



News & Views

FEBRUARY, 2017

The mission of Family Enrichment Network is to provide supportive services for the optimal development of children 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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From the Desk of the Executive Director

Happy New Year!

It is hard to believe that we have closed another year. It is always good to look back and appreciate all the good we have accomplished and consider new areas for this year. We have a tendency to forget all the great things we have done for children and families – big and small. We marvel at progress children have made from the first day they came to program to when they leave.

Our funders look at program effectiveness and whether or not we met our goals. We do meet those goals, but sometimes the greatest achievements we make never make it to those funder reports: a child going to bed not hungry, a child sleeping in a bed instead of the floor, a mother bringing her child to program and going to work knowing her child is safe, a mother getting rental assistance so they can move out of condemned housing. We do this and much more hundreds of times each day.

It seems that every month a new program need presents itself. Those who know me are aware that I cannot resist meeting those needs and the challenges it presents.



Darrell Newvine

Family Enrichment Network

We continue to grow and prosper. That is a very difficult task in the not-for-profit world today.

The Christmas Holiday season is always a time for reflection. Here's what I saw: we held another successful coat drive and Adopt-A-Family program. Desperate families come to us with needs and, with great assistance from our community, we find ways to meet those needs.

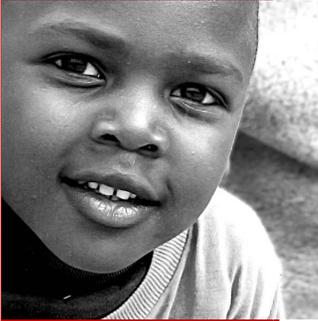
On the program side, we must continue to provide quality services in everything we do. We need to step up advocacy to increase revenue so we can increase salaries and benefits for our staff. We need to find a way to attract more staff to our Agency. This may be our biggest challenge. We are at a crossroads where the program needs and the staff to provide those services is really challenging.

We are very fortunate to have a tremendously supportive and talented Governing Board, a strong organization, and staff structure. This has placed us in a great position for the future.

With the minimum wage for our agency going to \$12.50 per hour, we must advocate or be left behind. If our children are important, than we need to pay quality child development staff adequately. We need to advocate for increases just as those did for fast food workers.

There is a growing sense that there must be a better way to involve a new and substantial investment in services to young children. We must develop a compensation initiative that includes wage increases and fringe benefits to include health insurance. The long-term answer continues to be a cooperative effort between government, not-for-profits, and the business community. The most recent election will affect programs for children and families, but we do not know yet to what degree.

Our staff, this past year, has worked tirelessly to assist us in moving this Agency forward and meet the needs of children and families. As always, we thank them and you.



CCR&R News

Did you know that in 2016, CCR&R staff conducted:

- Over 70 trainings and workshops at Family Enrichment Network offices
- Over 15 workshops onsite in the community
- Over 1000 technical assistance phone calls with child care providers throughout Broome, Chenango, and Tioga Counties
- Over 200 onsite assistance visits at area child care programs to offer hands-on assistance
- Over 500 referrals to parents looking for child care in the community

New programs:

Chenango County Group Family Child Care
Next Generation Daycare
Juli Lewis
Tioga Day Care Center:
Franziska Racker Centers, Inc.
Owego Elementary School

Congratulations to CCR&R staff!

Leslie Vermaat and Linda Miller have successfully renewed their Pre-K CLASS certification for 2017. CLASS stands for Classroom Assessment Scoring System. CLASS is the observation tool developed to assess the interactions teachers have with children which impact learning, development—even lifelong achievement.

Nicole Dillon, Ann Shear, Lisa Rosa, and Leslie Vermaat have successfully renewed their New York State Early Learning Trainer Credential through the New York State Association for the Education of Young Children. These four staff successfully demonstrate the specialized knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for those who provide training to early care and education programs and providers.

Classroom Upgrade

Thanks to funding provided by the Decker Foundation, Family Enrichment Network has been able to replace the floors in five classrooms at its Cherry Street site. The previous floors in these classrooms were approximately 10 years old and in need of repair. Overall, this improvement will allow us to operate programs in a safer manner and furthers our mission of providing quality programs and services to children and families.



