

Celebrating 25 years with AFFM!

Family Ties

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

Volume 25

Number 2

March & April 2022

25th Annual conference
"Strengthening & Growing Hope"

*Join AFFM virtually for the 25th
Annual Spring Training Conference
Friday April 22nd and Saturday April 23rd
Click the Link to Register Today!*
<https://affmconference.vfairs.com/en/>

Friday April 22nd Keynote: Chan Hellman, PhD

Hope Rising

Chan Hellman, PhD. joined the University of Oklahoma in 2002. Chan is a professor in the Anne & Henry Zarrow School of Social Work and Founding Director of the Hope Research Center. He is also an Adjunct Professor in the Department of Internal Medicine and Department of Pediatrics for the OU College of Medicine and the Department of Health Promotion Science for the OU College of Public Health. Chan's current research is focused on the application of hope theory to predict adaptive behaviors, and hope as a psychological strength that buffer stress and adversity among those impacted by family violence. In this context, he is also interested in the impact of prevention and intervention services on improving client hope and wellbeing.

The Hope Research Center is focused on developing, testing, and implementing a trauma informed and hope centered framework for human service agencies. The HRC partners with these agencies to conduct outcome evaluations to improve the hope and well-being through effective program service delivery.

Hope is the belief that the future will be better and you have the power to make it so. Hope is based on three main ideas:

1. The ability to set desirable goals
2. The ability to identify viable pathways to these goals
3. The capacity to dedicate mental energy or willpower to pursue these goals

The science demonstrates that hope is a critical psychological strength. Hope is easily measured in children, adults, and communities. Hope can be increased and sustained through effective programming. Hope is one of the most important predictors of positive outcomes for human service agencies.



Saturday April 23rd Keynote: Sue Badeau, Adoptive Parent, Speaker, Author



Building Bridges of Hope in our Families and Communities

Using images and facts about bridges, as well as anecdotes and stories spanning 40+ years of experience in the trenches of foster care and adoption, Sue Badeau will paint vivid and often humorous pictures of foster and adoptive family life in a manner that illustrates the enormous power that families have in creating healing and wholeness for children. Stories will also illustrate critical lessons learned about the importance of communities and families engaging and partnering together to ensure the best outcomes and opportunities for children and youth to grow and thrive.

Friday April 22nd Workshops

Hope as a Verb: Looking Inward to Lean into Action

Presented By: YLAT

This workshop will invite participants to examine the wins and losses of dreaming and goal setting in their own lives. Facilitators will guide the group through a process of mapping out where they've been and where they want to go, and to think about the steps it takes to achieve short and long-term dreams. A panel of youth experts will incorporate key pieces of Hope Theory to bring attendees along in their journey of goal setting, creating and accessing community support and being in the driver's seat of their futures. This workshop will help participants explore their own patterns of goal setting and provide them tools to empower the young people in their lives through conversation and youth-adult partnerships.

Kinship Care and Legal Responsibilities: Who to Call and When

Presented By: Bette Hoxie, AFFM Kinship Supervisor

Elizabeth Stout, Esq. Executive Director Volunteer Lawyers Project

The AFFM Kinship Program and the Maine Volunteer Lawyers Project are partnering to help bring hope to the personal and legal relationships of kinship families. This workshop will assist participants in understanding when and who to go to when navigating the issues of kinship care. It is difficult to know where to turn when you feel parents are not making healthy decisions about the care of their minor children. It becomes even more complex when the parents are related to you. At this presentation, you will learn when to call an attorney at the Volunteer Lawyers Project and when an AFFM Kinship Specialist can assist.

The Protective Factor Framework for Strengthening Families
Presented By: Denise R Trafton, LSW and Heidi Aakjer, MPA

Protective factors are characteristics or strengths of individuals, families, communities or societies that act to mitigate risks and promote positive well-being and healthy development. Most often, we see them as attributes that help families to successfully navigate difficult situations. A protective factors framework is an organized set of strengths-based ideas that are used to guide programs, services, supports and interventions aimed at preventing child maltreatment and promoting healthy outcomes. The Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework from the Center for the Study of Social Policy distills extensive research in child and family development into a core set of five protective factors that everyone can understand and recognize in their own lives.

Participants will be able to:

- *List five protective factors that help keep families strong and prevent child abuse and neglect.
- *Identify multiple strategies and everyday actions that help families to build those protective factors.
- *Understand what it means to work with families in a strength-based way.

