

The Family Resource Network, Inc.
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@family.resource.network

Although we have not picked out a date for our 2021 event, the Family Resource Network is excited to be hosting our 6th Annual Duck Derby sometime this Summer or Fall!

If you or your agency is interested in finding out how to sponsor this event please reach out to the Family Resource Network at 607-432-0001 for more information.

connections

Information, Resources, and Updates from **The Family Resource Network, Inc.**



**Family
Resource
Network**

**March & April 2021
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Teen Scene staff are looking forward to hosting their second month long challenge of 2021! In honor of Mental Health Awareness month, Teen Scene is hosting a Coping Skills challenge in the month of May. We believe that this is a perfect opportunity that can help youth to create new coping skills, practice the skills they already have and experiment with other healthy ways to deal with stress and challenges we face on a day to day basis.

The Coping Skills Challenge will have a similar format to the Fitness Challenge that Teen Scene completed in January. Teen Scene will encourage youth to practice using coping skills every day throughout May. To support this, Teen Scene staff members will provide all registered youth with a binder full of resources.

We plan to kick off the Coping Skills Challenge with an event on April 28th, 2021 from 5 pm to 6 pm on zoom. During the event, we will explain the resources that have been provided to registered participants and prepare for the month of May by making stress balls.

Throughout the month of May, Teen Scene will host events that are related to our theme of mental health and coping skills. Registered youth can attend the weekly Teen Scene events to participate in discussion and activities that can count towards their participation for that day. However, anyone can participate in the May Teen Scene events even if they are not registered for the Coping Skills challenge.

The Teen Scene events for the month of May are:

- Monday, May 3rd - Creatively Coping with Stress: Directed Artwork with Teen Scene
- Wednesday, May 12th - Relieving Stress Through Physical Activity
- Monday, May 17th - Pet Show and Tell
- Wednesday, May 26th - Coping Skills BINGO

At the end of the month, Teen Scene will offer youth the opportunity to share their experiences. Various prizes will also be provided to youth who practice using coping skills for 10, 15, or 31 days.

For more information on the Coping Skills Challenge or any of our other upcoming events for youth we encourage you to flip through this Newsletter, check out our website or facebook page or call the Family Resource Network at 607-432-0001!

The Family Resource Network, Inc. Mission & Purpose

Mission Statement:

Individuals with special needs deserve every opportunity to achieve their unique potential. The Family Resource Network was founded by parents to enhance the lives of individuals with special needs and their families, empowering them to lead productive independent lives within the community.

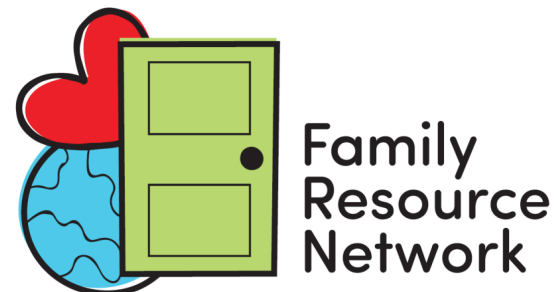
Purpose:

We want to make our community a better place through education and the enlisting of our citizens to bring services to those in need. We accomplish our mission through our core values.

We have been a vital part of our community for a number of years. We were founded to serve a growing segment of our community in need of inaccessible services. We have continued to grow with the help of our donors and volunteers that make our mission possible. Through all these years our purpose still remains the same: bring services to those in need.

Family Resource Network Staff:

Skylar Collins: Youth Peer Advocate
 Heather Cotten: Family Peer Advocate
 Terry Diluzio: Education Advocate
 William Drew: Education Advocate
 Barbara Finkelstein: FPA-YPA Supervisor
 Mary Fralick: Family Peer Advocate
 Valerie Harris: Family Peer Advocate
 Karyn Kanzer: Family Peer Advocate
 Darcy McElligott: Youth Peer Advocate
 Jennifer Moore: Family Peer Advocate
 Brooke Parmalee: Youth Peer Advocate
 Robin Piefer: FSS Supervisor
 Joleane Robinson: Family Peer Advocate
 Twyla Shaffer: Medicaid Billing
 Kristin Winn: HR Supervisor
 Michelle Zuk: Executive Director



