

ENRICHING THE COMMUNITY

A monthly publication for friends of Family Enrichment Network

Family Support Services Department Updates

The Family Support Service Department at FEN was started 18 years ago and has provided a dozen different programs in response to identified needs in our community. Currently the department runs four separate programs: the Courthouse Children's Center, the Kinship Care program, the Nutrition Outreach and Education (NOEP) program, and the Walk with Me program. Over the past year there have been changes in three of these programs.

The Courthouse Children's Center was closed by the Office of Court Administration (OCA) in March 2020 because of COVID-19. The Center finally reopened at the end of 2023 to provide free drop-in child care for any adult with business in Drug Treatment and Family Courts. The process to re-open was hampered by the struggle to find staff. Since re-opening the Center has faced two new challenges. The OCA states that two staff must always be present and because of the staffing shortages the Center has had to close on the days a staff person is absent. Since reopening of the Center, many court hearings are being conducted virtually. As a result, we have experienced a decrease in the number of families needing childcare services.

The NOEP program had an opportunity to employ a second NOEP Coordinator in July 2023 when Broome County was recognized as having a high percentage of eligible people who were not applying for SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program). This added position has allowed the NOEP Coordinators to attend more community events and expand the NOEP outreach into our rural areas.

The Kinship Care program sadly had a reduction in service hours when our grant funding ended in September 2023. However, because of the high need of our kinship families, FEN made the decision to continue funding the program part-time while other grants are being sought.

For more information about Family Enrichment Network Programs, please visit us at www.familyenrichment.org or call (607) 723-8313.



The mission of Family Enrichment Network is to provide supportive services for the optimal development of 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.