



NEWS & VIEWS

NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2020

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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From the Desk of the Executive Director



Darrell Newvine
Executive Director

As we close the year it is always good to look back and reflect on all we have accomplished and review areas we need to look at in the coming year. We 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 accomplished in the past and spend a considerable amount of time and energy looking to the future.

Obviously the big story this year has been the COVID-19 virus. We shut down in-person programming in the early spring and the majority of staff worked from home. We opened up a very successful in-person early childhood summer program and prepared for the fall. We re-opened in the fall and have served as many children as we possibly could, and our enrollment and attendance has been excellent. We were not unlike others in the community and had to deal with some challenging times as several of our staff tested positive for COVID-19. We followed all Public Health guidelines in dealing with that and continued operating in a safe manner. We continue to follow all public health, safety and hygiene protocols. The staff have done an extraordinary job in keeping the agency moving forward.

As we approach the Holiday season, it is a great 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 improve communications internally with staff and externally with the communities we serve. 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. We continue to see the challenges of quality early childhood care and education. The most important job in the world, caring for our young children, should not be the lowest paid. The number of child care centers in the area that have closed or have had significant issues is concerning. There are still more centers that are on the brink of closing in the near future. The long-term answer continues to be advocacy, support, and a cooperative effort between government, not-for-profits, and the business community.

At this time last year we were awarded a Homeless Housing and Assistance Project for 19 apartments in the city of Binghamton. This was a cooperative effort between our agency, the City of Binghamton, and OTDA. Construction began in the spring and we plan to have the project turned over to us by the end of December. Tenants for occupancy will be selected in January 2021 and hopefully move in on or about the first of February. Housing is an area where we will expand over the coming years. We will once again host our annual coat drive and Adopt-A-Family program. We look forward to offering these programs year after year. We understand this will be a challenge with the health crisis but we see an increased need and will do all that we can to assist our families with the help of the community.

We have been very fortunate to have a tremendously supportive and talented Board of Directors, that coupled with a strong organization and a staff that has placed us in a great position for the future. We thank you for your past support of our Agency and look forward to future partnership opportunities.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Special Education Services Program

We certainly have gotten off to an unprecedented start to the school year. Among the change and uncertainty in our homes, schools, and communities, the SES staff has remained determined to provide positive stable surroundings and continued support to our students. Last summer we serviced 31 students in in-person classes where many of them also received therapy services. We also provided 167 evaluations in speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and psychological and educational reviews. This fall we are currently running in-person programs for 39 SES students, 36 related service students, 5 UPK remote students, 8 daycare students (at our Norwich site), and are providing therapy either in-person or via teletherapy. Additionally, any of our students can join our daily UPK zoom class which will occur each day while our UPK classes are learning remotely.

We continue to practice safety and hygiene protocols which include: having fewer numbers of students in classrooms; using social distancing spaces; washing and sanitizing hands, materials and rooms; and wearing masks (all adults wear masks and students do so when possible). Staff is diligent in their sanitization efforts while still managing to provide structure, academics, and fun in the learning environment. The safety and well-being of our students, staff, and community remain our number one priority.

Please keep aware of changes in the classroom structure as our community winds its way through changes due to the pandemic requirements. As always, please contact the SES department with any concerns or questions at 723-8313.



Child Care Resource & Referral

NY CARES FOR CHILD CARE

Since March, CCR&R has been working with the Office of Children and Family Services on the distribution of New York's CARES Act funding for child care to address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the child care community. The funding has been issued in three parts, called CARES 1, CARES 2, and CARES 3.

CARES 1 Update

Parents who were essential personnel, still required to leave for work every day, and were income eligible could apply for assistance paying for child care from April – June.

Here are some highlights of the scholarship program:

- Over \$100,000 in scholarships distributed
- 76 parents were able to go to work
- 99 children were cared for in registered/licensed child care programs through Broome, Chenango, and Tioga Counties
- 37 child care programs were able to receive funding

CCR&R was able to distribute PPE and other supplies to child care programs throughout Broome, Chenango, and Tioga Counties. Supplies included masks, gloves, paper towels, toilet paper, hand sanitizer, touch-less thermometers, diapers, bleach, mops and other cleaning supplies.

- Over \$70,000 worth of supplies were purchased and distributed
- 87 child care programs through Broome, Chenango, and Tioga Counties received supplies



CARES 2 Update

In July and August, programs were able to apply to OCFS for two different grants through the New York Forward Child Care Expansion Incentive One-Time Reopening/Restructuring Grant and Temporary Operating Grant.

- 33 programs throughout Broome, Chenango, and Tioga Counties have applied for funding
- Over \$240,000 of funding is dedicated to assisting these programs with expenses of operating during the pandemic

CARES 3 Update

OCFS recently announced CARES 3 funding will include another opportunity for programs to apply for Temporary Operating Grants, similar to CARES 2. OCFS will also reinstate the Essential Personnel Scholarship program similar to CARES 1. More information will be coming out about these programs.

For any questions on these programs, please contact CCR&R Director, Jenn Perney at (607)723-8313, ext.872.

