

MAINE CHILDREN NEED YOU!

• AFamilyForMEMaine.org •

A Family for ME

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

APRIL '23-JUNE '23



Scan the code to learn more about foster care!

A
Family
for ME

May is National
Foster Care
Month!

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It is a time to acknowledge and celebrate child welfare professionals and foster families. It is also a time to reflect on how Maine continues to struggle with a shortage of available licensed foster homes. Children of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities are in need of temporary, loving care; until they are able to safely return home to their birth families, or transition to an adoptive home. However, LGBTQ+ children and youth and those diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder disproportionately face more challenges.

We urgently need community members who have experience or are willing to learn, to open their homes to provide care for these youth. This year, we emphasize how it is essential to have a role in community networks that take a holistic and culturally responsive approach to supporting our state's diverse populations.

Have you ever wondered how you could serve your community? Do you love children? We invite you to open your heart and learn more about the many different ways you can get involved in helping Maine children in care.

Maine Needs Foster Families and Respite Providers Urgently

Do any of these apply to you?

- I am at least 21 years old
- I own or rent my residence
- I am single, partnered, or married
- I work, am retired, or I stay-at-home
- I have children, or have never parented
- I am part of a faith community, or, I am non-religious
- I am accepting of other cultures, traditions, and LGBTQ+ youth
- Family is important to me

Could you be a treatment foster parent?

- I have experience with children who have special needs, or have worked in a youth caring profession.

Can you refer someone who would
be a great caretaker?

WE NEED YOU TODAY!

Out and About!

A Family for ME has been busy participating in community events and we'd love for you to come out and join us! Here are just a few of our recent events, and some that will be coming up soon. We hope to see you there!

- 4/1- Biddeford School Readiness Fair
- 4/14 & 4/15- AFFM's 26th Annual Spring Conference, South Portland
- 4/21- Skowpendous, Skowhegan
- 4/23 & 4/30- Autism Acceptance Walk, Westbrook & Bangor
- 4/29- York County Early Childhood Coalition's Spring Conference
- 4/30- Oak Hill Middle School Community Resource Fair, Sabattus
- 5/3- 'Jammin for Mental Health Through the Arts' Event, Windham
- 5/4- Maine Roads to Quality Professional Learning Webinar
- 5/7- Lewiston Mosque visit
- 5/20- Foster Parent Appreciation at Fort Knox, Prospect
- 5/22 & 5/23- Maine Library Association Conference, Newry
- 5/28- Foster Care Interest Event, 12:30, Rock Church, Bangor Maine
- 6/17- Portland & Aroostook Pride
- 6/24- Bangor Pride

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April was Autism Acceptance Month!

The Autism community is working to change the narrative from awareness to acceptance. People on the spectrum have differences in how their brains perceive the world; it's not a disease.

One in 36 children will be diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and due to better diagnosing, this number is expected to rise.


Therefore, the number of children in care with ASD is rising as well. Many of us know someone on the spectrum. But we don't know them all!


The Autism Society of Maine explains:

"There are great differences among people with Autism. Some individuals may exhibit only slight delays in language and greater challenges with social interactions. Some may have average to above-average verbal, memory, or spatial skills but find it difficult to be imaginative. Others may require intensive support to manage even the basic tasks and needs of day-to-day living. Contrary to popular belief, many children and adults with Autism make eye contact, show affection, smile and laugh, and show a variety of other emotions, just to varying degrees."

If you are knowledgeable about Autism or have experience with individuals on the Autism Spectrum, consider becoming a licensed resource parent for a child on the spectrum! To learn more about Autism, visit Autism Society of Maine at www.asmonline.org.

Join us to learn more about foster care and adoption - Register [HERE](#) or on the Events page at afamilyforme.org.



A Family for ME
live virtual Q & A sessions!
zoom 

**You've got questions,
we've got answers!**

**The 2nd Monday of every month at
Noon or 6:00pm!**