



FAMILY TIES

FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE:

**Holiday Gift Giving
Program (Available Until
November 17th!)**

Kinship Corner

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

...and more!

VOLUME 26 | SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2023

***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 ANNOUNCEMENT!



**Rashida Skomurski
adopted July 28th. a
happy addition to the
Skomurski family!**

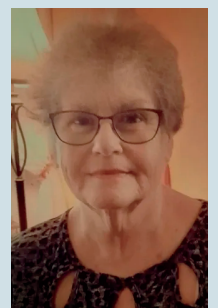
**Email: meagan@affm.net for
your adoption announcement
to be featured in AFFM
newsletter!**

Sharon Carter

AFFM is saddened with the news that our dear friend, resource parent, and board member Sharon Carter passed away on September 1st. Her battle with ovarian cancer showcased her strength and courage as she fought her illness with bravery, dignity and her unwavering positive attitude. She was a gentle spirit and will always be remembered for being happy, upbeat, and having a smile and respect for everyone.

Sharon lived her life in service to others. She devoted her time to the YWCA, AFFM, and St. Martin de Porres. She was also the founder of Zoe's Closet that provided clothing to foster families in need. Sharon was predeceased by her parents Ray and Sally Moore. She leaves behind her husband of 15 years, Chuck; sons Christopher and Tyson, daughters Ashley and Zoe-Anna; sisters Gail Moore, Cindy Pea and her husband, Bob. Additionally, Sharon leaves behind grandchildren Lexi, Cameron, Dominic and LJ; nieces Melissa and Kelsie, and nephew, Chad; as well as many extended family members. Sharon also leaves behind her dearest friends Kiki Royer, Denise Gove, Cathy Goodwin, and Leo Baillargeon, along with many others.

The world was a better place with her in it and will be lonelier without her.



UPCOMING EVENTS/TRAINING!

RSVP to a training by visiting www.affm.net



Trauma Informed Parenting October 4th @6:30PM
Participants will understand 12 key good parenting skills and how to implement them into real life situations. The information helps participants navigate the confusing and overwhelming abundance of parenting advice out there.

Mandated Reporter Training October 10th @6:30PM

All resource families are required to take the mandated reporter training when becoming licensed. They also need to renew this training every 4 years! Join us here for mandated reporter training and receive 2 training hours towards recertification! Mandated Reporters are a critical part of Maine's Child protection system and act as an early warning network to identify suspected child abuse and neglect; promptly enough to avoid serious and long term damage to a child. Professionals who frequently encounter children in their work are in the best position to recognize and report suspected child abuse and neglect and are required by law to do so.

Educational Rights for Foster Students October 11th @6:30PM

Join staff from the Maine Department of Education to discuss the educational rights of students in Foster care. Students who are experiencing homelessness, unaccompanied youth, and students with IEP.

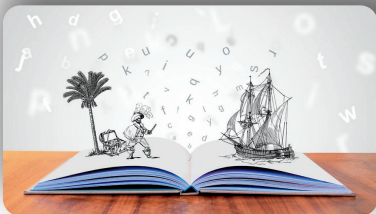
Presenters: Julie Smyth, Director, Office of School & Student Supports, and Foster Care Point of Contact, Amelia Lyons Rukema, McKinney Vento Specialist, Sarah Ferguson, State Agency Programs Education Specialist, Dylan Campbell Maine Parent Federation Youth Coordinator, & Parent Trainer Allison Wiest Maine Parent Federation Parent Trainer

Integrating Foster Children w/ Bio/adopted children October 16th @6:30PM

During this webinar, you will add tools to your toolbox when it comes to integrating foster children into your family when you have or will have biological/adopted children. Presenters will cover several scenarios that you and your family may encounter when joining foster children into the family plus leave room for discussion.

Understanding the Maine Child Protective Court System October 25th @6:30PM

After this training participants will have the basic understanding of the court process and terms. Participants will feel more comfortable navigating the court system with having this basic understanding of the process and terms used.



