



FAMILY TIES

VOLUME 26 | JULY 2023

FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE:

Upcoming Summer Events

Back to School Program
(Available Until August
4th!)

Feel Good Stories

C.A.R.E.S. Meeting:
Join a Meeting Near You!

...and more!

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 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 support and resources 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.



PH: 207-827-2331



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

WWW.AFFM.NET

ADOPTION ANNOUNCEMENTS!



THE MCEWEN'S ADOPTED THEIR GRANDDAUGHTER LAST JULY. THEY STARTED FOSTERING ABIGAIL AT 20 MONTHS. SHE HAS GROWN SO MUCH!

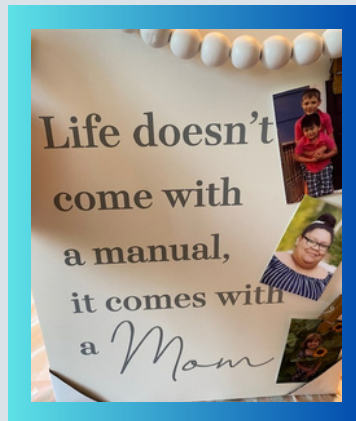


ON MONDAY, JUNE 12, 2023, AFTER SPENDING 959 DAYS IN FOSTER CARE, XAVIER OFFICIALLY BECAME A BELYEA. HE IS HEAVEN SENT, COURT APPROVED AND FOREVER LOVED BY OUR FAMILY ♥!



FEEL GOOD STORIES!

We have four adopted children. All of whom are amazing of course! We encourage connections with birth family when safe to do so. Recently we connected with our 10 year old's birth mom. She sent us this picture for mothers day! It was just so amazing and thoughtful of her.



My teen in care started a job at McDonalds over the winter. It turned out the judge on her case worked at the same McDonalds location when he was a teenager, though he was paid significantly less! Then this spring, she was playing tennis at school, and the same judge told us how his mother remembers losing to my daughter's tennis team 82 years ago! It was so nice that the judge was willing to share those stories and make a connection with my daughter.

I would like to submit a pretty funny story that literally just made everyone in my house bust out laughing so hard! This past Friday all the kids and myself were just chilling out at home, Kaliina came into my room where I was watching a movie and she wants to play, so she gets up on my bed and starts jumping on my stomach (playfully that is) and I look at her and say "Kaliina you are so lucky Mumma does not have to fart or puke right now with all that jumping on my stomach". She instantly stands up (on the bed next to me) and as she is slowly rolling her eyes in the back of her head and falls backwards onto a pillow and pretends to pass out. I say "Kaliina what on earth was that?" She stands up and without missing a beat looks me straight in the eyes as she is slowly waving her hand back and forth in front of her nose and says "Mumma stinky farted" We all instantly started laughing so hard and I say to her "Mumma is not stinky" and as she is sliding off the bed laughing from the bottom of her belly starting to run out of the room she screams "Mumma is stinky and Kaliina funny" and she ran out straight into the next room laughing so hard. Kaliina has been fully adopted since August of 2022, and this little spit ball of fire has brought so much life into our home. She is funny, sweet and sassy (our little sour patch kid, sometimes sweet and sometimes super sour lol) and just so much fun to be around. NEVER a dull moment. She has thrived beyond what I could have ever imagined in such a short time.

UPCOMING SUMMER EVENTS!

Family fun Day @ Mantle Lake

All foster, adoptive, and kinship families come join us for AFFM's Annual Family Fun Day at Mantle Lake Park

When: Friday, August 4th, 3pm-6pm

Where: Mantle Lake Park, 100 Pine Street, Presque Isle, ME

RSVP REQUIRED

*Scan the
QR code
to RSVP*



- FREE BBQ!
- Fire Trucks/Police Car
- Games/Activities provided by The Northern Lighthouse Inc.
- Bounce House
- Door Prizes
- Face Painting and More!



JOIN US FOR HAMPDEN CHILDREN'S DAY AUGUST 12TH @9AM

Come decorate bikes and ride/walk in the parade!

Help AFFM decorate bikes at 9 AM

at Reedsbrook middle school in Hampden. Kids can use bikes or scooters please make sure children are wearing helmets. Adults are welcome too and we are looking forward to seeing you!!



BACK TO SCHOOL PROGRAM

AFFM's goal is to make the next upcoming school year, whatever it may bring, go as smoothly as possible. The Back to School Program is designed to assist families who would struggle otherwise purchasing back to school items for the children in their care.

