



NEWS & VIEWS

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2023

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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As we begin the New Year it is always good to look back and see all the good we have accomplished and new areas we need to look at in the coming year. We are fortunate to continue to grow and prosper. That is a very difficult task in the not-for-profit world today. We continue to look at what we have in the past and spend a considerable amount of time and energy looking to the future.

Financially, we are very strong. We continue to be a low risk auditee and have a great balance sheet. Our asset to debt ratio is the best it has ever been.

The New Year is a time for reflection. Here is what I see: every program and service we provide is consistent with our mission and vision. We need to continue to provide quality services in everything we do. We need to step up advocacy to increase revenue so we can increase salaries and benefits for our staff. We need to find a way to attract more staff to our agency. Every little change we make makes us stronger. We have to take risks, but calculated risks.

Our five departments offer over 20 successful programs and this past year we served over 1,500 children, adults and families throughout Broome, Chenango and Tioga Counties. We purchased another home, this multi-family home is located on Robinson Street and expands our commitment to provide affordable and quality housing. We will be submitting another HHAP application in January. .

We have been very fortunate to have a tremendously supportive and talented Board of Directors that coupled with a strong organization and a staff and a structure that has placed us in a great position for the future.

Our biggest challenge continues to be staffing, as it is everywhere.

The most important job in the world, caring for our young children, should not be the lowest paid. In childcare cheaper is not better. Cheaper results in poor quality, high staff turnover, and the number of people in general who want to work in child care decreases. The number of child care centers in the area that have closed or had significant issues this past year is disconcerting. There are still more centers that are on the brink of closing in the near future. The long-term answer continues to be a cooperative effort between government, not-for-profits, and the business community.

We thank you for your past support of our Agency and look forward to future partnership opportunities.

Happy New Year



***Darrell Newvine,
Family Enrichment Network***

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CCR&R

The Child Care System needs your help!

It's time to speak up.

Advocating for investment in the child care system is vitally important for the future of our country. The current system, where the majority of the funding comes from parents directly, does not work. Parents cannot afford to pay for the actual cost to provide high quality child care and early childhood education. Additional investment needs to come from other sources, including state and federal funding. Parents need to work and they can't without child care. It's that simple.

February 14, 2023 is Child Care Advocacy Day in New York State. Take time to contact your elected officials to tell them your story. Did you struggle finding child care? Is child care more expensive than your mortgage or rent? Does your child care program keep closing because there is a lack of staff? All of these different scenarios make up "your story." Share your experience to those that can change it.

For information on the Empire State Campaign for Child Care, visit www.epirestatechildcare.org or contact CCR&R Director, Jenn Perney, at jperney@familyenrichment.org.

New Programs:

Broome Family Child Care:

Just Like Home—Michelle Arlequin

Itty Bitty Biddie Community—Nikia Holmes

Broome School Age Child Care:

Right At School, LLC at CR Weeks Elementary School

Adopt-A-Family

Thank you to everyone who participated in our 2022 Adopt-a-Family Program! It has been another challenging year, but through the generous support of our community we were able to support every single child nominated for the program. This year 128 families were “adopted,” for a total of 347 children. We could not do this without your support. Donors ranged from individuals who could adopt a single child, to local businesses and clubs who could adopt multiple families.

Thank you to all of our donors, big and small! This program would not be possible without your support.

We also want to give a special thank you to Lalor Family Dental, who adopted 74 children from 15 families! And we also want to thank the Local Carpenters Union 277 who donated additional toys and coats for children in need. These items went to children in our program who families needed a little extra help this holiday season.

Coats For Kids

The Coats for Kids drive had another successful year, with more than 1,500 coats donated! Thank you to WBNG for organizing another successful coat drive and thank you to Bates Troy for cleaning and delivering all the winter coats to our office at Cherry Street. The coats went to children and adults in our programs, from babies in our Early Head Start classrooms to grandparents in our Kinship program. Thank you to everyone who donated a new or gently used coat this year.

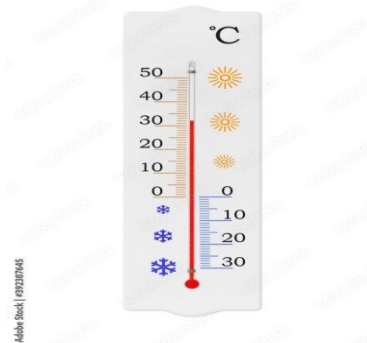
We were able to supply brand new coats to all children and families in our program. We also were able to provide coats to our community and provide coats to many of our local schools.

Despite another difficult year, this was our most successful coat drive yet. The generosity of our community in these challenging times was truly breathtaking. Thank you everyone for your support. We hope that everyone stays warm this winter.