The Power and Application of Hope

Presented By: Brett Hayes Oklahoma Department of Human Services – Director of Hope Transformations

The Science of Hope is powerful and leads to improved outcomes for children and adults. In this workshop, we will revisit the Science of Hope and learn how the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) applied Hope to become the first Hope Centered Organization. In addition, we will walk through the process of Hope by engaging in Hope Centered goal setting.

Saturday April 23rd Workshops

Adoption for a Lifetime: Finding our Lifeline when the Road is Rocky

Presented By: Sue Badeau

Adoption has often been described as a gift that brings hope, joy, miracles and lifelong blessings to all involved. That can all be true. AND at the same time, adoption is hard. Grief, loss, anger, confusion, frustration – all of these emotions are experienced by both the children and adults involved in adoptions. Grief and loss related to being separated from everything and everyone one loves, challenges the system itself creates in our lives, emotions related to the loss of the life we once hoped for or dreamed about. Trauma, multiple foster care moves, disruptions or ruptures in attachment can contribute to many of these challenges for both children and the adults who love them. How do we cope with this mix of our own emotions while also helping a child to cope with theirs? How do we find and hold onto a lifelong, when it seems like we can't find enough strength to put one foot in front of the other? When we started down our adoption path and heard the phrase, "it's a lifetime commitment" is this – this experience right now – is this really what we signed up for? Participants in this workshop will also become informed, inspired and better equipped to implement an attachment-focused, grief and trauma-responsive approach to caring for children, while adding skills to their resiliency-building tool kit and understanding the important role of creating and sustaining hope.

Communicating Today In A Diverse World For A Happier Tomorrow

Facilitated By: Marcus Stallworth, Co-owner Welcome to Reality, CWLA Director of Training and Implementation

Travis Bryant, Executive Director Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine Inc. & The Kinship Program

The main purpose of this workshop will be to learn more about the successes and challenges that come along with new children joining your family- particularly if their culture, life experiences, and values are different than yours.

Panel Members Include:

Sophie Crooker - Adopted Youth
Cyndi Dolloff - Resource Parent
Bobbi Johnson - Associate Director Office of Child and Family Services
Angela Okafor - Attorney, Bangor City Council, Entrepreneur

Fostering Resilient Environments

Presented By: Kini-Ana Tinkham, Executive Director, Maine Resilience Building Network

Breakthrough research shows that early childhood trauma and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), are linked to increased risks for physical, mental, emotional and behavioral health problems throughout life. They also can be passed down generationally. Preventing and healing ACEs is possible. Science also shows that resilience and positive childhood experiences (PCEs) influence health and well-being. The good news is that resilience, which includes positive connections, can be learned and cultivated at any age. No matter our age, there are science-informed ways to support resilience and build protective factors for all members of our community. Breakthrough neuroscience will be reviewed providing participants with a model for understanding the nervous system and emotion regulation. The science of compassion and mindfulness will also be explored as strategies to build resilience in ourselves and foster it in the youth in our lives. Participants will leave with strategies, tools and resources that support and promote resilience and well-being.

Learning Objectives:

1. Summarize the science of ACEs
2. Describe positive childhood experiences and their influence of well-being
3. Describe what resilience is and how it can be promoted in children, families, and communities
4. Explain emotion regulation and co-regulation
5. List 3 resilient strategies for promoting well-being



Through a Child's Eyes; Understanding the Effects of Attachment and Trauma

Presented By: Jim Harris, Ed.D., MSW

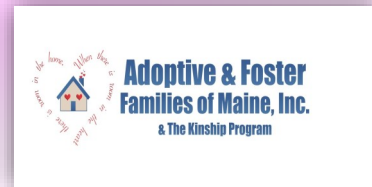
Unfortunately, if you are working with children and families today, you are likely encountering the effect of attachment disruption and trauma. In this session Dr. Harris helps you better understand the developmental importance of attachment and how the experience of trauma can have a profound effect on the physiology and psychology of children. Dr. Harris will explore different types of attachment and how they can impact the developmental trajectory of children. He will also explore how understanding these potential effects can help us provide more responsible and effective interventions.

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 6 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!



Attention Kinship Families: Register for AFFM's Annual Spring Training Conference and join Friday April 22nd for the workshop, Kinship Care and Legal Responsibilities: Who to Call and When.