G & E Therapies
 Summer Camp for Youth with Autism
 After School Program for Teens with Autism-Social Skills Group (Geckos on the Go)

Legacy Resource Fund
 Source of financial assistance

Family Resource Network Programs:

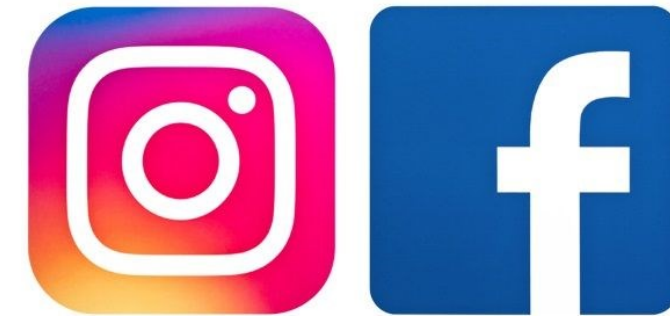
Services for Families with OPWDD Eligibility

Education Advocacy
 Intensive Advocacy Program
 Enhanced Autism Trainings
 Support Groups
 Family and Provider Trainings
 Dragon Dates Program (Social Opportunities)
 Service Access Program

Mental Health and Wellness Services

Family Peer Support
 Residential Family Peer Support
 Youth Peer Support
 Teen Scene
 Monthly Parent Group
 Southern Tier Chapter of Families Together in NYS

Keep up with the
 Family Resource Network through our
 Social Media Accounts!



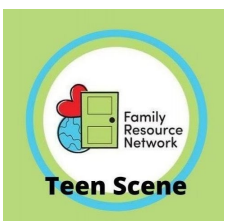
Find us on Facebook:
 @familyrn

Find us on Instagram:
 @family.resource.network

Interested in finding out more about our youth programming and upcoming Teen Scene events? Follow our Teen Scene pages on Facebook and Instagram!

Find us on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/FRNTeenScene

Find us on Instagram:
 @_frnteenscene_



Please join the Family Resource Network for our upcoming training:
IDEA: An Overview

Wednesday, April 7th
 9:00am-12:00pm
 via ZOOM

Children who have disabilities are entitled to appropriate, individualized, educational services that meet their unique learning needs. This workshop will explain the history and provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), two federal laws that govern education for students with disabilities. Families, educators, and human service professionals will learn about children's rights, how children qualify for special education services, and how these services may be delivered.

Participants will:

- Gain information on the history and provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- Understand the rights protected by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- Know where to find state regulations online

About our Speaker: Kara Georgi is the Parent Education Specialist for Starbridge Parent Training and Information Center. She offers support and information for families and professionals navigating the special education system in Cayuga, Tompkins, Onondaga, Cortland, Broome, Madison, Chenango, Otsego and Delaware Counties.

Registration is required.

To register online, go to www.familyrn.org and click on the News & Events link and the Event Calendar. To register by phone, call the Family Resource Network at 432-0001.

This workshop is funded through a grant from the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD). Self-directing families will need to add "Advocacy" to their budgets prior to attending. Please contact FRN for assistance adding this to your budget.

The Family Resource Network would like to recognize all of its staff for the hard work and effort they have put in over the past year when it has come to adapting the services we provide to families. With the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic last March, almost all of our service delivery had to be immediately transitioned to virtual and remote. From the beginning our staff have been dedicated to making this transition as seamless as possible to families and still providing the same quality and level of support. We want them to know how much everything they do on a daily basis is appreciated and that what they have been able to accomplish over the past year by continuing to help the families we serve in this capacity has been no easy feat! With that being said, the Family Resource Network will be individually recognizing a staff person each month with the "Quacktastic" Award as a special thank you!

Our first award has been presented to **FPA and Intake Coordinator Mary Fralick!**

Mary is an amazing member of the FRN Team. Not only does she do an outstanding job with the families she works with through FRN on a regular basis she is also continually recognized by other agencies for the great work she does!