Story Time with AFFM

Caregivers if you have yet to include your child in the monthly Story Time, please consider doing so. You will not be disappointed! The children have the opportunity to meet others in similar situations (foster, adoptive or kinship placements) and you get the opportunity to have up to an hour to yourself. The kids who have participated thus far have been engaged and engaging. Meagan Sprague and Bette Hoxie delight in their sweet comments. Meagan and Bette take turns reading and although there is considerable talking and commotion between books, once the stories begin the children are absorbed and they can retell bits of each story at the end. They additionally let us know what they hope to have us read on our next gathering. Both Meagan and Bette agree that it is a venture we love and look forward to. We encourage you to sign on and see how your kids respond. Story Time is held monthly on the first Wednesday of the month from 5:30PM until about 6:30PM and is on Zoom. Watch for an email via Listserv for dates and the Zoom link.

HOLIDAY GIFT GIVING PROGRAM

Resource Families are invited to add the children in their home to AFFM's Holiday Gift Giving Program. As in past years AFFM hopes to supplement the families who may need a bit of help with holiday gifts this season. Gift requests should be valued at no more than \$75 per child in need.

The sooner AFFM has the information, the more likely we are to fulfill the children's wishes. Requests will be filled to the best of our ability and that of our sponsors.

AFFM extends a sincere thank you to the Spirit of Giving Committee in Ogunquit who set this charitable program in progress over 20 years ago and has maintained it annually ever since! Thank you to all the many churches, organizations and individuals who have assisted AFFM in expanding the program statewide.

AFFM will begin taking requests on Tuesday, September 12th until Friday, November 17th. Please make sure your requests are in by November 17th!

It is difficult to fill requests after the deadline. AFFM and sponsors need time to gather gifts and make sure they are brought to their designated pick up location and delivered in time for the holidays. Thank you to all who make this program possible!

Scan

THE CODE

TO GET THE FORM!



A Message from OCFS Medical Director

Happy September! Fall is a great time to check in and get up to date on vaccines. Along with falling leaves, cool nights and pumpkin spice lattes come the respiratory viruses – Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV), Influenza (Flu) and COVID-19 rates all increase in the cooler months. Everyone over the age of 6 months should get updated Flu and COVID 19 vaccines and boosters this fall. There is also now protection against RSV for adults over 60 and infants under 8 months during RSV season, and for infants with certain conditions. If you have an infant in your care, check with their pediatrician's office to see if they can get the new protection against RSV called nirsevimab- it should be available very soon. And for everyone over 60 in your home, check with their doctor to see what vaccines and boosters can help keep everyone safe and healthy this winter.

Get all the kids and adults in your home protected this fall- check with your medical providers to see where and when everyone can get scheduled for these vaccines. Some schools are offering clinics, and local pharmacies have vaccines and boosters available. Don't delay, and stay healthy and get up to date!

Adrienne W. Carmack, MD
Medical Director Office of Child and Family Services

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

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KINSHIP CORNER



Throughout the month of September, AFFM honored Kinship Caregivers. Grandparents and other relatives provide for over 50% of children entering the foster care system in Maine and over 10,000 children reside with a relative caregiver. This is no small task and AFFM recognizes the special types of individuals who step up to provide security within the family for children who might otherwise be placed in the home of a stranger. Thank you to the relatives who step up independently to meet this growing need.

Thank you also to Maine's Office of Child and Family Services for recognizing the value in keeping families together whenever possible. Thank you to partnering organizations and community members who support AFFM and the families we serve. A special thank you to Pineland Farms, Cole Land Transportation Museum, and Owls Head Transportation Museum for collaborating with AFFM to host a special event for kinship families on Grandparents Day on Sunday September 10th.

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

Biddeford - Meets Tuesday, October 17th, 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, October 19th, 6:00-7:30 P.M. at SeniorsPlus 284 Main St. Suite 210, Wilton, ME. 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, October 10th 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.
<https://affm.net/cares-rsvp/>

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.

Waterboro - F/A/K - Meets the first Tuesday of the month from 6:00-7:30pm at Massabesic Adult Learning Center 84 West Road Massabesic East Waterboro, ME

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-Temporarily on hold

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 3-4:30 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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National Foster Parent Association
Generations United
Partnering With: Department of Health and Human Services

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Bangor, ME

PERMIT NO. 65



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



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

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LEARN MORE

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