

Register for
the Spring
Conference
Today!



FAMILY TIES

VOLUME 28 | JANUARY-MARCH 2025

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

28TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

'The Power of Meaningful Connections'

Keynote Speakers



Nicholas Tucker
Youth Camp Owner &
Inspirational Speaker



Dr. Amelia Franck Meyer
Executive Officer

Registration is Now Open!

The AFFM conference offers specialized training tailored for families and professionals seeking unique and advanced learning opportunities. This two day event also provides a valuable chance to network and build connections.

April 11th & 12th 2025

DoubleTree by Hilton, S. Portland

For more conference details or to register visit:



WWW.AFFM.NET



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

AFFM's 28th Annual Conference Agenda

Friday April 11th, 2025

8:00 -8:15 AM	Registration
8:30-8:45 AM	Ballroom: Welcome - Travis Bryant, Executive Director, Adoptive & Foster Families of Maine Inc., and The Kinship Program
8:45-9:00 AM	Ballroom: Opening Remarks - Bobbi Johnson, LMSW, Director Office of Child and Family Services
9:00-10:00 AM	Ballroom: Keynote -The Human Need For Belonging- Dr. Amelia Franck Meyer
10:00-10:10 AM	Break
10:10-12:00 AM	Breakout Workshops <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ballroom: Workshop - Families are the Solution: Co-designing Changes Everything - Dr. Amelia Franck Meyer2. Sebago: Workshop - Bridging Hearts: Trauma-Informed Strategies -Catherine Cutler/AFFM
12:00 PM-1:00 PM	Lunch
1:00-1:30 PM	Networking & Resource Exploration
1:30 PM - 3:30 PM	Breakout Workshops <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ballroom: Building Your Toolkit for Healthy (Youth) Connections - Youth Leadership Advisory Team2. Cumberland: Partnering for Healthier Happier Outcomes: The Kinship Experience - Bette Hoxie3. Sebago: Connecting with Kids and Families through Balance, Structure and Nurture-Marissa Stam
3:30 PM- 4:00 PM	Lobby: Networking & Resource Exploration
6:00 PM- 7:00 PM	Ballroom: Meaningful Connections Mixer

Saturday April 12th, 2025

8:30 AM	Registration (Saturday attendees)
8:45 AM	Welcome - Travis Bryant, Executive Director, Adoptive & Foster Families of Maine Inc., and The Kinship Program
9:00 AM	Ballroom: Keynote - One Step at a Time: Walking Toward Purpose and Inner Strength - Nick Tucker
10:10-10:15 AM	Break
10:15-12:00 AM	Breakout Workshops <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ballroom: Roots and Wings: Nurturing Connections for Adopted Children-Hether Anderson2. Sebago: Building Connections that Make a Difference-Marissa Stam3. Cumberland: Catchy Vibes: Exploring Co-Regulation and Emotional Awareness - Heather Bowie
12:00 PM-1:00PM	Lunch
1:00 PM-1:30PM	Networking & Resource Exploration
1:30 PM - 4:00 PM	Ballroom: Unpacking The Complexities of Resource Families & Birth Family Connections Q&A - Nick Tucker, Youth Camp Owner & Inspirational Speaker
4:00 PM	Conference Closure

Register Today!
www.affm.net

Announcements!

**For the Resource
Parent Bill of Rights
Visit:**

<https://shorturl.at/YHbQd>

The Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS) is pleased to announce an important update to Maine's Resource Parent Bill of Rights, originally established in 2019. Recognizing the significant systemic changes that have taken place over the past five years, OCFS and key partners agreed that an update was necessary to better reflect the current needs and realities of foster, adoptive, and kinship families. The work was further guided by Resolve 2023, Ch. 62, in which the Legislature directed the Department to convene a stakeholder group to review the document and ensure it provides meaningful support for resource families as valued partners in the Maine's child welfare system. Through this collaborative effort, five key areas emerged as essential to strengthening and enhancing the partnership with resource parents: resources, supports, services, resource family involvement, and communication. In addition to revising the Bill of Rights to reflect these priorities, the workgroup emphasized the importance of identifying tangible strategies to ensure resource families receive the support they need to provide safe, stable, and nurturing homes for the children in care.