AFFM's Back to School Program provides a new backpack, grade appropriate school supplies, personal care items and when available, a new outfit. The program serves children in grades kindergarten (age 5) to senior year of high school.

If your child will be in need this upcoming school year, please **fill out a request form found here** or at www.affm.net.

Please note, AFFM's Back to School Program relies heavily on donations to fill the backpacks. You may not receive all the items requested. Please have your request in no later than Friday, August 4th.

*If your child is entering 7th grade up to high school, AFFM may be able to provide a \$25 gift card. As teens tend to have their own style of clothing, AFFM hopes to provide kids going into middle school and high school with gift cards to purchase their own outfits. The Back-to-School Program was designed to bring a sense of normalcy to kids in care, especially at the beginning of a school year. AFFM is aware providing teens the opportunity to pick their own clothing may help ease some anxiety as they transition into a new school.

AFFM has a limited amount of gift cards available, this will be first come first served

Scan THE CODE
TO GET THE FORM!



A Message from OCFS Medical Director

In case you have not heard, OCFS has launched two exciting new programs for young children and families. Help Me Grow (HMG) and the Early Childhood Consultation Program (ECCP) are available throughout Maine.

Help Me Grow (HMG) connects families of young children (pregnancy through age 8) to information and services. Caregivers and providers can contact HMG for support and receive short-term care coordination for up to 60 days for a variety of needs. HMG Resource Specialists will listen, share developmental information and community resources, and provide follow-up to caregivers and referral sources. To learn more go to: Help Me Grow Maine ECCP® is a prevention service that partners a mental health consultant with adults who work with infants and young children ages 0-8 where they learn and grow, such as child care, preschool, pre-K, and public school. ECCP® provides short-term consultation to child care providers, teachers, and families to help understand children's needs, address challenging behavior, and support healthy social and emotional development before mental health or early intervention treatment is needed. Consultation is no-cost and confidential. OCFS is now expanding ECCP® statewide after a successful pilot of the program. To learn more go to: Early Childhood Consultation Program

Have a fun, safe summer!

Thank you-

Adrienne W. Carmack, MD
Medical Director, OCFS



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

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KINSHIP CORNER



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Celebrate all kinship families during Grandparents Day on Sunday September 10th AFFM will have activities throughout the state. Follow AFFM for more information. Are there ways you celebrate your family? Share with AFFM, we'd love to hear how to celebrate and honor kinship families throughout the month of September.



Did You Know There Are Kinship Specific C.A.R.E.S. Meetings?

Biddeford - Meets Tuesday, August 15th, 10:00A.M. - 12:00 P.M. at JR Martin Community Center 189 Alfred St #1 Biddeford. NO childcare is provided. This meeting is led by Cat Anglea, AFFM Facilitator and Resource Parent. RSVP by calling Brigid at 207-827-2331 or email brigid@affm.net or clicking the below link:
<https://affm.net/cares-rsvp/>

Wilton - Meets Thursday, August 17th, 6:00-7:30 P.M. at SeniorsPlus 284 Main St. Suite 210, Wilton, ME. Childcare provided with prior RSVP. This meeting is led by Cyndi Dolloff, AFFM Trainer, Facilitator and Resource Parent. RSVP by calling Brigid at 207-827-2331 or email brigid@affm.net or clicking the below link.
<https://affm.net/cares-rsvp/>

Statewide - Meets Tuesday, August 8th from 6:00-7:30 P.M. by ZOOM Conferencing. RSVP IS REQUIRED EACH MONTH TO RECEIVE THE LINK TO JOIN THE MEETING. RSVP by calling Sheila at 207-827-2331, email sheila@affm.net, or by clicking on the link below. Meeting led by Bette Hoxie, AFFM Kinship Program Manager and Dona Lane, M. ED, Clinical & Educational Consultant.



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 3 to 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**



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*

Augusta- F/A/K - Meets on the first Monday of the month from 6:00-7:30 P.M. at the Green Street United Methodist Church (13 Green Street).

Orono - F/A/K - Meets on the third Monday of the month from 6:00-7:30 P.M. at the Orono United Methodist Church (36 Oak Street).

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 Monday 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)

Presque Isle- F/A/K- Meets the first Thursday of the month from 5:30-7:00 P.M. at the Northern Lighthouse (172 Academy Street).

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

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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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THE ADDRESS ABOVE.

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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



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

Contact Us



Save a tree, sign up for the E-Newsletter!

207-827-2331

Email: info@affm.net



LEARN MORE

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