Recently the Director of Children and Family Services at the Central NY Field office of the NYS Office of Mental Health reached out to Michelle Zuk, FRN's Executive Director to express what an impression Mary Fralick made while on a call regarding a family with a very complex situation. "I was told that she was really an asset to the meeting. We know that Mary does a remarkable job on a regular basis and that the families she works with are lucky to have her. And so are we."

Thank you Mary for all you do!



Teen Scene and Dragon Dates Combined Events: March & April

With the need for physical distancing, Family Resource Network Teen Scene and Dragon Dates will continue hosting virtual events via Zoom until further notice.

Upcoming Virtual Meetings :

Monday, March 8th, 5:00pm-6:30pm via ZOOM

Knot Blankets! Join us for a relaxing evening of making no sew fleece knot blankets! We thought making these cozy lap blankets would be the perfect way to round out the winter months. The Family Resource Network will provide the fleece needed to make the blankets to anyone who registers before Wednesday, March 3rd. Participants will need to be prepared with their own scissors, ruler, and work space in order to complete the project.

Monday, March 17th, 5:00pm-6:30pm via ZOOM

Virtual BINGO! Have a fun family game night at home in the company of friends from FRN through a virtual BINGO game! We will be playing multiple rounds. All family members are encouraged to join in! Prizes will be given to the first person to get BINGO in each round. With this event landing on St. Patrick's Day we hope to weave in some extra lucky fun! Wear your green for our meeting if you would like. There will be an additional prize for the participant with the best St. Patrick's Day costume!

Wednesday, March 24th 5:00pm-6:30pm via ZOOM

Virtual Cook-a-Long! We are excited to host another virtual cooking class. Our last cooking event focused on healthy meals and snacks, but this month we are focused on everything sweet! Participants will be guided through various dessert recipes and will have the opportunity to create some treats with us. Please register by Wednesday, March 17th in order to receive your free supply kit.

Monday, April 5th, 5:00pm-6:30pm via ZOOM

Seed Starting! We are so excited for Spring! Are you and your family thinking about having a garden this year? Now is the perfect time to begin starting seeds indoors for vegetable plants such as tomatoes and peppers if you plan to grow these from seeds yourself! Tonight we will go over how to begin tomato and pepper seeds indoors. We will also discuss transplanting guidelines and other tips and tricks for your seedlings. We will cover the difference between container gardening vs. planting directly in the ground and help you decide which is best for you! Finally we will also help you start a small window garden of herbs that you will be able to use in your kitchen year round! FRN will be providing seed packets and other needed growing supplies for all participants who register by March 25th.

Monday, April 19th, 5:00-6:30pm via ZOOM

Virtual Escape Room! FRN is super excited to host our first ever virtual Escape Room! Through a combination of clues, questions and riddles work together with friends from FRN to solve multiple puzzles and complete the Escape Room Challenge!

The age range for **Teen Scene** events has been expanded and these will be open to any school aged youth in Otsego, Delaware and Chenango County.

Dragon Dates events are for individuals with OPWDD eligibility living in the family home in Broome, Chenango, Otsego, Delaware, Tioga or Tompkins County.

Registration for all events is REQUIRED. To register please visit our website @ www.familyrn.org and click on "News and Events" and then "Events Calendar".

Questions? Call FRN at 607-432-0001 and ask for Kristin.

Please join the Family Resource Network for our upcoming workshop:
Advocacy Steps and Effective Communication for In-Person and Virtual Settings

Friday, March 12
 9:00-11:00 am
 Via Zoom

Do you come away from meetings not saying what you intended or feeling as though your viewpoint is misunderstood? Do you listen to what other team members say? How do you respond?

Communication is key to effective partnerships. Learn to recognize the barriers in communication that can get in the way of collaboration and positive outcomes. Strengthen your advocacy skills by learning effective and collaborative communication strategies for in-person and virtual meetings and interactions.

Participants will gain information on how to:

- Identify barriers to effective communication
 - Learn techniques to remove barriers
- Learn elements for effective teamwork and positive interactions

About our Speaker: Kara Georgi is the Parent Education Specialist for Starbridge Parent Training and Information Center. She offers support and information for families and professionals navigating the special education system in Cayuga, Tompkins, Onondaga, Cortland, Broome, Madison, Chenango, Otsego and Delaware Counties.

