

Family Ties

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

Volume 26

Number 1

January 2023

AFFM is excited to enter the new year and continue to support families in Maine. As we look ahead to the work to be done in 2023, we would also like to reflect back on what was accomplished throughout 2022.

AFFM's 25th Annual Spring Training Conference was held virtually on April 22nd and the 23rd. The theme of the conference was "Strengthening and Building Hope". Attendees learned of the importance of strengthening hope in children and adults. A panel of former youth in care were able to share their life experiences and their hopes for the future. Attendees gained a better understanding of legalities of kinship care and much more. ***Mark your calendars for AFFM's 26th Annual Spring Training Conference on Friday April 14th and Saturday April 15th. This year's conference will be in person in South Portland!***

AFFM collaborates 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.

AFFM offers C.A.R.E.S. meetings via zoom, as well as in person. Please reach out to either Brigid or Sheila surrounding the C.A.R.E.S. meetings. Thank you, Brigid and Sheila for the continued support you provide to families. AFFM also offers support via their Facebook page.

AFFM's Mentor Service has steadily grown throughout the year. If you are interested in becoming matched with a mentor or becoming a mentor, visit <https://affm.net/support/mentor-service/> or reach out to either Sarah, Heather, or Beth to assist you.

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

AFFM filled 477 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 10th AFFM celebrated Grandparents Day with events at Pineland Farms in New Gloucester, Cole's Transportation Museum in Bangor, and Owls Head Transportation Museum. It was great to have an in person event to celebrate kinship families.

Beginning annually in the late summer, AFFM goes into full "Holiday" mode. The Holiday Gift Giving Program begins in late August and stops taking request mid November. There is so much work that goes into gathering children's wishes, finding sponsors, collecting gifts, picking up and dropping off the gifts, etc. AFFM is so thankful for all those who step up each year to support the program to ensure kids have the holiday they deserve. AFFM's Holiday Gift Giving Program provided gifts to over 1,100 children statewide. AFFM's gratitude to The Ogunquit Spirit of Giving Committee as well as the community around us can not go unnoticed. Over the past 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.

AFFM’s Kinship Navigators have been hard at work connecting kinship families to the services needed to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the children in their home. AFFM’s Kinship Navigators provide non judgmental listening support, systems navigation, access to AFFM’s programs, and more. If you are a kinship caregiver in need of support please reach out to your local Kinship Navigator.

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;

<i>Travis Bryant, Executive Director</i>	<i>Meagan Sprague, Resource Family Program Manager</i>
<i>Bette Hoxie, Kinship Supervisor</i>	<i>Holly White, Administrative Assistant</i>
<i>Monica Bushey, Training Program Manager</i>	<i>Sheila McDougal, Resource Support Coordinator</i>
<i>Heather Crooker, Resource Family Specialist</i>	<i>Shelly Anderson, Accountant</i>
<i>Carey Pierson, Kinship Navigator</i>	<i>Brigid Torberg, Resource Support Coordinator</i>
<i>Mindy Kane, Kinship Navigator</i>	<i>Sarah Hatt, Resource Family Specialist</i>
<i>Jessica Richards, Kinship Navigator</i>	<i>Beth Gilboy, Resource Family Specialist</i>
<i>Hether Anderson, Resource Family Trainer</i>	<i>Pat Tavernakis, Resource Family Trainer</i>
<i>Carrie Rapp, Resource Family Trainer</i>	<i>Cyndi Dollof, Resource Family Trainer</i>
<i>Melinda Corey, Resource Family Trainer</i>	<i>Penni Theriault, Community Kinship Specialist D7</i>
<i>Heather Bowie, Resource Family Trainer</i>	
<i>Ashana LeGeyt, Resource Family Trainer</i>	

Wondering Who You Should Contact for Support?

Visit: <https://affm.net/resource-contacts-by-county/>

New Discount Penobscot County



Subway
255 Main St.
Old Town, ME 04468
50% off a 6 inch sub and fountain drink

Thank You!

August until the middle of December, AFFM is a whirlwind of activity as we prepare for the Holiday Gift Giving Program. This holiday season, as previously mentioned, we once again provided over 1,100 kids in care 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. To say thank you is an understatement. 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!

A special thank you to the Ogunquit Spirit of Giving Committee whose behind the scene work should not go unrecognized. Each year, this incredible group of people step up and make sure kids in care have the Christmas they deserve and we could not be more grateful. Thank you to Frances Reed and her team. AFFM is blessed to have your support!