Before, vinyl tiles



After, new vinyl plank flooring



A message from Nurse Michelle

Good Health Habits Can Help Prevent the Flu



The symptoms of flu include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people have reported diarrhea and vomiting.

Everyone 6 months of age and older should get an annual flu vaccine as soon as vaccines are available. Those who are especially vulnerable to complications are:



- Children younger than 5, but especially children younger than 2 years old
- Adults 65 years of age and older
- Pregnant women

The single best way to prevent seasonal flu is to get vaccinated each year.

Even though we are in the middle of flu season, it is not too late to get immunized.

Good health habits like covering your cough and washing your hands often can help stop the spread of germs and prevent respiratory illnesses like the flu. There also are **flu antiviral drugs** that can be used to treat and prevent the flu.



Other ways to avoid the flu include:

1. Avoid close contact.
Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.
2. Stay home when you are sick.
If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching your illness.
3. Cover your mouth and nose.
Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.
4. Clean your hands.
Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs.
5. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.
6. Practice other good health habits. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

Source: CDC Website

Employee Spotlight



Hello,

My name is Linda Fox, and I am the Fiscal Clerk at FEN. I have been working here for approximately 9 months.

I help out with different duties here in the Fiscal Office, which include: purchase orders, In-kind data entry, stamping, & mailing out checks to vendors, matching shipping notices & invoices to P.O.'s, petty cash, filing, and other clerical duties.

I love the challenge, and one of my favorite duties is processing, ordering, sorting, and delivering the W.B. Mason office supplies for all of the FEN employees.

I am always amazed at all the wonderful staff that works here at FEN and the incredible jobs that they do.

Community Habilitation Services

Family Enrichment Network is now offering Community Habilitation services.

Community Habilitation is a waiver program funded by Medicaid and is available to children and adults with developmental and intellectual disabilities. Both individuals residing in certified settings and individuals living in the community are eligible for this program.

The goal of Community Habilitation is to provide community integration and independent living skills. An individual in the program may receive anywhere from 4 to 30+ hours a week of the service depending on their needs. The Community Habilitation staff provides all transportation to individuals in the program. Community Habilitation is based on person centered planning, meaning that the individual decides what goals are important to work on and how the goals will be met.

This is a fun and educational program which supports independent living and provides opportunities for people to get involved in their community while learning new skills.

For more information please contact Jamie LaPlante at 607-723-8313 ext. 1662.



New Years Resolutions for Fathers (and Kids)

We all want our kids to have a better life than we've had. When calendars change, many of us think about ways we would like to improve ourselves and our families. Whether you are big on resolutions or not, there are probably ways you can improve as a father and be a good role model for your children.



Here are some things you can do in 2017 to help your kids be successful:

Support what your children love to do; *don't push them to do what you want them to do.* No father wants his kids to make the same mistakes he made growing up, but remember you cannot fix your mistakes through them. Your kids' biggest successes will come from doing what they love to do, what they're passionate about, not what they're forced to do or pushed into doing.

Teach them to try new things. If they succeed it will give them confidence, but if they fail, they will learn even more. Let them make their own mistakes and learn to take responsibility for the outcome. I know it's hard to watch them try new things and come up short, but it's really important that they get used to that. And let them see you do the same. Let them see you as you are: human, genuine, and flawed.

Let them be kids. Social skills are critical for children to be successful. Sports, friends, relationships, parties, being out and about, it's all good. Sure, they'll make mistakes and occasionally do things you wish they wouldn't, but if you are open and encourage them to come to you with their problems, then you can mentor them on how to get along and learn from their mistakes.

Encourage their natural curiosity. Encourage your kids to seek out books, games, puzzles, whatever interests them. Video games can be a limited part of play time, but your children will learn more by creating and using their imagination.

Get healthy with your kids. Losing weight or getting fit is probably the most common resolution, but with rising obesity rates in America, it is more important than ever to (literally) take the first step toward wellness. Involve your kids in this process! From a walk around the block to playing in the park, there are plenty of things you can do with your children that will get you both active.

