



NEWS & VIEWS

MAY/JUNE 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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I believe that spring has finally sprung; it's time to get outdoors and enjoy the warm weather.

The agency continues to have a very aggressive development program, to include program development and expansion in general. We have been blessed with very supportive community partners with foundations and government agencies being very supportive. We completed our 2022-2025 Strategic Plan and have identified a variety of goals and objectives to reach our vision.

The area that provides continued growth is housing. Two years ago we had just six units, we now have 31. We just submitted another letter of intent for ten units of HHAP homeless housing. We have also had interest from Chenango County for homeless housing. The need is there. We have several more opportunities in the works. We just completed our Community Assessment and will use that as our guide to move forward. We are also in the process of trying to provide transitional housing to people upon release from being incarcerated. They need a safe place to go until they can make long term living arrangements; otherwise they struggle and end up re-incarcerated. If this works out we will begin looking at providing longer term housing those people.

We continue to have struggles finding staff, as everyone does. We could expand even more if staff were available. We have completed our move to a \$14.20 minimum wage and beyond for all staff. If the state indexes the minimum wage to inflation with

our existing funding sources that will be a challenge. The Feds have just lifted the vaccination mandate and from a Human Resources perspective that will be very helpful in finding new staff to fill vacancies. There is light at the end of the tunnel. In the meantime we need to remain vigilant. We still encourage all staff and parents to get vaccinated.

If there something we are doing well, tell us. If there is something we could do different or better tell us. Our sole purpose here is to meet your needs and community needs. Help us do that.



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

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Head Start

Family Enrichment Network Offers Families a Free Summer Food Program

For the past fifteen years, Family Enrichment Network has hosted a summer food services program. In the early years we provided a morning snack and lunch program, in the past four years we have offered breakfast and lunch. We are an open site, so all interested children and their families are able to participate in our program daily.

Hunger is a local, state-wide, and national challenge that our families deal with on a daily basis, and providing these services allows families to better stretch their food dollars; offers them an opportunity to eat as a family; and provides them with nutrition and healthy meal ideas that they can prepare for their children at home.

The Food and Nutrition Services, USDA Summer Food Services Program assists families in obtaining **FREE** nutritious meals and snacks for their children when school is out.

The program runs from July 5, 2023 through August 18, 2023. Breakfast will be served from 8:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. and lunch will be served from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Monday through Friday each week at Family Enrichment Network in the Cafeteria.

Parents attending our program with their children will be invited to enjoy a free meal, too. The adult meals are paid for through local contributions secured specifically for these adult meals.

For more information contact Network Offices at (607) 723-8313.

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- (1) mail: US Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

CCR&R

May is Mental Health Awareness Month



May is Mental Health Awareness Month, a time to raise awareness about mental health.

Mental health is an important part of overall health. A young child's social and emotional well-being plays a big role in their ability to learn, form positive relationships, develop self-control and other important aspects of their healthy development. Young children need help to regulate their emotions. Self-regulation is an important life skill that helps children listen, wait, and react calmly to things they don't want to hear.

Our Infant Toddler Mental Health Specialist is available to help caregivers facilitate healthy growth and development. For information on our program, contact Traci at tdecker@familyenrichment.org.

New Programs:

- Broome SACC:
Broome County Urban League, Inc.
KCE Champions, LLC
- Broome Family Child Care:
Kim's Family Daycare—Kiminu Goodson
- Tioga Family Child Care:
Emilee Komarisky

NOEP



Having enough food to eat is important, and helps you stay healthy.

SNAP provides monthly benefits that you can use to buy groceries. SNAP helps more than 600,000 older New Yorkers buy food, and it can help you too.

The Nutrition Outreach and Education Program (NOEP) can tell you if you may be eligible for SNAP. We can also help you complete and submit your application.



**Family Enrichment Network
NOEP Coordinator, Broome County
(607) 723-8313 x 827**

Department Spotlight

Family Support Services

The Family Support Services (FSS) Department started 18 years ago, in 2006, due to the number of special projects that were no longer specifically childcare or child development related. These projects were developed in response to gaps in services identified through our annual FEN community assessments. Over the years, FSS has offered 11 different programs with distinct funding sources, rules, and regulations. Depending on the specific program, services were offered in one or two of the following counties: Broome, Cortland, Delaware, and Tioga.

Our FSS programs fill important needs in people's lives and really make a difference for individuals and families of all kinds. Over the years, the FSS department has helped survivors of domestic violence achieve independence, helped individuals with disabilities find employment, helped working families purchase cars, assisted families in signing up for WIC and SNAP benefits, and provided a NYS certified parenting class to help court-ordered parents manage custody and visitation issues while minimizing the drama in their children's lives. We have also offered three programs for formerly incarcerated populations: a support group for formerly incarcerated mothers that focused on family reunification and improved mother/child relationships; another group for unemployed and under employed individuals with criminal records that focused on employment resources; and training and a parenting class in the women's pod at the Broome County Jail.

Currently the FSS Department is responsible for four programs:

The Kinship Care program provides support and advocacy for kinship caregivers (adults raising someone else's child/ren), for caregivers in Broome and Tioga Counties. Kinship program services are provided regardless of a caregiver's income and include assistance navigating the Department of Social Services and Family Court, and help with school enrollments, referrals, community resources and a weekly support group. The program stays abreast on the most recent changes in kinship care laws and regulations. For more information about the program please contact the Peer Mentor, Julie Morgan, at ext. 840.

The NOEP program provides income eligible individuals with assistance in applying for SNAP benefits. The program also works to reduce the myths that surround eligibility for SNAP for many different populations. For more information, please contact the NOEP Coordinator, Alison Lorenc, at ext. 827.

The Walk with Me (WWM) program serves our local reentry population, helping individuals resettle back into the community after being released from the Broome County Jail. WWM provides personalized advocacy and support to each program participant, assisting with any barriers or challenges that may arise. Housing, employment, establishing benefits, and transportation are all addressed, as well as assistance obtaining, clothes, hygiene items, furniture and household items as needed. Through WWM's partnership with Justice and Unity for the Southern Tier (JUST) we offer support groups and peer mentoring. For more information on WWM please contact the ReEntry Specialist, Chamisse Morast, at ext. 1675.

The Courthouse Children's Center provides free drop-in childcare for any adult with business in the Broome County Family Court. Unfortunately, the Center is currently closed due to restrictions from the COVID-19 pandemic and the reduced in-person court calendar. However, for 19 years the Center has provided a safe, fun, and educational haven for children, away from the tensions and stresses of the Family Court waiting rooms.

Employee Spotlights

Alison Lorenc

Hi!!! My name is Alison Lorenc and I started as the NOEP Coordinator on February 6th. I come from a psych/medical background. I love to help people and know that I have made a difference in their lives.

I also love getting out into the community and networking. I love to talk, which can be looked at as a positive or negative, depending on time. I am a mom of a wonderful almost nine-year-old girl. I coach softball and help with cheer. My daughter and I love cats and someday will be crazy old cat ladies.



William Smallze

Hi, I am William Smallze, I was born and raised in New Jersey, Jersey City. I have worked with Family Enrichment Network about five months, starting in November of 2022. I help maintain FEN, ensuring all locations are operational and well maintained. Taking care of all maintenance request and installs that we keep in-house.

Growing up, I had big family of six brothers and three sisters and have two boys of my own. Prior to working for Family Enrichment Network, I have worked as a carpenter and held jobs in many other skilled fields. I spend my free time fishing and playing darts.



Years of Service

Congratulations

Five Years

Jason Goldman

Rafael Rondon



FamilySM



Enrichment Network



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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.