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

Tina Fitzgerald/Devan's Purple Closet	Becky Hadiaris	Kim Hitchcock	Laura Blackstone
WPOR Portland Radio Group	Acadia Lane	Lisa Turner	Jami Pierce
Norway Savings Bank	Cheryl LaFlamme	Emma Tanguay	Michelle Mishaan
Volk Packaging/Glorijane Winslow	The Hobbs Family	Libby Gardner	Casey Blackstone
Mann Law	Jessica Andrews	CAA Case Management	Ashley Elliott
Jordan's Furniture	Michelle Whitten-Sawyer	Jennifer L. Kelley	Kayla Buck
Marc Motors	Ogunquit Spirit of Giving Committee	Kori Dobson	Holly Vigue
Pam Wing & The Beacon	St. Paul the Apostle Parish	Ashley & Elizabeth Philbrick	Kaitlyn Butts
Whalen Family	Parish of the Resurrection	Vicky Dunn	Rhonda Chasse
Lindt Chocolate	Bangor International Airport	Vicky Sponberg	Kelsey Buck
Old Castle Lawn & Garden	Brewer Youth Hockey	Jodale Lagasse	Lacey Guiou
Dunstan Dental Center, LLC	Tensegrity Health	Courtney Breton	Kristen Gray
Kim Williams & Kaitlin Rustin	Girl Scout Troop 883	Gaila Marie	Cuddle Buddy
Gillies and Prittie, Inc.	Bill Walsh	Bridget Morningstar	Boy Scout Pack 805
Lauren Manera	Levesque Building and Remodeling	Jill Boyd	The Geishaker Family
Studio 77	Bags of Love	Sherri O'Donnell	Emily Williams
Girl Scout Troop 434	Charleston Church	Chelsae Guerrette	At Home Veterinary Care
Girl Scout Troop 280	Alex and Friends	Carla Cambridge	Toys for Tots
Bright Start Early Childhood Center	Bangor Federal Credit Union	Kirk & Louise Carroll	Tensegrity Health and Aesthetics
Katrina Peterson	Jake Albon & Family	Renee Hafford	Lisa Frazell
Sam D'Amico	Tyler Technologies	Megan Stanley	Gibson Financial Solutions
Old Navy Stacy Duffy, General Manager	Kristy Rich	Nancy Duncan	American Legion Auxiliary
Michelle Horton Livingston	Forecastle Tattoo	Laura Hale	Machias Savings Bank
Sarah Eastman	Franks Bake Shop and Catering	Jennifer Tanguay	Keller Williams Realty
Chris and Carlee Main	Tremont School	Hannah Tanguay	Mary Lake
Tobias/Noyes Family	Lots of Tots	Ashley Lajoie	
Chelsea Amaio	Seaside UCC	Anita McLellan	
Charmie Cuthbert	Nicol Sponberg	Leah Hatt	
Anne Jordan	Victoria Cote	Keilee Hatt	
Kate Clark	Staci Ireland	Karen Philbrook	
Jamie Jamieson	Jack Tanguay	Shelly Mcatee	
Barbara Malinowski	Kelly McHatten	Kara Addington	

Thank
you 

SAVE THE
DATE

DOUBLETREE BY HILTON

AFFM'S 26TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Heart of Healing

FRI & SAT,
APRIL 14TH & 15TH

DOUBLETREE BY THE HILTON HOTEL,
363 MAINE MALL ROAD, S. PORTLAND, ME



BRITTAINY CHARETTE, PSYD
KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Organizational Leadership



DIANE LANNI
KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Lead Trauma Coach, Foster Parent



JEN MALCOLM-BROWN, LICSW (SHE/HER)
KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Project Director- Lifeline for Kids



**Adoptive & Foster
Families of Maine, Inc
& The Kinship Program**

Kinship



Corner

A Thank You to Kinship Caregivers

As we begin this new year, I want to say thank you to all the amazing families who provide caregiving to a relative, friend or acquaintance's child and or children. You have faced obstacles no family member ever imagines they will face. As parents we anticipate that with the faith, hope, love, guidance, food, security, housing and education we provide that our children will grow up to be happy, productive members of society and will use all that we have provided as a yardstick by which to raise their own children. However, we have very little control over what choices anyone beyond ourselves will make. The world is filled with temptations and sometimes with the best of influences, our children or other relatives will make choices that lead to their children being at risk and unsafe. That is when kinship care comes into play. Sometimes, DHHS steps in and removes the children and in many other situations grandparents and or other relatives will intervene to make sure the minor children are safe. You have done just that!

No family thinks about becoming a licensed foster home in case their grandchildren come into the custody of the child protective services. No family imagines once they settle into senior housing that they will need to move to make room for growing children. No family imagines after they retire to a warmer climate that they will need to give up that retirement dream to come back to Maine to care for and in many situations raise children to adulthood. And yet! These are just a few of the many gifts you as kinship/relative caregivers have done to protect and care for grandchildren, nieces, nephews, younger siblings and children of friends or neighbors.

You all deserve so much more than a simple thank you! However, thank you is what I offer from the bottom of my heart. Never doubt, the significant gifts of security, family connectedness and love you are showering on the children in your care! It is a pleasure to work as a Kinship Specialist and assist in providing you with tools, support groups, and material goods to help ease a bit of your many burdens. And yes I do know that you seldom consider what you do as anything other than caring for your family!

I hope the New Year is one filled with peace and joy for each and every one of you! You are all my heroes!

Submitted: Bette Hoxie

AFFM has partnered with the University of Maine to help survey kinship families who receive support from AFFM. Please keep an eye out for the survey (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!



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

Adoption Announcements!



Congratulations to Tammy and Kevin Hall for legalizing the adoption of their two boys they've had since birth. Jamison Michael Hall and William (Willy) Scott Hall are 3 1/2 years old. Their birthdays are 9 days apart. They think they are twins!