Registration is required.

To register online, go to www.familyrn.org and click on the News & Events link and the Event Calendar. To register by phone, call the Family Resource Network at 432-0001.

This workshop is funded through a grant from the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD). Self-directing families will need to add "Advocacy" to their budgets prior to attending. Please contact FRN for assistance adding this to your budget.

Please join the Family Resource Network for our March and April meetings of our
Lunch and Learn Series

Upcoming Meetings:

Thursday, March 18 2021
6:00pm-7:00pm
Online

Friday, April 16, 2021
11:30 am
Online

Our monthly Lunch and Learn Series is intended to connect our community to local resources, professionals, and leaders. We will present a different topic each month.

For the month of **March** please join us for a **special evening edition** of our ongoing Lunch and Learn series when we invite the **Inner LimeLight Theatre Project** to present on their program. The Inner LimeLight Theatre Project is designed to empower, educate, and improve expression for individuals with different abilities through voice, dance, and visual arts. The organization is run by Director Jean Graham, who is a Speech and Language Pathologist by trade and an artistic performer with over 20 years of experience in dance, voice, and acting. Inner LimeLight Theatre regularly hosts workshops and collaborates with many organizations all over the Binghamton area.

April's presenter and topic are TBA.

Please check our website and facebook page for additional details.

Registration is required.

To register online, go to www.familyrn.org and click on the News & Events link and the Event Calendar. To register by phone, call the Family Resource Network at 432-0001.

View upcoming events by visiting our website: www.familyrn.org and click on the News & Events link and the Event Calendar.

****This workshop is funded through a grant from the Office of People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD). Self-directing families will need to add "Training Groups" to their budgets prior to attending. Please contact FRN for assistance adding this to your budget***

Please Join the Family Resource Network for Our Online and Phone Family Support Groups:

At Family Resource Network, we recognize that during these difficult times, families of individuals with special needs are facing unique challenges and may feel even more isolated. While we can't meet in-person to support one another, we invite you to join us for online support groups. These will be conducted through Zoom Meetings, and families may participate online or by phone. We are offering these groups as an opportunity for families to form connections, support, and learn from each other.

We will be offering two groups per week: one morning and one evening.

Registration is required.

Tentative Support Group Dates:

Tuesday, March 2 6:30 pm	Thursday, March 4 10:00 am
Tuesday, March 9 6:30 pm	Thursday, March 11 10:00 am
Tuesday March 16 6:30 pm	Thursday, March 18 10:00 am
Tuesday, March 23 6:30 pm	Thursday, March 25 10:00 am
Tuesday, March 30 6:30 pm	Thursday, April 1 10:00 am
Tuesday, April 6 6:30pm	Thursday, April 8 10:00 am
Tuesday, April 13 6:30 pm	Thursday, April 15 10:00 am
Tuesday, April 20 6:30 pm	Thursday, April 22 10:00 am
Tuesday, April 27 6:30 pm	Thursday, April 29 10:00 am

Dates may be adjusted based on interest and need as physical distancing regulations are lifted.

To register, go to www.familyrn.org and click on "News and Events" and then "Events Calendar".

For questions, or to participate by phone, please call Terry at (607)287-3816.

Support Groups are funded by a grant from the Office of People with Developmental Disabilities. Self-directing families will need to add "training groups" to their budgets. Please contact Robin at (607)287-6358 for assistance adding this program to your budget.

Please join the Family Resource Network for a Workshop on Supplemental Needs Trusts and Guardianship

Wednesday, April 21st, 2021
9 am to 12 pm
Online

Gain valuable information pertaining to financial planning for the future of your loved one with a disability.

About Our Speaker:

Greg S. Catarella, Esq., has been practicing law for over 20 years. His office is located in Binghamton, New York. He graduated from Binghamton University and Cornell Law School. He is a member and past president of the Broome County Bar Association. Greg's practice areas include Trusts, Estates, Elder Law, and Guardianship.

Registration is required.

To register online, go to www.familyrn.org and click on the News & Events link and the Event Calendar. To register by phone, call the Family Resource Network at 432-0001.