Housing

Code Blue

The Broome County Department of Social Services is required by the NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance to operate a “Code Blue Plan” during inclement weather. This plan was created by Governor Cuomo to ensure everyone is off the streets when the temperature drops below 32 degrees with the wind chill. This plan is in effect now in Broome County for winter nights when the temperature drops to 32 degrees or below, including wind-chill, between 4:00 PM and 8:00 AM.



There are three emergency shelter facilities in Broome County available for homeless housing during Code Blue:

- **The YWCA** (80 Hawley St. Binghamton) YWCA provides individual clean, safe apartments for homeless or formerly homeless women and their dependent children.
- **The YMCA** (61 Susquehanna St. Binghamton).
- **Volunteers of America** (320 Chenango St. Binghamton) Volunteers of America is the only shelter in Binghamton that houses entire families, allowing men and women with children to stay together in a safe and stable environment. Every year, Volunteers of America serves nearly 100 families in the Binghamton area.

Call 211 for assistance. After hours the Local Law Enforcement may be able to assist with transportation.

Head Start



Head Start/Early Head Start 2023 Policy Council Executive Committee

Federal Program Performance Standards require that annually that Head Start and Early Head Start programs recruit and elect members to serve as representatives. At November Parent Committee Meetings, a new Policy Council was elected for 2023, and they began serving their one year term at the December 14, 2022 Policy Council Meeting, which consisted of both outgoing and incoming members. Each member participates in a one year term, and terms run from December of one year to December of the next. So, each member is voted in for a thirteen month term. Members may serve up to five one year terms. With the advent of COVID-19 brought some changes to governance, and one of those changes is that for those who cannot attend a meeting in person, an electronic account of the meeting can be sent to members via email and they can participate and vote on action items through that system.

At their December meeting, a new Policy Council Executive Committee was elected; Executive Committee members include: Chairperson, Kenyetta Torrence; Vice Chair Person, Shauntel Bess; Treasurer, Erika Hinckley; Recording Secretary, Olivia Watson; and Corresponding Secretary, Amanda Cummings. Executive Committee Elections were conducted by the Nominating Committee which included Denise Lee and Meg Ward.

Congratulations to our new Policy Council. The Head Start and Early Head Start program wish them the best as they begin their work with the program.

The program would also like to acknowledge and applaud outgoing members whose final term ended this month, and they are Denise Lee and Meg Ward. Their individual and collective contributions are too many to name. They were both instrumental in the great work done by our Policy Council Governance group in both Broome and Tioga programs.

Department Spotlight

Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R)

The CCR&R department grew to 14 staff in 2022. All CCR&R programs support child care throughout our area.

The majority of the CCR&R funding comes from the NYS Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS). OCFS is the state agency that oversees the licensing of child care programs. They fund CCR&Rs to offer that supportive services. Every county in the state is covered by a CCR&R. We serve Broome, Chenango, and Tioga Counties.

Referrals: CCR&R can help parents find child care to meet their needs. We gather a little information from the parent, such as location, hours of care needed, ages of children, etc., then we match that to all the registered and licensed child care programs in our database. We don't just send out a "list" of programs in the area. We assist in their specific child care situation. Parents can also do a quick search for programs on our website, but can call or email for a more comprehensive search.

Resources: CCR&R offers a variety of resources for child care programs in the community. The CCR&R staff can help programs navigate the licensing regulations or help with classroom/program concerns or improvement. We get calls and emails asking anything from quick simple questions to needing more support and onsite assistance and coaching. The Infant Toddler Specialist can support programs who work with infants and toddlers specifically. The Infant Toddler Mental Health Specialist also works with infant and toddler caregivers, but more supporting the social-emotional development. The Child Care Business Specialist can support the business operations of child care programs, anything from helping them create contracts and policies to tracking required paperwork.

Training is large part of what the CCR&R staff can provide. OCFS requires child care programs have ongoing professional development in certain topics, and we can help them meet those requirements. CPR/First Aid training is the biggest requirement we help programs meet, as well as the OCFS required Health and Safety Trainings for new family providers or for new directors. Our Health Care Consultant can now provide MAT training for programs who administer medications to children. CCR&R staff can provide training on almost any topic needed, such as supervising children, behavior guidance and managing challenging behaviors, diapering and hand washing, developmentally appropriate practice, child development, and child abuse reporting requirements. CCR&R can work with the OCFS licensors and help programs with any corrective action plans needed for licensing violations. CCR&R also provides a CDA (child development associate) credentialing course to help increase the education of those in the field.

Department Spotlight, continued

CCR&R operates the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) as the sponsor of family child care homes. The CACFP staff work with the family child care programs on serving healthy meals and snacks, offering training and education, as well as monetary reimbursements for serving those foods.

The Legally Exempt (LE) staff work to enroll child care providers who are not required to be registered or licensed but are watching a child (or children) whose parent receives help paying for child care through the department of social services. The parent applies for the Child Care Assistance Program with their local DSS. If they want care by someone other than a registered or licensed child care program, such as a family, friend, or neighbor, the provider needs to go through the enrollment process with us to accept the payments. We assist the provider through that process, as well as conduct inspections to make sure they are following the guidelines they agreed to in the application. The goal is for children to be in safe, healthy environments.