My husband and I went from being Papa & Mimi to Daddy & Mommy officially on September 26th. We are so excited!

Submitted By: Robynne Burby-Hoyt



A Message From OCFS Medical Director

It's a new year, and I thought it would be a good time to review some useful websites that offer helpful resources to keep our children healthy, safe and happy.

The information on Healthy Children.org is updated regularly, the website is from the American Academy of Pediatrics <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/Pages/default.aspx>

There is a newsletter that can be delivered right to your inbox. <https://www.healthychildren.org/english/pages/registerinformation.aspx> Sesame Street in the Communities has activities, games, videos and more- on many relevant topics for caregivers.

<https://sesamestreetincommunities.org/> Safe and Sound is a series of resources developed to help caregivers and other adults caring for children who have experienced trauma and adversity.

The guides can be downloaded and shared. <https://www.aap.org/en/patient-care/foster-care/safe-and-sound-helping-children-who-have-experience-trauma-and-adversity/>

The National Child and Traumatic Stress Network has a webpage of resources for caregivers of youth who have experienced traumatic events- <https://www.nctsn.org/audiences/families-and-caregivers> As a safe secure nurturing adult, you can have a major impact on a child's life- I hope these resources can help.

As always, I remind you to be sure that all children in your home are up to date on all their vaccines, including the flu and COVID vaccines. Check with your child's provider if you have any questions. You can also find COVID-19 vaccine sites in Maine offering vaccine [here](#) or by visiting bravelikeme.com

~Adrienne W. Carmack, MD

STATEWIDE C.A.R.E.S. MEETING meets the second Tuesday of the month from 10-11:30 A.M

STATEWIDE Kinship C.A.R.E.S. MEETING meets the second Tuesday of the month from 6:00PM-7:30PM

Friday With Friends meets the fourth Friday of the month from 6:00 AM-7:00AM

****NEW: Attend a meeting and receive 1.5 hours of training!****

Southern Maine C.A.R.E.S. Meetings: *Childcare is Available at in Person Meetings with Advance Notice*

F/A/K Evening- Meets the second Wednesday of the month from 7:00-8:30 P.M. by **ZOOM**.

F/A/K Afternoon- Meets the fourth Thursday of the month from 12:00-1:30 P.M. by **ZOOM**.

A/PG Afternoon - Meets the third Tuesday of the month from 12:00-1:30 P.M. by **ZOOM**.

South Portland - F/A/K- Meets the second Tuesday of the month from 6:00-7:30 P.M. at The Point 345 Clarks Pond Pkwy, South Portland.

Biddeford, Kinship Only- Meets the third Tuesday of the month from 10:00A.M. - 12:00 P.M. at JR Martin Community Center 189 Alfred St #1 Biddeford. Childcare is not provided.

Wilton, Kinship Only- Meets the third Thursday of the month from 6:00-7:30 P.M. at SeniorsPlus 284 Main St. Suite 210, Wilton. *Childcare is not provided at this time.*

Farmington - F/A/K- Meets the third Tuesday of the month from 6:00-7:30 P.M. at UMF Roberts Learning Center Rm 001 & 003.

Sanford - F/A/K- *Temporarily on hold*

Auburn- F/A/K- Meets the fourth Tuesday of the month from 6:00-7:30 P.M. at Opportunity Enterprises 400 Center St. Auburn.

Northern Maine C.A.R.E.S. Meetings: *Childcare is Available at in Person Meetings with Advance Notice*

F/A/K- Meets the first Wednesday of the month from 6:00-7:30 PM by **ZOOM**.

F/A/K- Meets the third Monday of the month from 6:00-7:30 P.M. by **ZOOM**.

F/A/K- Meets the third Thursday of the month from 12:00-1:30 P.M. by **ZOOM**.

Damariscotta - F/A/K: Meets the first Thursday of the month from 5:30-7:00 P.M. at The Lincoln County Assembly of God Church (672 Main Street).

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

Dover-Foxcroft - F/A/K - Meets the second Thursday of the month from 6:00-7:30PM at the Dover-Foxcroft Congregational Church (824 West Main Street).

Ellsworth - F/A/K- Meets the third Tuesday of the month from 5:30-7:00 P.M. at United Baptist Church (28 Hancock Street).

Skowhegan-F/A/K- Meets the second Tuesday of the month from 6-7:30 P.M. at The Federated Church (13 Island Ave.)

Belfast- F/A/K-- Meets the first Wednesday of the month from 5:30-7:00 P.M. at the Baptist Church (95 High Street).

Machias- F/A/K-- Meets the second Thursday of the month from 5:00-6:30 P.M. at the Rose M. Gaffney School (15 Rose Gaffney Road)

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.

Questions for Southern Maine Meetings Please Email: brigid@affm.net

Questions for Northern Maine Meetings Please Email: sheila@affm.net

Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc.

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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 Suite 101 Saco, ME 04072

Phone: 207-827-2331

Email: info@affm.net

Website: www.affm.net

Like us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Resource.Family.Support>

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