

Issue 12

2024



Growing Tomorrow's Leaders...
Today
Enriching the Community

Family Enrichment Network Child Care Resource and Referral Parent Newsletter

Family Enrichment Network Services

Family Enrichment Network is committed to offering services that enrich the lives of people in every corner of our community.

From our Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R), which can help you find the right child care provider, to our Kinship Care program, and everything in between, there are many services for you to take advantage of. Here is a list of some more services we offer.

- Kinship Care program: offers support for adults who find themselves raising another family member's child. This program is available in both Broome and Tioga Counties.
- Nutritional Outreach and Education Program: Not sure if you qualify for SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly known as food stamps)? Call and we can help! This program is available in Broome County.
- Housing Connections: Supportive homeless housing units for families and individuals in Binghamton. Call 211 for a referral.
- Caring Homes: Provides case management and financial assistance for homeless families or families at risk of homelessness, living in Broome and Chenango Counties & meeting income guidelines. Please call 211 for a referral.
- Early Head Start/ Head Start: Helps parents from prenatal to children age 5 with child care needs and support. This program is available in both Broome and Tioga Counties.
- UPK: Pre-Kindergarten programs for Binghamton, Johnson City, and Union-Endicott School Districts.
- Special Education Services: Available for the evaluation of your preschool child to receive special services, such as speech therapy, occupational therapy, or physical therapy. This program is available in both Broome and Chenango Counties.
- Walk With Me: A Re-Entry Specialist offers assistance for individuals who are newly released from the Broome County Jail. Includes help with housing, obtaining identification, employment, support groups and mentoring.
- Want to become a Child Care Provider and offer child care in your home? CCR&R can help answer questions and assist you in opening your own child care business.

For more information on any of our programs, check our website at:

www.familyenrichment.org or call 607-723-8313.

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Life affords no greater responsibility,
no greater privilege, than the raising
of the next generation.
~ C. Everet Koop, M.D.



Child Care Options

Listed below are brief descriptions of common types of child care programs in New York State. Each program is regulated by the state Office of Children and Family Services.

Day Care Centers - provide care for more than six children at a time, not in a personal residence.

Small Day Care Centers - provide care for up to six children, not in a personal residence.

Family Day Care Homes - provide care for three to six children at a time in a residence; may add one or two school-age children. The maximum allowable number of children will depend on whether there are infants and how many of them are in care.

Group Family Day Care Homes - provide care for seven to twelve children at a time in a residence; may add one or two school-age children. The maximum allowable number of children will depend on whether there are infants and how many of them are in care. A provider must use an assistant when more than six children are present.

*Each of the programs listed above can serve children ages six weeks through twelve years and operate for more than three hours a day.

School-Age Child Care Programs - provide care for more than six children from kindergarten through age twelve. Care for children during non-school hours; also may provide care during school vacation periods and holidays.

Other forms of legal child care include:

Nursery Schools - provide care for three hours a day or less. In New York City, the City Department of Health regulates these programs. A nursery school may voluntarily register with the State Education Department (SED).

Pre-Kindergartens (UPK)- usually located in public schools, but can also be found in private schools or day care centers; supervised by the SED.

Head Start Centers - targeted for preschool-age children from low income families; federally funded and usually licensed as Day Care Centers.

Informal Care and Legally Exempt Child Care - is home-based care for one to two children at a time in addition to the provider's children; are not required to register, unless the programs receives child care subsidy payments from DSS, then must enroll.

Child Care Assistance Program

You may be eligible to receive help with the cost of your child care if your household income is below 300% of the income standard.

NYS Annual Income Standards for Child Care Assistance—effective June 30, 2023

family size	300% income standard
1	\$43,740
2	\$59,160
3	\$74,580
4	\$90,000
5	\$105,420
6	\$120,840
7	\$136,260
8	\$151,680
Each Additional Person	\$ 15,420 per person

For additional information or to apply for assistance, please call the Day Care Unit at the Department of Social Services at (607) 778-2628 in Broome County; (607) 687-8300 in Tioga County; and (607) 337-1500 in Chenango County.

Financial Assistance Tip Sheet

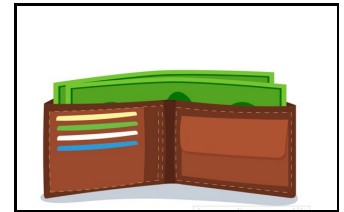
ASK YOUR EMPLOYER ABOUT:

- Dependent care benefits – A Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account allows you to have money set aside from your salary, pre-tax, each pay period in order to get reimbursed for eligible expenses related to the care of your dependents. <http://taxes.about.com>
- NYS Employee Dependent Care Advantage Account – The Dependent Care Advantage Account (DCAAccount) is a negotiated employee benefit that helps State employee families who have to pay for child care, elder care, or disabled dependent care while they are at work. www.flexspend.state.ny.us
- Employer subsidized childcare slots – A discounted rate at a child care center in which the parent’s employer subsidizes the cost for a certain number of slots.
- Child tax credits – The Child Tax Credit, The Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit, and The Earned Income Tax Credit are three kid-focused federal tax credits that are among the most effective ways to reduce your tax bill. For more information, visit www.irs.gov and talk with your tax preparer.