This workshop is funded through a grant from the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD). Self-directing families will need to add "Training Groups" to their budgets prior to attending. Please contact FRN for assistance adding this to your budget.



Please join the Family Resource Network for our Virtual Nurturing Parenting Series:
Nurture Hope-The Nurturing Program for Parents and Their Children with Special Needs and Health Challenges

The Family Resource Network will be offering a ten session course presented by our team of credentialed Family Peer Advocates and trained facilitators focusing on positive parenting of children diagnosed with special needs or health challenges.

The ten session, virtual workshops will meet on the following Thursdays from 6:00pm-8:00pm via Zoom:

Thursday, April 1	Thursday, May 13
Thursday, April 8	Thursday, May 20
Thursday, April 15	Thursday, May 27
Thursday, April 22	Thursday, June 3
Thursday, April 29	Thursday, June 10*
Thursday, May 6	Thursday, June 17*
	*Make up sessions

The Nurturing Program for parents and Their Children with Special Needs and Health Challenges is designed to help families explore their hopes and fears, develop effective parenting skills, enhance communication, develop strategies for facing challenges and recognize opportunities for celebration and growth.

Instructors of the Nurturing Programs gather information from families in order to prepare tailored sessions. Assessments will gather information about participants' current life conditions, their childhood, their relationship with their partner, their relationship with their children, how much they already know about parenting, and the beliefs they have about raising children.

What to expect if you participate in the Nurturing Parenting Series for Parents of Children with Special Needs and Health Challenges:

- Learn appropriate parental expectations regarding growth and developmental stages and family dynamics and the impact of special needs and health challenges.
- Develop empathic awareness of the needs of children as well as values associated with disabilities, sickness, healthcare, and more.
- Gain an understanding of valuing empathic discipline strategies and behavior encouragement techniques.
- Understand appropriate parent/child roles and responsibilities, including effective communication and advocacy, stress and coping techniques and finding community support.
- Develop personal power and independence in children using praise for being and doing.
- The flexibility within the structure of the program allows facilitators to ensure the specific needs of families are being met

To find out more information or to register please call the Family Resource Network at 607-432-0001 and ask to speak with Kristin Winn.

Please join the Family Resource Network for our Virtual Nurturing Parenting Series:
Nurturing Skills for Families-A Strength Based Approach to Positive Parenting

The Family Resource Network will be offering a ten session course presented by our team of credentialed Family Peer Advocates and trained facilitators focusing on positive parenting of children birth-11 years of age.

The ten session, virtual workshops will meet on the following Thursdays from 6:00pm-8:00pm via Zoom:

Thursday, June 24	Thursday, August 5
Thursday, July 1	Thursday, August 12
Thursday, July 8	Thursday, August 19
Thursday, July 15	Thursday, August 26
Thursday, July 22	Thursday, September 2*
Thursday, July 29	Thursday, September 9*
	*Make up sessions

The Nurturing Parenting Programs are a family-centered trauma-informed initiative designed to help caregivers build nurturing parenting skills and develop positive parenting techniques. The Nurturing Parenting Programs are designed to meet the family's needs based on their parenting strengths and weaknesses.

Instructors of the Nurturing Programs gather information from families in order to prepare tailored sessions. Assessments will gather information about participants' current life conditions, their childhood, their relationship with their partner, their relationship with their children, how much they already know about parenting, and the beliefs they have about raising children. The Family Resource Network strongly encourages participants to complete this assessment prior to the first meeting if possible.

What to expect if you participate in the Nurturing Parenting Series:

- The Nurturing Programs are family based interventions where parents and their children learn similar knowledge and skills for improving the quality of their lives.
- Built in assessment strategies allow facilitators and parents to chart the course of their successes.
- The flexibility within the structure of the programs allows facilitators to ensure the specific needs of families are being met.
- The nurturing philosophy of non-violent parenting focuses on the development of empathy, self-worth, self-awareness, empowerment, discipline with dignity, appropriate family roles and age-appropriate expectations of children's development.
- This 10 session course is geared towards families raising children from birth through 11 years old.

To find out more information or to register please call the Family Resource Network at 607-432-0001 and ask to speak with Kristin Winn.

Please join Family Resource Network's Teen Scene this May for our first ever Coping Skills Challenge!

