



## Board Member Prospectus

### About Us

The Adoptive and Foster Family Coalition of New York is a non-profit organization that provides support, information and advocacy for foster and adoptive families in New York State. Through our services to families, we work to ensure that every child grows up in a permanent and loving family. The Coalition was incorporated in 1975 as the New York State Citizens' Coalition for Children, a citizen-based advocacy organization of adoptive parents. In early 2016, the Coalition rebranded itself as the Adoptive and Foster Family Coalition of New York, a name that better communicates the organization's focus.

Today, the Coalition has grown to include foster parents, kinship parents, advocates and professionals. Coalition services are designed to improve the long-term stability and happiness of vulnerable children in New York State by supporting caregivers. The Coalition is the only organization that provides these services to families in every county at no cost.

### Our Mission

The Coalition unites foster, adoptive and kinship care families, giving them a voice and providing support, information and advocacy. By fostering communication and collaboration between families, agencies and concerned citizens, we seek to ensure the stability, well-being and permanency of all children.

### Our Vision

No foster, adoptive or kinship care family in New York State will feel alone or unsupported and that all such families will have the tools, support and community they need to nurture their children and be role models for others.

### Our Impact

Our current programs and accomplishments include:

- Free 24/7 **HelpLine**, providing information, resources and advice to foster parents, adoptive parents, relative caregivers and professionals.
- **Adoptive and Guardianship Assistance Program for Everyone (AGAPE)**, a trauma-informed support program for adoptive families that serves 19 counties and is the largest in New York State.
- **Foster and Kinship Care Support**, which offers hands-on advocacy, information and ombudsman services for families.
- **Best Practices Training Academy**, which provides training to parents and professionals.

**Main Office: 108 Main Street, Suite 5 | New Paltz, NY 12561 | 646.688.4321 |**  
**[www.affny.org](http://www.affny.org)**  
**Regional offices in Amityville and Ithaca**

- Annual **New York State Foster Care and Adoption Conference**, currently in its 31st year.
- **Parent Support Groups and Mentors**, located throughout the state.
- **Advocacy and Outreach**, speaking on issues important to our families and educating the public.

Additional information about our programs can be found at [www.affcnny.org](http://www.affcnny.org).

### **The Changes We Could Make**

While the Coalition has an extensive list of accomplishments, there is much more to do. For example, the Coalition, chosen in 2016 as a provider of post adoption services after decades of advocacy, is in the unique position of advocating for the continued and enhanced provision of these services and ensuring that services are based on best practices and are evidence-based. We are conducting a first-ever evaluation of our own services with Columbia University and hope this effort informs the next round of grants.

With the pro bono litigation support of Morrison & Foerster, the Coalition has spent the last decade asking that New York State comply with federal law and reimburse foster parents for the costs of the children in their care. Currently there is no formula to estimate these costs and the State only has a maximum rate – no minimum that the counties must use to reimburse volunteer foster parents. This hampers adequate foster parent recruitment and means that children live in institutions, not families. While the State has fought every step of the way, we hope our eventual success in this lawsuit will create fundamental change in the system.

In addition, we need to secure the long-term stability of the organization to ensure that the parent voice is always at the table in government decision-making while also increasing outreach to families in need.

### **About the Board of Directors**

We seek board members who are excited about joining, want to help build on the organization's successes and help propel us forward in the changing world of foster care and adoption. The board meets six times a year. Five of these meetings are on weeknights in New York City and the sixth is an annual planning meeting held on a Saturday.

The expected give or get contribution of board members is \$5000 annually.

### **Needed skills, representation and connections to resources**

We are seeking candidates with a variety of skills, experience and networks in areas such as marketing, public relations, accounting & finance, fundraising, child welfare and legal.

### **Questions**

For more information, contact Susanna Furfaro at [vicepresident@affcnny.org](mailto:vicepresident@affcnny.org), Sarah Gerstenzang at [president@affcnny.org](mailto:president@affcnny.org) or Pat O'Brien, Executive Director, at [pat@affcnny.org](mailto:pat@affcnny.org).