*If you are experiencing issues with finding and/or affording child care, please let your employer know!

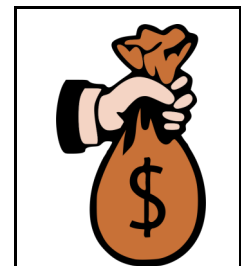
ASK YOUR PROVIDER ABOUT:

- Multi-child discounts- a discounted rate for the second or third child from the same family
- Sliding scale fees – the cost of child care is calculated based on the parent’s income
- Scholarships – offered by individual programs to aid families who need help with the cost of care.
- Negotiable rates
- Reduced or free breakfast/lunch programs
- Volunteer hours in the center in exchange for child care
- Child care services exchange
- Head Start – A free federally funded program for 3 to 5 year olds for income eligible children
- Early Head Start – A free federally funded program for infants 6 weeks to 3 year olds for income eligible children



Average Weekly Cost of Child Care in Broome County For Full-Time Care in Registered/Licensed Child Care Programs

	Child Care Center	Family Child Care Home	School-Age Program
Infant	\$295	\$266	—
Toddler	\$275	\$252	—
Preschooler	\$253	\$250	—
School Ager	\$245	\$225	\$245



Child Care Health Policies

When you send your child to a child care program, they are exposed to more germs. If this is your child's first time in another setting outside your home, then be prepared for them to get sick when they first start a new child care program. Your child will get sick. It's going to happen. But don't give up. It will get better as they develop immunity. In the meantime, be prepared with what you will do when that happens.

All child care programs need to have an approved health care plan. The plan includes when children can go to child care and when they need to stay home. As a parent, it is your responsibility to help your child care program follow their plan.

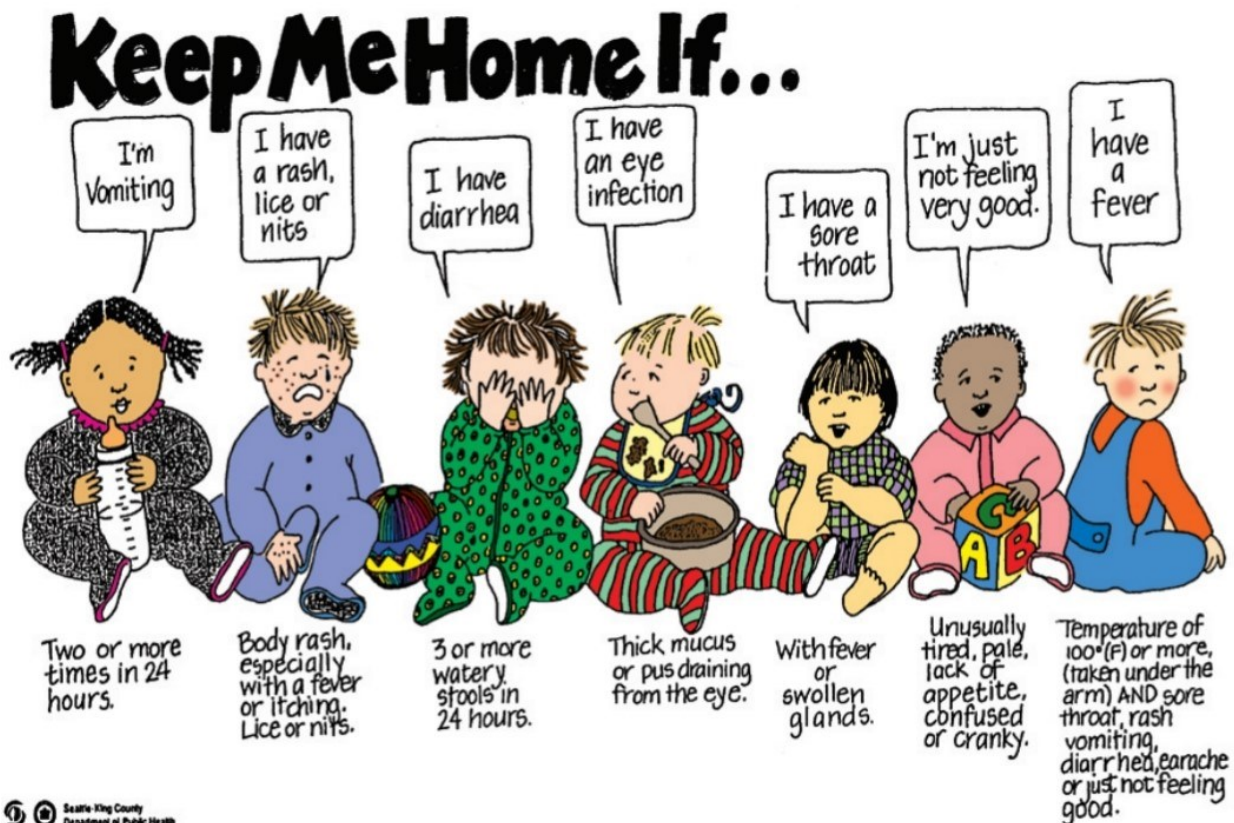
Missing work isn't always an option for all parents. Some parents fear they will lose their job if they take the time off. Some work places have no flexibility for adjusting hours worked or working from home. It may be tempting to give your child some Tylenol and send them to child care anyway, but that is not in the best interest of anyone.

