



NEWS & VIEWS

NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2022

From the Desk of the Executive Director

The mission of Family Enrichment Network is to provide supportive services for the optimal development of children, adults, and families.

The vision is that all children, adults and families in our service area have the opportunity to grow and develop to their full potential.

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Fall is upon us and Family Enrichment Network continues to grow and change. It's hard to believe the new school year has started and winter is just around the corner. A lot has happened this past year, some good and some not so good. The Family Enrichment Network continues to grow and change.

We know families continue to struggle amongst rising inflation. We continue to provide quality programming for children, adults and families. To meet community needs, we are developing our strategic plan and evaluating our Community Assessment to plan for program sustainability and growth.

We have built an organization and a staff structure that has placed us in a great position for the future. In the past, we have been able to weather the funding challenges and continue to be in a good position.

Election season is a few weeks out. Make your voices count and vote. Everything we do or not do makes a difference. The children and families of this community need it and deserve it.

We could not do so without the support of the staff, the Governing Board and the entire community. Our staff this past year has worked tirelessly to assist us in moving this agency forward and meet the needs of children and families. We thank you for your past support of our Agency and look forward to future partnership opportunities.



*Darrell Newvine,
Family Enrichment Network*

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Did you know we are in the midst of a Child Care Crisis in New York?

Locally, we are no different.

Parents, especially families with infants and toddlers, have a hard time finding high quality child care that is affordable. The cost of child care has increased for families. The average cost for an infant in a child care center is \$15,000 a year.

Child care programs are struggling to find staff. Classrooms have to close and operate with less staff because the difficulty finding people to enter the early childhood field.

Child care workers make low wages, even with the recent federal funding to provide Stabilization Grants to programs. These grants were able to provide one-time bonus funding or small increases in salaries or benefits, but not enough to make an impact on the field. With the increase in minimum wage again in December combined with the increased costs of food and supplies, child care programs are still struggling to balance their budgets.

What can we do? Speak out! If you are a parent and have experienced any hardships due to child care, call your elected officials, write a letter to the editor; just bring attention to the situation.

If you are a community member, you can still join in the fight to fix the child care system. Questions can be directed to CCR&R Director, Jenn Perney, at 607-723-8313 ext. 872 or jperney@familyenrichment.org.

New Programs

Broome Family Child Care: Lisa Beylo, Victoria Allen

Broome Group Family Child Care: Latoya Foster, Healthy Tykes—Christine Schell

Chenango Family Child Care: Sheila Bishop

Broome Child Care Center: Endwell United Methodist Church

Adopt-A-Family

The leaves are just beginning to turn, but here at Family Enrichment Network we are already gearing up for our 2022 Adopt-a-Family Program.

In 2021, through the generous support of our donors, big and small, we were able to adopt 353 children from 128 families! No donation was too small and we were overwhelmed by the outpouring of support. Donors ranged from individuals, families, and friend groups, to businesses in our community.

This year, we aspire to help even more families. Our hope is that you will be able to participate once again (or for the first time!) and help a family in need this holiday season. Families that qualify to be adopted are enrolled in at least one of our programs here at Family Enrichment Network. They do not receive any help from other agencies or family members. There is a \$60.00 minimum per child, and we ask that you do not donate used items for this program.

If you would like to adopt a family this holiday season, please visit our website to complete our online Donor Form. Donors will be contacted by or before November 18th with information about their family and each child's wish list, including information about the child, their wants, needs, and interests. We try to match donors with families quickly, so that you have as much time as possible. Gifts are due by Monday, December 12th and detailed instructions for delivery will also be provided along with the wish list(s).

If you are not in the position to adopt a family this year, please consider making a donation that will go towards helping one of our families. Nothing is too small, and any amount will go a long way in helping a family in need. One hundred percent of donations received will go directly to the families for necessities and gifts. You can donate securely through our website (<http://www.familyenrichment.org/give-pg.html>) or by check, mailed to:

Family Enrichment Network
ATTN: Adopt-a-Family
24 Cherry Street
Johnson City, NY 13790

Thank you so much for your time and consideration and thank you to our donors, past, present and future. If you have any questions about the Adopt-a-Family program, please contact Rachel Faulks at (607) 723-8313, ext. 891 or by email at rfaulks@familyenrichment.org.



Coats For Kids

Coats for Kids is our annual coat drive organized by WBNG to collect coats for children and families in need. This year, WBNG has teamed up with Endwell Family Physicians, Bryant Heating & Air Conditioning, Security Mutual Life, Tier Pediatrics, Servepro, Tioga State Bank and Hatala Orthodontics. Coat collection ends on November 4th, but coats will be available through the end of December. All coats are professionally cleaned by BatesTroy. Last year Bates Troy cleaned 1,464 coats! We hope to have another successful year and keep the children and families in our community warm this winter.

Coats are available for everyone in the community on a first come first serve basis, not just families enrolled in FEN programming. You do not need to bring anything with you; all we ask that you take one coat per person. Be sure to check out our Facebook Page, where we post when new shipments of coats arrive.

A promotional graphic for the 'Coats for Kids' drive. The top left features the WBNG 12 logo. The main text reads 'COATS FOR KIDS' in large, white, hand-drawn letters, with 'OCT 3 to NOV 4' to the right. Below this, it says 'Sponsored by' followed by logos for TIER PEDIATRICS, Excellus, Tioga State Bank, ENDWELL FAMILY PHYSICIANS, HATALA ORTHODONTICS, P.C., SECURITY MUTUAL LIFE, SERVPRO, and bryant Heating & Cooling Systems. A photo of a child in a red coat is on the left, and the text 'Coats will be professionally cleaned by BatesTroy' is above it. At the bottom, it says 'Donate a coat to a child in need.'



