ Donna Jensen
- ◆ Forecastle Tattoo
- ◆ A-Copi
- ◆ Downeast Toyota
- ◆ Bill Walsh
- ◆ Bangor Savings Bank
- ◆ Angel Francini
- ◆ Mclaughlin's Seafood
- ◆ Orono IGA
- ◆ Pat's Pizza Hampden
- ◆ Seaside United Church of Christ
- ◆ Lots of Tots daycare
- ◆ Ashley Stanley
- ◆ St. Paul the Apostle Parish
- ◆ Northern Light Health
- ◆ Brewer Youth Hockey
- ◆ Levesque Building
- ◆ Gibson Financial
- ◆ Kimberly Leong
- ◆ Marilyn Hoxie

Online Training Opportunities!

Resource Families looking to complete training hours for re-licensing can now sign up through FosterParentCollege.com for free! These trainings are done on your own time! See the instructions below to request an account today! If you prefer webinars, check out www.affm.net/training for the most up-to-date listing!



FOSTERPARENTCOLLEGE.COM®

Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine Inc. and FosterParentCollege.com®

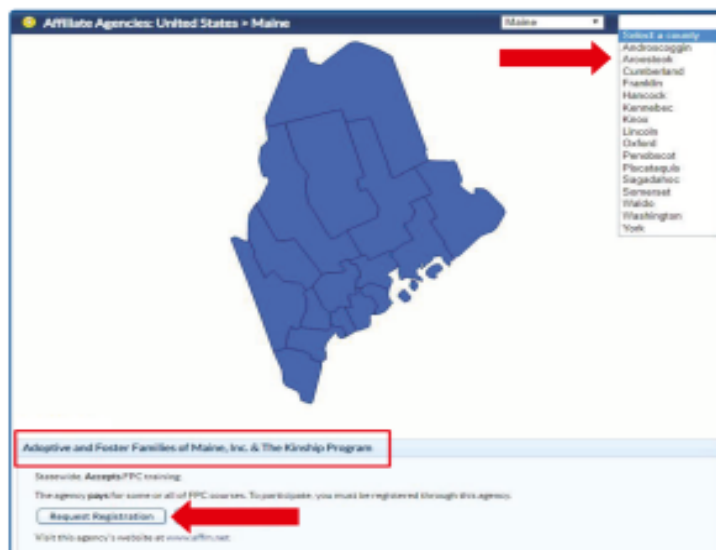
Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine Inc. (AFFM) is providing parents with free access to FosterParentCollege.com (FPC) online training! FPC's interactive online courses explore practical parenting strategies, behavior problems, and emotional disorders in children. Parents can complete courses on FPC to receive credit towards their annual training requirements.

To gain access to your own individual training account, please follow the instructions below:

1. Click on the following link:
[Maine Registration.](#)
2. Select your county from drop down menu.
3. Click on **Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine.**
4. Select **Request Registration.**

Note: Your registration request will be emailed to AFFM staff. Once registered, you will receive a welcome email with your log in information.

5. Click the following link to log in:
[FPC Login.](#)
6. Enter in your email address and password.



AFFM Contact

If you have any questions about using FPC or have any issues with registration, please contact:

Monica Bushey – Training Coordinator

email: Monica@affm.net | phone: (207) 827-2331

Kinship



Corner

On November 16, 2021, the Advisory Council to Support Grandparents Raising Grandchildren released its initial report to Congress. This report outlines the joys, challenges, gaps, and unmet needs faced by kin and grandparent caregivers. It also describes federal programs currently available to assist them and provides 22 recommendations for better supporting kinship families and grandfamilies. The recommendations will inform the development of the National Family Caregiving Strategy, which will include action steps to increase recognition and support for kin and grandparent caregivers.

AFFM's own Bette Hoxie is a member of the Advisory Council to Support Grandparents Raising Grandchildren.

The full report can be found at: <https://acl.gov/SGRG/report>

If you don't have access to the internet and are interested in reading the full report, AFFM would be happy to mail a hardcopy.



By Jack Levine

Here's my 20-item Emotional Gift Guide which I hope will be meaningful for you in this season of celebration.

To yourself....respect, confidence, faith and fortitude.

To a family member....communication and understanding, even if there have been relationship challenges.

To a friend....a heartfelt, caring spirit and appreciation.

To our natural world, animal and plant life....admiration, protection, and preservation.

To a good cause....generosity of time and treasure and ardent advocacy.

To a traveler....an open door of hospitality.

To our military forces, first responders and their loved ones....honor, admiration, and support to heal the wounds.

To the ill and hurting....conscientious concern and comfort.

To the hungry and homeless....compassion, emergency services, and creative community solutions.

To the abused, neglected and abandoned....representation, security, and hope.

To someone with a special challenge....recognition, acceptance, and a path to independence.

To the addicted and troubled....open arms, forgiveness, and a positive path to recovery.

To an infant and toddler....attention, attachment, safety, and learning opportunities.

To a child or teen....patience, guidance, and a positive example through mentoring.

To a parent in need....a helping hand and guidance.

To an elder....reverence, gratitude, and dignified care.

To a customer or client....excellent service and lasting value.

To everyone you see, friends and strangers alike....a warm smile, acts of kindness, and positive energy.

To people of every age....unconditional love and sincere gratitude.

To all the peoples of the world....justice, and peace.

Adoption Announcements!

Gideon Peter Foss, adopted by Dustin Foss on November 2, 2021!



Tim and Kelly Collins of Acton, Maine legalized their adoption of grandson Calvin on 11/22/21 after 3.5 years in foster care. We are also foster parents to others. We started this journey for our grandson but now love helping other kids stay safe while hoping for safe reunification. We want to thank AFFM for all the help over the years navigating this journey. Also gratitude to our caseworkers Bunny, and Kelsey, our liaison Christi and our amazing GAL Carol. Also all the support from other foster families. It took a village!



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!

Thank you to Maine Family Planning for your generous donation of books for all ages to AFFM's Lending Library!

Please check out AFFM's large selection of books available for children, teens and adults: <http://affm.net/services/lending-library/>

C.A.R.E.S.

Connect . Advice. Resources. Education. Support

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 February 8th from 10-11:30 A.M**

***STATEWIDE Kinship C.A.R.E.S. MEETING: Tuesday February 8th from 6:00PM-7:30PM**

Friday With Friends, Friday February 25th from 6:00 AM-7:00AM

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

District 1-3 Daytime Tuesday, February 1st from 10-11:30am

District 1-3 Evening Wednesday, February 9th from 7-8:30pm

District 1-3 Afternoon Thursday, February 17th from 12-1:30pm

District 1-3 A/PG Tuesday, February 15th 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 February 2nd 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 February 3rd from 5:30-7:00PM 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 February 14th from 5:30PM-7:00PM at Knox Ridge Baptist Church (115 Knox Ridge Road North, Knox).

District 5 (Kennebec/Somerset county): Virtual Wednesday February 2nd from 6:00PM-7:30PM

District 6 (Penobscot/Piscataquis county): Virtual Thursday February 3rd from 6:00PM-7:30PM

District 7 (Hancock/Washington county): Ellsworth— Tuesday February 15th 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 February 17th 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 February 22nd 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

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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

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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!](#)