Payment Issues – OCFS participated in a workgroup with other state agency staff to map out the payment process and streamline payments to resource parents. OCFS has created a single point of contact (OCFSPaymentInquiry@maine.gov) for resource parents to use when experiencing payment issues.

Staff are assigned to expeditiously research and resolve payment issues received through this email inbox. OCFS requests that Resource Families not use digital/mobile payment apps (e.g. Venmo, PayPal, Zelle, Square, Google/Apple Wallet) for any items or services for reimbursement. While mobile apps are a convenient way to purchase or pay, the documentation and acceptable invoice backup required to process those reimbursements continues to be challenging for families to obtain and is causing some reimbursements to be denied by the Department of Administrative and Financial Services (DAFS). OCFS has a goal to ensure our foster/adoptive parents quickly and accurately receive all reimbursements they are entitled to, while still meeting State financial processing requirements and avoiding these payment options will help us meet that goal. OCFS will continue to work with DAFS to explore how we can help support these payment options in the future.

Camp Scholarships available to children in adoptive, permanency guardianship and kinship homes! Email meagan@affm.net for more info. FUNDS ARE LIMITED. FIRST COME FIRST SERVE.

**Save the Date: Family Fun Day
May 17th at Fort Knox and May
31st Fort Williams**

Adoption Announcement!



The Miller family became complete when we adopted our four beautiful children in September. We are forever grateful for AFFM and everyone involved during our two and a half years from our first day fostering until a judge proclaimed us a family!

Jeremiah 29:11 “for I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for prosperity and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.” This verse is the promise God had for us and we pray it for every family going through the fostering and adoption process. God bless.



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

Staff to Contact for Support

DISTRICTS 1 & 2 (COUNTIES: YORK & CUMBERLAND)

Vacant
Kinship Navigator
York only



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DISTRICT 3 (COUNTIES: OXFORD, ANDROSCOGGIN, FRANKLIN)



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



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DISTRICTS 7 & 8 (COUNTIES: WASHINGTON, HANCOCK, AROOSTOOK)



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Travis Bryant
Executive Director



Meagan Sprague
Resource Family
Program Manager



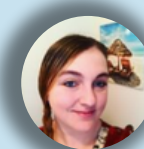
Bette Hoxie
Kinship Program Manager



Monica Bushey
Training Program
Manager



Hether Anderson
Lead Resource
Family Trainer



Holly White
Outreach & Marketing
Specialist



KINSHIP CORNER



The National Family Support Network is taking action to protect vital programs that support children, youth, and families—and we need your help. Congress is currently considering reconciliation legislation that could significantly reduce funding for key programs, including:

Medicaid – A lifeline for families accessing critical healthcare and mental health services

Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) – Funding that strengthens child welfare and family support programs

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) – Helping families achieve financial stability

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) – Ensuring children and families have access to food

384 organizations across all 50 states have already joined this effort by signing a letter to Congress emphasizing the importance of these programs. Now, we must amplify our voices.

How You Can Help:

Share a letter by state and national organizations with your networks and policymakers to keep these critical programs intact.

Engage your representatives – Encourage them to protect funding for these essential services.

Join the conversation – Stay informed and connected by participating in meetings

Now is the time to stand together. Please take a moment to share this message with your networks and urge action before funding cuts take effect.

Thank you for your continued partnership in strengthening families nationwide.



AFFM is sharing this information for individuals to respond or not as they see fit.

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!





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

****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 by **ZOOM**.

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 The Second Congregational Church at 19 Crescent Street, 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.

Auburn- F/A/K- Meets the fourth Tuesday of the month from 6:00-7:30 P.M. at SeniorsPlus 8 Falcon Rd, Lewiston.

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 Tuesday 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 4-5:30 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- *On hold.*

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- *On hold.*

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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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

Visit Our Website
www.affm.net