Employee Spotlights

Tessa Stacy, LCSW is Family Enrichment Network’s new Infant/Toddler Mental Health Specialist. Tessa has been a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in the Southern Tier for the last 12 years, working with children and families in the community as well as those with addictions and mental health needs by providing psychotherapy in clinical settings. Her role in joining the FEN family is to help serve the area childcare programs in collaboration with providers and families in how to best support and enhance the care for our infants and toddlers while hopefully easing stress and challenges for the adults in their lives.

Tessa lives in Binghamton with her two-and-a-half year old daughter Zoe, and cats Maggie and Jake. In her personal time, Tessa spends time with family and friends as much as possible. She loves to bake and search for “treasures” at local flea markets and second hand stores and, when time allows, loves a good Netflix binge!



My name is Tina Gunther and I work in the Walk With Me program, that is part of the Family Support Services department. I love my job, almost as much as I love my four-year-old granddaughter! I enjoy working with people that many others would rather forget about, formerly incarcerated individuals. Every day is a new day and no one should be judged for a conviction, for making a mistake. I wouldn’t ever want to be judged for an action on my worst day, yet all too often my participants go through this. Whether looking for housing or employment, people judge individuals based solely on their criminal records.

I love the work I do, assisting people that have hit a bottom and helping them grow into stable community members. Every day is full of different tasks and sometimes hurdles but I wouldn’t change what I do for anything.





Years of Service

Five Years

Tarah Brown 5 years
Cassandra Scalzo 5 years
Mary Shabazian 5 years
Rebecca Griffin 5 years
Adine Lewis 5 years
Christina Hall-Weaver 5 years
Lori Wido 5 years
Katherine McKeever 5 years

Ten Years

Chastity McEwen 10 years
Kari Sweeney 10 years
Eric Bosworth 10 years
Kaitlin Buckley 10 years
Heather Ayres 10 years
Amy Buchanan 10 years

Fifteen Years

Darrell Bush 15 years
Lori Hoyt 15 years
Rosael Gross 15 years
Nuha Obeidallah 15 years

Twenty Years

Natalie Smith 20 years

Twenty Five Years

Sandra Belensky 25 years

Thirty Years

David Parkhurst 30 years



NEW PATHWAYS FOR FATHERS PROGRAM
IS ENDING ON DECEMBER 30, 2020

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BUT YOU MUST PRE-REGISTER**

607-723-8313 ext. 838

dlesch@familyenrichment.org

facebook.com/NewPathwaysForFathers/

Contact us for more information or to register

Essential Fatherhood Skills

BECAUSE DADS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Funding for this project was provided by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Grant #: 90FK0103
These services are available to all eligible persons, regardless of race, gender, age, disability, or religion.

Coats for Kids

We are well into fall and winter is just around the corner! That means the WBNG 12 News “Coats for Kids” coat drive has officially started. The coat drive began October 19 and will run through November 20. Bates Troy will be picking up and cleaning all coats before delivering them to us.

You can donate any new or gently used coats to the following sponsored locations:

- Bryant Heating & Cooling (528 Old Front St. in Binghamton)
- ServPro (134 Conklin Ave, Binghamton)
- Safelite AutoGlass (313 Vestal Pkwy E, Vestal)
- Tioga State Bank:
 - 1250 Vestal Pkwy E., Vestal
 - 510 Hooper Rd., Endwell
 - 1430 Upper Front St., Binghamton
- Fyzical Therapy & Balance Centers
 - 1333 Upper Front St., Binghamton
 - 34 Front St., Binghamton
- Hatala Orthodontics (165 Riverside Dr., Johnson City)

We can't thank our sponsors and donors enough for all the help and support that they provide to this program and our community!

If you or a loved one needs a coat this season, please stop by 24 Cherry Street, Johnson City anytime Monday through Friday, 8AM – 4:30PM. Coats should arrive at Family Enrichment Network the first week of November and will continue to be available through the month of November and into December or until they are all gone.

In order to keep everyone healthy this winter, please know that masks are required to be worn at all times, hand sanitizing stations will be available at the entrance and exit of the building, and we ask that everyone to practice social distancing. There may be a short wait time, as we are limiting the number of people inside to prevent overcrowding.

For more information please contact Rachel Faulks at rfaulks@familyenrichment.org or (607) 723-8313, ext. 891.



The banner features the text "COATS FOR KIDS" in large, white, hand-drawn letters on a dark blue background. To the left is the WBNG 12 logo. To the right, it says "OCT 19 to NOV 20". Below the main text, there are several logos for sponsors: Tioga State Bank, FYZICAL Therapy & Balance Centers, Safelite AutoGlass, Bates Troy, SERVPRO Fire & Water - Cleanup & Restoration, Bryant Heating & Cooling Systems (Factory Authorized Dealer), and HATALA ORTHODONTICS, P.C. There are also images of a blue winter jacket and a brown winter jacket.

FamilySM



Enrichment Network



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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Advertising Space Available

Space is now available to send your valuable message to OVER 1,000 community members.

“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.