

Is there room at *YOUR* table for a teen?



Start your fostering journey today!

A Family for ME Foster Parents: Building better futures one family at a time.

YLAT - Youth Leadership Advisory Team

As we continue to focus on teens and older youth in Maine foster care, we would be remiss not to mention YLAT (Youth Leadership Advisory Team). YLAT is a youth-adult partnership led by the Catherine Cutler Institute at the University of Southern Maine.

YLAT is committed to improving short-term experiences and long-term outcomes for youth who are or have been in foster care. Caregivers, service providers, lawmakers, and the legal community are examples of YLAT's partnerships with community members.

Through these partnerships, YLAT impacts youth in care, the child welfare system, and the larger community. By participating, youth have an opportunity to connect with others in care, learn valuable skills for transitioning to adulthood, and advocate for positive changes within the child welfare system on local, state, and national levels.

Youth can also be a part of various trainings, participate on panels to share their lived experiences, or engage in other ways by connecting with their Youth Transition Specialist at DHHS's Office of Child and Family Services.

YLAT hosts monthly in-person meetings from March to December, and virtual meetings in January and February. Meetings are held in six locations across Maine from Aroostook County to York County.

Meetings are low-barrier and are open to youth aged 14 and older who wish to participate in leadership and skill development.

To learn more about YLAT, please visit ylat.org, or find them on [YouTube](#), [Facebook](#), or [Instagram](#).

Maine Heart Gallery Spotlight



Braxton
D.O.B. 2014

Braxton likes animals, babies, being goofy, and being outside.

Visit the Maine Heart Gallery at: afamilyformemaine.org/heart-gallery

Back to School Tips for Teens

Contact the school about taking a tour so your teen will be familiar with where things are.

Create an account in your school district's portal and make a school supplies list. If the expense is too much, there are places you can get free or discounted supplies.

Make sure your teen knows you are interested in how they're feeling about going back. Most students have some anxiety about returning to school. Listen to their feelings rather than thinking you already know.

Shortly before school starts, suggest that kids go to bed a little earlier and get up a little earlier each day so that it's a gradual change.

Encourage teens to stop computer and cell phone use an hour before bed. Blinking lights and glowing screens can disrupt sleep.

Have frequent family meals so everyone can reconnect in between busy schedules.

Please join us for our Q & A Sessions to learn more about foster care and adoption! Register [HERE](#) or on the Events page at afamilyformemaine.org.

Curious about foster care?

Join us on **zoom** the 2nd Monday
of every month at noon
or 6 pm to learn more!

These sessions aren't part of the licensing process. They are casual, informational discussions. You can ask questions, or just sit in and listen!

August 12th
September 9th
October 14th



A Family for **ME** Q & A Sessions

Teen Resources:

UMO Multicultural Student Center: access free training for community members, faculty, and students. umaine.edu/diversity-and-inclusion

Maine YMCAs: core values are caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. nneymcas.org/find-your-ymca/

Foster Friends Database- offering wrap-around services and after-hours help for foster families. <https://tinyurl.com/fosterfriendsneedalert>.

AFFM: provides training, guidance, knowledge, and resources to resource and adoptive parents. affm.net/resources-adoptive-foster-families-of-maine/

OCFS partners with CHCS to provide support and resources for adoptive parents, kinship caregivers, and legal guardians. chcs-me.org/

Maine Parent Federation: support for parents of children with disabilities or special health care needs and the professionals who work with these families. mpf.org/

YLAT is a dynamic group of young leaders and adult partners working together to improve outcomes for youth in foster care. ylat.org

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