*Presenters: Bette Hoxie, AFFM Kinship Supervisor, and Elizabeth Stout, Esq.
Executive Director at Maine Volunteer Lawyers Project*

Adoption Announcements!



We are happy to announce the adoption of Hannah and Jadan! These two were meant for our family and we knew it almost from day one. After 2.5 years of waiting, we are excited that it's "official". Our adoption day is one of our favorite family memory days. Anxious to continue living life with these two precious peanuts.

Submitted by the White family

Nadine Avery is excited to announce the adoption of her son Thomas Avery on December 20, 2021!

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!



April and Michael Placchetti are delighted to announce the adoption of their daughter Daphne. Daphne joins brothers, Ryan, Dustin, Pasquale and Ethan and their wives, significant others, and their children. Bette Hoxie is proud to be called Mom, Grammy, and Great Grammy by this amazing family!



You are invited!

JMG is offering **VIRTUAL** Financial Literacy training for teens and young adults in care. The **Opportunity Passport™ (OP)** program personal finance training helps young people gain skills related to personal finances like creating a spending plan and goal setting. We are reaching out to you and others who were referred to the program. To participate you must:

- Be at least 14 but younger than 26 years old
- Be currently in foster care, or in foster care for at least one day since turning 14
- Have access to the internet - training is 100% virtual

YOU WILL EARN A ONE-TIME \$100 STIPEND once you have completed both virtual training segments (two 90-minute sessions). In order to proceed to full enrollment in OP™ with access to matching funds, you must have a bank account and reliable, ongoing source of income – *but these do not have to be in place to participate in the training.*

Training Expectations:

Please have your camera ON and participate from a minimally distracting environment

Part 1 Training Dates - Choose ONE to attend:

- Tuesday, March 15, 4:00 – 5:30 pm
- Tuesday, April 19, 10:00 – 11:30 am
- Tuesday, May 10, 4:00 – 5:30 pm
- Tuesday, June 14, 4:00 – 5:30 pm

Part 2 Training Dates - Choose ONE to attend:

Note: Part 1 must be completed before Part 2

- Thursday, March 17, 4:00 – 5:30 pm
- Thursday, April 21, 10:00 – 11:30 am
- Thursday, May 12, 4:00 – 5:30 pm
- Thursday, June 16, 4:00 – 5:30 pm

ALL trainings are virtual, via Zoom. Participants will be emailed a Zoom link (sent to the email address given on the training referral form).

Opportunity Passport™ Referral Link.

For questions contact:

Debbie Bechard: 557-0079 or dbechard@jmg.org

Kara Boone: 459-8192 or kboone@jmg.org

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 for virtual meetings.

STATEWIDE C.A.R.E.S. MEETING: Tuesday March 8th and April 12th from 10-11:30 A.M

STATEWIDE Kinship C.A.R.E.S. MEETING: Tuesday March 8th and April 12th from 6:00PM-7:30PM

Friday With Friends, Friday March 25th and April 29th from 6:00 AM-7:00AM

Southern Maine C.A.R.E.S. Meetings: (York, Cumberland, Androscoggin, Oxford, & Franklin county)

District 1-3 Daytime Tuesday March 1st and April 5th from 10-11:30am

District 1-3 Evening Wednesday March 9th and April 13th from 7-8:30pm

District 1-3 Afternoon Thursday March 17th* and April 21st from 12-1:30pm

District 1-3 A/PG Tuesday March 15th and April 19th from 12-1:30pm *To expand your village and find support with other families post adoption or permanency guardianship.*

***Training:** District 1-3 DHHS Resource Unit Supervisor Question & Answer Session. Receive a 1 hour training certificate for attending.

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 (Sagadahoc, Lincoln, Knox, Waldo county): Wednesday March 2nd and April 6th 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 March 3rd and April 7th 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.

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

District 6 (Penobscot/Piscataquis county): Virtual Thursday March 21st and April 18th from 6:00PM-7:30PM

District 7 & 8 : Virtual Thursday March 17th and April 21st from 12:00PM-1:00PM

Ellsworth: Tuesday, March 15th from 5:30-7:00 P.M. at The United Baptist Church (28 Hancock Street). On-site child-care available with advance notice. Meeting led by Mindy Kane, AFFM Kinship Specialist.

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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National Foster Parent Association
Generations United
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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!](#)