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. We thought this would be the perfect time for a fun challenge that would help us foster our coping skills, practicing those we already use as well as implementing and experimenting with other healthy ways to deal with stress and challenges we face each day.

Participants will be provided all the supplies they need to make their own stress balls upon registering, as well as, a binder full of information, activities and worksheets to keep track of the coping skills they are utilizing throughout the month!

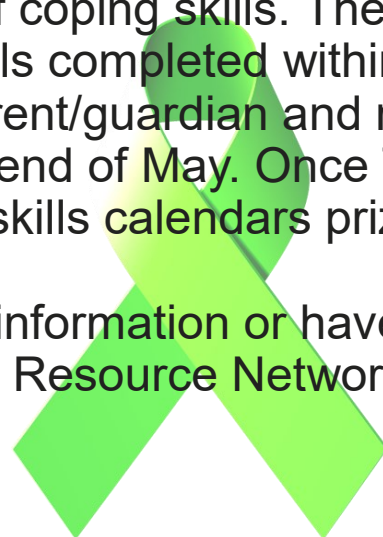
This event is open to all school aged youth. In the case that there are multiple youth in one household participating, a registration form must be completed individually for each youth.

REGISTER BY 4/19/2021 TO RECEIVE YOUR VERY OWN COPING SKILLS BINDER AND STRESS BALL SUPPLIES!

To register online please follow the link below:
<https://forms.gle/GAz7xvrcWPLegSP1A>

There will be prizes awarded to each youth who reaches the goals of 10, 20, and 31 days of coping skills. There will be a calendar to document the coping skills completed within the binder that will need to be signed by a parent/guardian and returned to the Family Resource Network at the end of May. Once Teen Scene staff is able to review the coping skills calendars prizes will be sent out.

If you would like more information or have any questions, please contact the Family Resource Network at 607-432-0001.



The Family Resource Network is excited for the events and activities we have planned to go along with our Coping Skills Challenge! Please consider joining us for one, some or all of these upcoming events:

Wednesday, April 28th, 5:00-6:00pm via ZOOM

Coping Skills Challenge Kickoff Event! Tonight we will explain the resources that have been provided to registered participants and prepare for the month of May by making stress balls with the supplies that came in your kit! If you have registered for the Challenge you will receive the Zoom link the morning of the event.

Throughout the month of May, Teen Scene will host events that are related to our theme of mental health and coping skills. Registered youth can attend the weekly Teen Scene events to participate in discussion and activities that can count towards their participation in the Coping Skills Challenge for that day. ***However, anyone can participate in the May Teen Scene events even if they are not registered for the Coping Skills challenge.***

The Teen Scene events for the month of May are:

Monday, May 3rd, 5:00-6:30pm via ZOOM

Creatively Coping with Stress: Directed Artwork with Teen Scene. Get artsy with FRN as our YPAs lead the group in creating selected art piece. As the event is being held virtually, the art will be demonstrated with a variety of mediums. Some ideas are acrylic paint, watercolor, crayons, colored pencils, colorful pens, markers or mixed media. Come prepared with your selected supplies!

Wednesday, May 12th, 5:00-6:30pm via ZOOM

Relieving Stress Through Physical Activity. Tonight we will have a special guest visit our Zoom meeting to lead us through a group fitness class, as exercise can be a great way to combat stress! More details to follow.

Monday, May 17th, 5:00-6:30pm via ZOOM

Pet Show and Tell! We all always love it when our furry friends sneak into our Zoom meetings with us so we figured why not have an entire event showcasing them! As spending time with animals and pets can be a great way to destress after a hard day, we thought this was the perfect time to talk about our pets and share some of our favorite things about them with our friends from FRN!

Wednesday, May 26th, 5:00-6:30pm via ZOOM

Coping Skills BINGO: Join us for virtual BINGO...with a fun twist! Each Letter/Number combination has a scenario associated with it. If a letter/number combination is called and you can put a chip on that combination – you will pick a coping skill that you would use in that situation. This will give everyone an opportunity to think about and apply some things they have learned over the month as well as discuss what works best for them! Prizes will be given to the first person to get BINGO in each round.