



# FAMILY TIES

**VOLUME 27 | AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2024**

*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.*

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Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc. (AFFM) provides support for adoptive, foster and kinship families. This includes kinship families 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

# CELEBRATE GRANDPARENT'S DAY! SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 8TH, FROM 10AM-1PM

*AFFM will be hosting three free events across the state in honor of Grandparent's Day and National Kinship Care Month in September! RSVP Required-click on the link to which event you'll be attending or call AFFM to sign up today!*

## The Coastal Children's Museum 75 Mechanic St, Rockland, ME 04841

[\*\*RSVP HERE!\*\*](#)

The Coastal Children's Museum is a wonderful place to bring your children! Come explore the museum at no cost and enjoy the beautiful landscape of Rockland!



**GIVE  
AWAYS FOR  
ALL WHO  
ATTEND!**

## Cole Land Transportation Museum 405 Perry Rd, Bangor, ME 04401

[\*\*RSVP HERE!\*\*](#)

The Cole Land Transportation Museum offers fun for the entire family! RSVP today and join AFFM for a fun day at the museum!



## Pineland Farms 15 Farm View Drive, New Gloucester, ME

[\*\*RSVP HERE!\*\*](#)

Choose a check in time of 10am, 10:30am, or 11am and then have 2 hours to explore the farm, barnyard, and natural playgrounds with your family. We have 20 slots available for each. Make sure to secure your spot for this special event.



## JOIN STORY TIME SEPTEMBER 11TH @5:30PM VIA ZOOM TO CELEBRATE GRANDPARENT'S DAY AND NATIONAL KINSHIP MONTH!

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. Those who have participated thus far have been engaged and engaging. We encourage you to sign on! Children joining for the first time will receive a new pair of pajamas and a new book!

**Keep an eye out for an email via Listserv for dates and the Zoom link.**



# RESOURCE PARENT CARE TEAM(RPCT)

***RPCT is a voluntary program. You determine what your family needs to be successful. We encourage the use of our Liaison services to talk about day-to-day concerns and ask questions as this can help families feel more supported and confident in caring for children.***

***Liaison Support:*** The Liaisons are located in local DHHS offices and are available by phone and email. Liaisons help enhance communication amongst resource families, OCFS staff, and community-based providers. They provide information about community resources, general support, and problem-solving assistance. All resource families are eligible for the service provided by the Liaison assigned to your area.

***Clinical In-home Services:*** Clinical support is provided by a licensed mental health clinician and offered at no cost. Clinical services provide education and support related to the complex experiences of resource families including managing difficult behavior, grief and loss, trauma, attachment, community resources, and many more. The RPCT is fully staffed and each district has their own individual clinician they have access to.

## ***RPCT Contact Information:***

- Jenn Bryant, Lead Liaison for Districts 1 & 2, Jennifer.bryant@maine.gov -District 1 - 286-2469 District 5 - 624-5246 & 474-4849
- Tiffany Lawrence, Liaison for Districts 2, 3, & 4, Tiffany.Lawrence@maine.gov - District 2 - 822-2212 District 3 - 795-4650 District 4 - 596-4281
- Kelby Dobbins, Liaison for Districts 6, 7, & 8, Kelby.dobbins@maine.gov - District 6 - 561-4242 District 7 - 664-1404 District 8 - 493-4182
- Jessica Stevens Program Director/Clinician jstevens@chcs-me.org

## A MESSAGE FROM OCFS MEDICAL DIRECTOR

As we are all busy getting ready for the new school year, I wanted to share a few helpful resources that are available to help with parenting our youth. Be There for ME is a new campaign for parents and caregivers in Maine and the people who support them. Parenting can be a joy, and it can also be hard. Everyone needs help sometimes and support is out there. Learn more and start to find support at: <https://bethereforme.org/>

Social media is part of the lives of all our families and there is a new National Center of Excellence that serves as a trusted source of information as we navigate the world of social media and technology and our children. The website: <https://www.aap.org/en/patient-care/media-and-children/center-of-excellence-on-social-media-and-youth-mental-health/> has Conversation Starters for Teens, Strategies for Children 10 and Younger, and a Family Media Plan. And there is a link to submit questions. If you like to listen to podcasts, [www.HealthyChildren.org](http://www.HealthyChildren.org), now has a weekly podcast and the Episode 3 is “Helping Kids Navigate Social Media”

As always, I remind you to be sure that all children in your home are up to date on their well child check ups and all their vaccines. Check with your child’s pediatrician today to see if they are due for a visit. Stay healthy and stay safe- and enjoy these beautiful Maine late summer days!

Thank you again for all you do to keep the children of Maine happy, healthy and safe!

Adrienne W. Carmack, MD  
Medical Director, OCFS



# 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 Monday, September 16th until Friday, November 15th. Please make sure your requests are in by November 15th!**

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!

**The Holiday Request Form will be sent via Listserv. Please make sure you are signed up to receive emails from AFFM.**

**<https://affm.net/mailling-list-subscriptions-adoptive-foster-families-of-maine/>**

## BE THERE FOR ME

The Maine Child Welfare Action Network (MCWAN) and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) announced July 30th the launch of Be There for ME, a new campaign for parents and caregivers in Maine and the people who support them. The campaign aims to reduce the stigma of asking for help and provides a judgement-free place for parents and caregivers to start to find support.

MCWAN and DHHS developed Be There for ME over the past year in partnership with a diverse group of parents and caregivers, as well as many community organizations. The campaign reflects the types of support parents and caregivers of children of all ages said they need and how they spoke about their experiences. The website connects parents and caregivers to resources to start to find support for family needs—including housing, getting everyday items, child care, and dealing with stress. Available in 12 languages, the website is designed to welcome parents, caregivers, and all those who are there for them by encouraging them to take the first step toward support even if they're not sure where to go.