CCR&R helps anyone in the community who is interested in starting a child care program. The Outreach and Recruitment Specialist can assist with understanding the requirements, ordering the application, and navigating that licensing process. There are often small grants to assist in the costs associated with starting a child care business.

CCR&R also collaborates and hosts the Southern Tier Early Childhood Regional Coordinator of the Professional Development Institute (PDI) with CUNY. This project coordinates the Leadership Initiative for the entire Southern Tier, working with directors and other early childhood leaders in the community on professional development and networking opportunities. The project also includes the Career Development Center, working to bring more early childhood workers into the field and supporting the career progression of those currently in the field.

CCR&R understands the entire landscape of child care in the community. Analyzing the supply and demand of care and knowing where there are gaps, we can support new programs to meet needs. We also educate the community on why supporting child care is important.

Employee Spotlights

Crystal Rozelle

I have had the wonderful pleasure of working in the CCR&R department since August 2008. I enjoy working with our daycare programs, helping them in the Child Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) to educate them on providing healthy food for the children. I have always loved being around children from a young age, leading me to working with infants at a daycare center. An opportunity came available at FEN as the CACFP Monitor and 14 years later I am in the same position. It has been great seeing the children and programs grow over the years as we help guide them to making healthier choices in the food they eat. I have been able to travel and network with other CACFP sponsors over the years, and I think the best conference was in Seattle (first time flying).

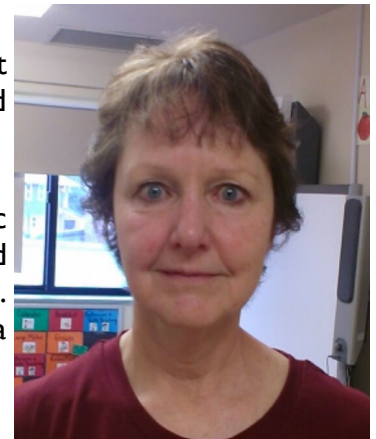


I have lived in the Binghamton area all of my life, from graduating to raising my two boys. When I am not working you will see me spending time with my family, friends, and my dog Rocket.

Cathy Lee

I have two children, one amazing granddaughter, and recently got married. My home is in Colesville, surrounded by acres of fields and forest.

Originally, I am from NJ. I earned a Master's degree in Public Administration from Penn State, which opened wonderful health and wellness opportunities for me in private and public organizations. Being physically active is important to me, so I have also been a certified personal trainer, group exercise and Pilates instructor.



I started my career at FEN in 2016 when I felt it was time for a career change; I wanted to work with children. I loved teaching children and an opportunity opened to teach adults as well. Being a certified CPR instructor, I began helping Nurse Michelle teach CPR and I am thankful for that opportunity. That led me to apply for a position in CCR&R, which led to a position in CACFP and brought me back to Health and Wellness. A perfect circle!

When I am not at work, I can be found paddling my racing canoe locally on the Susquehanna or at races, gardening, hiking, biking, going for long walks, writing poetry or hanging on my swing in my "Fairy Garden" in the woods.

Employee Spotlights, continued

Anna Boerner

I live in Binghamton, NY and recently got married on June 25th, 2022 in Endwell. I grew up on a small farm in the Town of Maine and graduated from Maine-Endwell High School in 2015. I received my Associates degree in Human Services at SUNY Broome, and then transferred to SUNY Empire State College, where I graduated in December of 2021 with my Bachelors Degree in Community and Human Services.



In 2013, I found a job at Good Shepherd Nursing Home in Endwell as a server/bartender in the dinning room. I always loved hearing all their stories they would share about their past, they were truly inspiring. After a few years, I wanted to do something that I felt would truly make an impact with working with families and children, so I became a teacher at Kurious Kids Childcare for five years. I loved being able to see the children and having the chance to work with them each day. In October, I took this position at Family Enrichment Network and I am so excited to see where this adventure takes me.

I have a wonderful husband at home and we have two very spoiled dogs, Doug and Riley, who were both rescues. We have a camper up in Clayton, NY where we love to spend our free time in the summer with family and friends.

Trina Zigata

I began working for FEN this past July (2022), as an Infant Toddler Mental Health Consultant! Prior to this position, I provided direct care to children and families in Broome, Tioga, Chenango, and Chemung County who have experienced trauma. These supports included family psychotherapy, individual psychotherapy, behavior modification, crisis intervention, community habilitation, and community psychiatric support and treatment. In my free time, I enjoy being with family, spending time with my dogs and doing DIY projects around my house. I also enjoy thrifting and love a good bargain!



Years of Service



Five Years

Bill Squires

Fifteen Years

April Ramsay

Twenty-Five Years

Eric Ludwig



FamilySM



Enrichment Network



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