Make family dinners a regular part of your schedule. Fathers have a great influence on the foods their kids eat. In fact, one study showed that by far the biggest influence on how often children ate out was the number of times fathers did. Although preparing food and setting the table after a long day at work can seem daunting, your family's waistlines and mental health will thank you for it. Regular

family meals have been associated with many positive outcomes for children. Beyond giving the family a space to talk freely without distraction, kids who ate with their parents were less likely to be involved with drugs and other destructive behaviors.

Respect their mother. If you are in a relationship with the mother of your children, or are co-parenting, your kids will develop more when both parents work together toward a common goal rather than struggling against each other. Your kids gain security, stability, and added perspective when you respect their mother.

Do something your kids will remember forever. When children are grown they do not look back and remember their father through toys and gifts, but the experiences they shared together. It can cost little or no money to create a memorable experience. Make 2017 a year that your kids will remember forever.

Talk to your kids. Do not be afraid to dig deeper than asking how your child's day was or what they did in school. Even though it may feel awkward occasionally, your children need your presence, guidance, and wisdom. You will be glad you made the effort and your kids will love you for it!

Sign up for a fatherhood class. A great way to learn new skills and meet other dads who have "been there, done that." The New Pathways for Fathers Program provides fun, interactive, responsible fatherhood workshops in Broome and Tioga counties. All workshops are free and provide a meal. Childcare and transportation assistance are generally available, as well. Workshops cover between 20-25 hours of training on topics such as: family history; father's roles; anger management; understanding child development; co-parenting; domestic violence and relationship safety; communication; work and job readiness; self-care; and more. Participants also have access to case management services, and those that complete three surveys will receive a \$25 gift card. Although the focus of the program is on fathers and fatherhood, women and men are both welcome to attend and participate. Call today to register!

If you enjoyed reading this and have questions about the New Pathways for Fathers program, Please call Dan Lesch at 723-8313 (ext. 838)

or email: dlesch@familyenrichment.org



Head Start Pre-Screening Event

WHEN: February 15, 2017

4:00 to 7:00 pm

WHERE: Family Enrichment Network Inc.

24 Cherry Street

Johnson City, NY



Head Start and Early Head Start are having a prescreening event which offers families with children ages 0 to 4 interested in Head Start programming, the opportunity to complete a pre-screening and health interview at one time. Interested families need to bring proof of income for the last twelve months, the child's birth certificate as well as medical information such as insurance and immunizations/allergy information. Child care is available while parents complete paperwork.

For more information call 723-8313, Ext. 850 or 880.

Head Start/Early Head Start

2017 Policy Council Membership

Federal Program Performance Standards require that annually Head Start and Early Head Start programs recruit and elect members to serve as representatives. At the November Parent Committee Meetings, a new Policy Council was elected for 2017 and they began serving their one year term at the December 13th Policy Council Meeting. At that meeting, a new Policy Council Executive Committee was elected; Executive Committee members include: *Chairperson:* Sonjah Howard; *Vice Chair Person:* Ralph Gedeon; *Treasurer:* Denise Lee; *Recording Secretary:* Patty Quinton; and *Corresponding Secretary:* Angel Stringer. Executive Committee Elections were conducted by the Nominating Committee which was directed by Shobhana Sharma.

2017 Policy Council Parent Members (by center):

Carlisle:
Betty Dewar

Owego:
Meg Ward

Newark Valley:
Shannon Elliot

Waverly:
Penny Walker

Woodrow Wilson:
Kacie Allen

Saratoga:
Takicia Mitchell
Megan Deno
Stephen Mitchell
Brian Deno

Cherry Street:
Barbara Paugh
Angel Stringer
Sonjah Howard
Kaminie DeGroot
Jenilli Woody
Marie Holland

Chris Rohde
Angie Rohde
Michelle Ford
Ralph Gedeon
Melissa Ellis
Denise Lee

Crystal Corbett
John Daszewski
Patty Quinton

Congratulations to our new Policy Council!

The Head Start and Early Head Start programs wish them the best as they begin their work with the program.



24 Cherry Street
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 13790



We are a proud sponsor of Family Enrichment Network, and the positive changes they make in our community.

*Thank you
 for all you do!*



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“Blocks” approximately 2 1/2” x 3 1/2” are now available, become an advertising partner of Family Enrichment Network for \$15 per year, and receive 3 issues of “free” advertising.

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

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