As a parent, you wouldn't want other children coming to child care sick with something contagious and spreading it to your child, right? So the same applies. Keep your child home when they are in their contagious period of an illness. The extra cleaning and sanitation needed to keep other children healthy is difficult for child care providers.

Besides being contagious, sick children need more cuddles and quiet time, which isn't always possible in child care. Child care providers still have the other children to take care of in the program.

Or what if your child care provider gets sick from your contagious child? The program might have to temporarily close or find an alternate provider which can be difficult for children.

The best advice we can offer is to be prepared for the call to pick up your child and having to stay home or find someone to watch your child until they can return to child care.



When Your Child is Sick:

1. Have plans for back up child care.
2. Tell your caregiver what is wrong with your child, even if your child stays home.

Positive Parenting Tips

Parenting is hard but the most rewarding thing in life. The COVID pandemic has added many more struggles to parenting. Here are some tips for getting through this year:

- Talk to your child about what is going on in the world and how he/she is feeling.
- Set up a special time to read books with your child and encourage him/her to read every day. This will help him/her develop and understand language and sounds and develop a love for books. Visit the library (if open) or bookstore to browse.
- Spend time cuddling and holding your child. This will help him/her feel safe and secure.
- Encourage exploration and trying new things.
- Encourage your child's growing independence by letting him/her help with dressing and feeding himself/herself.
- Respond to wanted behaviors more than you punish unwanted behaviors. Always tell or show your child what he/she should do instead.
- Give your child attention and praise when he/she follows instructions and shows positive behaviors and limit attention for defiant behaviors like tantrums. Teach your child acceptable ways to show that he/she's upset.
- Help your child through the steps to solve problems when he/she is upset.
- Let your child help with simple chores.
- Encourage your child to play with other children. This helps learn the value of sharing and friendship.
- Show affection for your child. Recognize accomplishments.
- Talk with your child about school, friends, and things he/she looks forward to in the future.
- Help your child set her own achievable goals—he/she will learn to take pride in him/herself and rely less on approval or reward from others.
- Help your child learn patience by letting others go first or by finishing a task before going out to play.
- Encourage him/her to think about possible consequences before acting.
- Make clear rules and stick to them, such as how long your child can watch TV or when he/she has to go to bed. Be clear about what behavior is okay and what is not okay.
- Do fun things together as a family, such as playing games, reading, and going to events in your community.
- Get involved with your child's school. Meet the teachers and staff and get to understand their learning goals and how you and the school can work together to help your child do well.
- Take care of yourself physically, mentally, and emotionally. Parenting can be hard work! It is easier to enjoy your child and be a positive, loving parent when you are feeling good yourself.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

Are you feeling emotional distress or suicidal? Talk to someone now!

Do you know someone who is suicidal and you are concerned? Get advice and support.

Call 1-800-273-8255 or call/text 988.
24/7, Free, Confidential Support.

Visit: <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org> for more information on how to help someone in need.



Quality Child Care

We hear a lot about wanting our children to be in a quality child care program. But what does a quality child care program look like? Here are some things you want to see:

Educated, attentive, and engaged teachers and staff

Teachers with degrees and specific training in early childhood education.

Teachers who crouch to eye level to speak to children.

Teachers who hold, cuddle, show affection, and speak directly to children, especially infants and toddlers.

Families and children exchanging information about the child's development and learning progress.

A safe, healthy, and child-friendly environment

A room well-equipped with sufficient and appropriate materials and toys.

Classrooms in which materials and activities are organized logically and placed at eye level for the children.

Materials and toys accessible to children in an orderly display.

Centers that encourage safe, outdoor playtime.