Department Spotlight

Special Education Services

Clinical Services:

The Clinical Services Department at FEN consists of Speech and Language Therapists, Physical Therapists, and Occupational Therapists who evaluate children as well as provide the appropriate services and recommendations. We currently have six Speech Therapists; one is a FEN Employee, one is contracted through an agency, and four are contracted through Binghamton University. We have four therapists in our Physical Therapy Department; one is a contracted PT, one is a contracted PTA (Physical Therapist Assistant), and two are FEN PTAs. We also have four Occupational Therapists who are all FEN employees. The therapists either work directly with the students in their respective therapy settings or push in to classrooms to work with the assigned student, their teachers, or as a whole class session. By intervening in a timely manner, many actions can be corrected or diminished at a young age. Parental support is also offered through suggestions for use in the home setting.

FEN has recently established calming rooms at most FEN sites. They are spaces or rooms that provide a comforting, relaxing atmosphere to promote self calming techniques. Thank you Mary Ann Higgins for being the catalyst for these amazing spaces. We are very fortunate to work with such dedicated, caring therapists who go out of their way to offer support to help each child function to the best of their abilities.

Classroom Staff:

The classroom staff currently consists of five teachers, five teaching assistants, and nine aides (as required by student IEPs). Teachers follow either UPK or Head Start lessons and adapt them accordingly to meet the special needs of their students. Additionally, Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are followed for each classified student. Three- and four-year-old students attend half day classes and are provided with a meal and a snack during the three and a half hour session. Staff are very diligent with meeting the educational needs of the children while also addressing the social-emotional aspects of child development. Lessons are age and skill appropriate either by design or with modifications as required on the IEPs. Students must have the approval of their school district to attend the SES classes and be registered by our FEN social worker. The entire department works together to provide a strong educational foundation for the beginning of each student's educational journey.

Employee Spotlights

Sarah Sedore

I have been teaching at the Family Enrichment at Horace Mann site since 2018. I started as a special education teacher and transfer to the UPK teacher the following year. I have been teaching for 23 years in Pre-K and have a master's degree in Literacy, birth to grade 12. I live in Apalachin with my husband Tom, four cats named Princess Furburger, Alekhine, San Remo, and Vienna. All except Princess Furburger are named after famous chess players or a city where an important chess tournament was held (not my idea). I also have one dog named Cooper.



An exciting development for FEN at Horace Mann is the creation of a calming room. With the help of MaryAnn Higgins, one of the occupational therapist, we are making a calming room. All the children love the splatter tiles that are on the floor, just as you enter or exit the main room. No one enters or exits the room without jumping on the tiles.

A few things that are unique to FEN at Horace Mann are, we eat our meals in the cafeteria, and join the school in different activities throughout the year. We also join kindergarten and transitional kindergarten for story time with Mr. Stewart, the school principal, on Fridays.

Rachel Dowd

I joined Family Enrichment Network this past June as a CCR&R training and coaching specialist and have been loving every minute of it! I graduated from Ithaca College in 2017 with a degree in psychology where I found a love for and interest in child development. I spent the first few years after college working at Racker Centers in Ithaca, honing my skills and developing a passion for special education and childcare, while also working as a coach for the Ithaca College women's crew team. Since then I have been working in special education programs and preschool programs while spending my free time coaching college and youth rowing. When I'm not at work I enjoy hiking, exploring, and reading books ranging from cheesy romance to magical fantasy. I also love spending time with my wonderful fiancé, Emily, and our three cats and six rats!



Employee Spotlights, continued

Emily Owen

I joined Family Enrichment Network this past February of 2022 as an Informal Childcare Specialist in the Legally Exempt Office. My education has included an Associates Degree in Early Childhood Development and a license in Cosmetology. I am also an aquatics instructor for a few local community businesses, such as the YMCA and the Jewish Community Center.

After college I went right into the daycare field and fell in love with the children and families! Of the six years teaching, Campus Preschool brought so much learning, growth, appreciation and friendship (let me not forget patience)! However, as much as I loved the classroom, there was an opportunity waiting to challenge my strengths, weaknesses and comfort zone. FEN has certainly met those; as I continue to learn and serve the children and families in the community, I hope to extend the same skills and continue to grow even further in my professional development, let alone personal. The "family feeling" here at FEN has made me feel welcome; and the adjustment to a new job, smooth sailing, minus the gust of wind here and there.

In my free time, I like to be outside, hiking or on the water, or creating art and finding that good book.



Julie Henry

I started at FEN in 2006 in CCR&R. After exploring another career briefly, I returned to CCR&R in 2019. I've held several different positions within the department. I'm now the Business Specialist where I can use my previous business background with our childcare providers. It's very rewarding to see the childcare providers succeed.

At home, my husband and I are partners at McRey Farm where we raise beef, pork, and chicken that we sell at the Farmer's Market. Two years ago, we also started beekeeping. Much to my surprise, I love it! We have three German Shepherds - Mabel who is seven years old, and Jimmy and Maxine who are seven months old. But by far, my favorite thing to do is spend time with my family. I have two daughters and sons-in-law who have blessed me with six beautiful grandchildren - two boys and four girls. Life is good!



Laura Smith

Laura has worked at FEN for seven years. She feels it is nice to be part of the human service organization. Laura got married in May of 2021 and now lives in Johnson City. In her free time, Laura enjoys reading, trying new recipes and spending time with family.



Years of Service

CONGRATULATIONS!

5 Years:

Marisa Happ
Charlotte Heaney

20 Years:

Chris Caciola



FamilySM



Enrichment Network



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for all you do!*

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For more information on available space or to set up your ad,

please call Laura at (607) 723-8313 ext. 815.