**[website: https://bethereforme.org](https://bethereforme.org)**



# Staff to Contact for Support

## DISTRICTS 1 & 2 (COUNTIES: YORK & CUMBERLAND)



Kelly Donegan  
Kinship Navigator  
kelly.d@affm.net  
207-659-8147  
York only



Tammy Cutchen  
Kinship Navigator  
tammy.c@affm.net  
207-478-6990  
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Resource Family  
Specialist  
Beth@affm.net  
207-631-4318



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Resource Support  
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Brigid@affm.net  
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## DISTRICT 3 (COUNTIES: OXFORD, ANDROSCOGGIN, FRANKLIN)



Jessica Richards  
Kinship Navigator  
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207-817-6062



Brigid Torberg  
Resource Support  
Coordinator  
Brigid@affm.net  
207-710-2089



Beth Gilboy  
Resource Family  
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Beth@affm.net  
207-631-4318

## DISTRICTS 4 & 5 (COUNTIES: WALDO, LINCOLN, KNOX, SAGADAHOC, KENNEBEC & SOMERSET)



Alyssa Rovella  
Kinship Navigator  
Alyssa.r@affm.net  
207-817-6060



Sheila McDougal  
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Coordinator  
Sheila@affm.net  
207-817-6063



Heather Crooker  
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HeatherC@affm.net  
207-817-6065

## DISTRICT 6 (COUNTIES: PENOBSCOT AND PISCATAQUIS)



Heather Crooker  
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Terri Barnett  
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## DISTRICTS 7 & 8 (COUNTIES: WASHINGTON, HANCOCK, AROOSTOOK)



Sarah Hatt  
Resource  
Family Specialist  
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Sheila McDougal  
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Sheila@affm.net  
207-817-6063



Mindy Kane  
Kinship Navigator  
Mindy@affm.net  
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## ALL DISTRICTS (ALL COUNTIES) P: 207-827-2331 E: INFO@AFFM.NET



Travis Bryant  
Executive Director



Meagan Sprague  
Resource Family  
Program Manager



Bette Hoxie  
Kinship Program Manager



Monica Bushey  
Training Program  
Manager



Hether Anderson  
Lead Resource  
Family Trainer



Holly White  
Administrative  
Specialist



# KINSHIP CORNER



On July 30th, the White House hosted a convening on transforming child welfare to announce new policies that focus on preventing family separation and supporting and creating opportunities for families and youth. The convening brought together policymakers across federal, state, local, and tribal governments, philanthropy, child welfare and family support organizations, and young people and families who have personal experiences, to encourage further innovation, build new partnerships, and exchange best practices. The new announcements focus on four key areas:

- Separating Poverty and Neglect
- Prevention Services
- **Prioritizing Kin and Youth Needs**
  - Allowing child welfare agencies to draw on federal funds to finance background check operations to facilitate quicker licensing for kin and others who provide foster care.
  - Rolling out a new website spotlights states and Tribes that have adopted new kinship licensing rules, as well as data on their kinship placement rates.
  - Publishing a resource guide on federal programs that provide supports to grandparents and kin in their caregiving roles.
  - Conducting a series of listening sessions to identify federal flexibilities needed for states and Tribes to adopt kinship licensing rules and kinship first approaches.
- Innovations and Research

[The new policies can be read in full here.](#)

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

**RSVP HERE: <https://affm.net/cares-rsvp/>**

**Biddeford** - Meets the 3rd Tuesday of the month 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.

**Wilton** - Meets the 3rd Thursday 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.

**Milford**- Meets on the first Wednesday of the month from 6:00-7:30 P.M. at the Dr. Lewis S. Libby School (13 School St.) Meeting led by Bette Hoxie, AFFM Kinship Program Manager.

**South Portland/Southern Maine Agency on Aging** - Meets the 2nd Thursday of the month 12:00 to 1:00 P.M.. at the South Portland Library. Childcare provided with prior RSVP. The meeting is led by Tammy Cutchen, AFFM Kinship Navigator and Robyn Berry, SMAA Family Caregiver Support Program Specialist.

**Statewide** - Meets the 2nd Tuesday of the month 6:00-7:30 P.M. by ZOOM Conferencing. RSVP IS REQUIRED EACH MONTH TO RECEIVE THE LINK TO JOIN THE MEETING. 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.

**South Portland, Kinship Only-** Meets the second Thursday of the month from 12pm-1pm at the South Portland Library.

**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

**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.*

**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 5:30-7:00 P.M. by **ZOOM**.

**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 Central Lincoln County YMCA (525 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).

**Ellsworth - F/A/K-** Meets the third Tuesday of the month from 5:30-7:30 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 Tuesday of the month from 5:30-7:00 P.M. at the Baptist Church (95 High Street).

**Lincoln--F/A/K-** Meets the fourth Monday of the month from 6:00-7:30 P.M. at the Community Evangel Temple (124 River Rd.)

**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)

**Milford-Kinship Only-** Meets on the first Wednesday of the month from 6:00-7:30 P.M. at the Dr. Lewis S. Libby School (13 School St.)

**Presque Isle- F/A/K-** Meets the first Tuesday of the month from 5:30-7:00 P.M. at Presque Isle Public Library (39 2nd 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](mailto:brigid@affm.net)**

**Questions for Northern Maine Meetings Please Email: [sheila@affm.net](mailto:sheila@affm.net)**

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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**



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](mailto:info@affm.net)



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[www.affm.net](http://www.affm.net)