Frequent hand washing by children and adults.

Children offered breakfast, lunch, and a time to nap.

Parents welcomed to visit at any time.

Stimulating activities and appropriately structure routines

Children have a variety of activities in their daily routine using indoor and outdoor spaces, including experiences with language, literacy, math, science, art, music, movement, and dramatic play.

Children participating with teachers and each other in individual, small-group, and large-group activities.

Children who are engaged in their activities.

Preschoolers who are allowed to play independently.

Additional Information To Help In the Search for Child Care

Use the "*As You Think About Child Care...*" book included with your referrals for additional tips, checklists and questions to ask when looking for a child care program to meet your needs.

For information on OCFS child care regulations, visit: ocfs.ny.gov/main/childcare/daycare_regulations

Community Resources

Medical and Insurance Resources:

Mothers and Babies Perinatal Network at 457 State Street, Binghamton, behind the Colonial Plaza or call 772-0517.

Parenting Support and Resources:

Lourdes PACT (Parents and Children Together) Home-visiting Program: Broome County, call 584-4570
or Tioga County, please 687-6145

Binghamton City PACT Home-visiting Program: For Binghamton City School District resident call 607-762-8144

Binghamton PAL Center at 457 State Street, Binghamton or call 771-6334.

Endicott Family Education Center at 200 Jefferson Ave., Endicott or call 760-5755.

Owego Family Resource Center at 72 North Street, Owego or call 687-1571.

Waverly Family Resource Center at 374 Broad St., Waverly or call 565-2374.

Budget Stretchers and Food Resources:

WIC: Broome County call Department of Health at 778-2881

Chenango County call Opportunities for Chenango at 334-7114

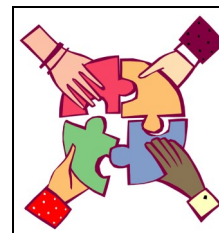
Tioga County call Tioga Opportunities at 687-31470 or 1-866-352-3680

SNAP (Food Stamps): Broome County call 723-8313 ext. 827

Chenango County call 337-1500

Tioga County call 687-8300

CHOW: call 211.



For assistance with any other needs, call 211 to help you find the right resource.

Parent Advocacy

Not As Difficult Or Time-Consuming As You Might Think!

All parents and families have a variety of needs and interests, and every family is different. We also know that no matter what your individual circumstances are, as a parent, you want the best for your children.

One of the best ways to ensure that your children get what they need is to be actively involved. We also know that parents are very busy people with limited free time and countless demands upon it. But there are also a multitude of programs and resources that can help you, and being an advocate for your child doesn't have to be as time-consuming as you might think.

Join Child Care Aware Parent Network, a free website for everyone who cares about children and the quality of care they receive. It is not only for parents. It is intended to bring child care to the forefront of the nation's agenda and to create new perspectives about the priority of children's issues. Parent Network offers high quality information on parents and child care. When you join, you will receive networking and advocacy tools, as well as free webinars on important topics.

Join today at www.ccaparentnetwork.org.



Family Enrichment Network

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Growing Tomorrow's Leaders...Today
Enriching the Community

www.familyenrichment.org

The mission of Family Enrichment Network is to provide supportive services for the optimal development of children and families. This mission includes a strong commitment to partnering with families and community agencies to develop and provide programs to achieve the best results for children and families. We believe in coordinating children and family services using a comprehensive and collaborative approach to improve their quality of life while ensuring the greatest value for our investment in child, adult, and parent development.

To learn more about our mission, and share in our vision that all children and families have the opportunity to grow and develop to their full potential, please visit our website at www.familyenrichment.org.

Family Enrichment Network Complaint Procedure

Complaints about child care programs:

Complaints about child care programs in the community should be called into the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), Syracuse Regional Office (SRO) Complaint/Inquiry Line at 1-800-732-5207.

If guidance or assistance with a child care program concern is needed, contact the CCR&R Director at (607) 723-8313 ext. 872. The concern will be documented. The complainant will be notified that all complaints are handled by the SRO of OCFS and will be encouraged to call the Complaint/Inquiry Line 1-800-732-5207 and the SCR Public Hotline at 1-800-342-3720, if necessary for concerns of maltreatment or abuse. The CCR&R Director will follow up all complaints by calling OCFS and relaying information concerning the complaint.

In the absence of the CCR&R Director, community members can call the FEN Human Resources Director or Executive Director.

Complaints about CCR&R services:

Clients or community members who have a complaint about the CCR&R service or staff can contact the CCR&R Director at (607) 723-8313 ext. 872; FEN Human Resources Director at (607) 723-8313 ext. 814; or FEN Executive Director at (607) 723-8313 ext. 835. The Agency policies and procedures will be followed to respond to the complaint.