

The Family Resource Network, Inc.
46 Oneida Street
Oneonta, NY 13820

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The Family Resource Network is looking for people like YOU!

If you are reading our newsletter, it is a safe bet that you already make a positive difference in the life of someone with a special need and have attended one of the many conferences or workshops sponsored by The Family Resource Network. Have you ever wished for the opportunity to share your knowledge and/or help others? The board of directors at The Family Resource Network consists of members of our community who believe in the mission of the agency and we are currently looking for people to join a committee or the board of directors.

For more information regarding the Family Resource Network, our mission statement and the role of a committee or board member please contact Kathleen Wenck at (607) 278-5758.



connections

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



**November & December 2017
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“Growing Communities, One Family at a Time”

The fall has gotten off to a great start. The weather has made it possible to do some fun outside activities. Our Dragon Dates Social Skills Group continues to be a very popular event where individuals with OPWDD eligibility that live at home can get together to enjoy social activities with other families. This fall both blueberry and apple picking were very popular events. We know that the weather will be turning cold soon but we will still continue to do fun activities throughout the winter months.

Please be sure to look inside for pictures from our fantastic Community Softball Game. It just keeps getting better and better and we are already looking forward to next year's game.

We encourage you to spend some time looking inside at our fall events and consider attending. We hope to see many old friends and continue to do our part to grow strong, healthy and supportive communities.



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:

Executive Director: Michelle Zuk



OPWDD Program:

Resource Center Coordinator: Kristin Winn

Senior FSS Advocate & Training Coordinator: Shelley Hubal

OPWDD Supervisor: Robin Piefer

Service Access Liaison: Renee Walker

Broome/Tioga/Tompkins Education Advocate: Shelley Hubal

Chenango/Delaware/Otsego Education Advocates:

Valerie Harris & Robin Piefer

Youth Programing:

Program Coordinator: Blake Stensland

RFPS Program:

Senior Family Advocate/RFPS Program Supervisor:

Barbara Finkelstein

Residential Family Peer Support Partner:

Valerie Harris

CCSI Program:

Senior Family Advocate/CCSI Program Supervisor:

Barbara Finkelstein

Otsego Parent Partner: Jessica Morton

Chenango/Delaware Parent Partner: Terry DiLuzio



Families Together in NYS

Credentialed Family Peer Advocates:

Michelle Zuk

Terry DiLuzio

Barbara Finkelstein

Valerie Harris

Renee Walker

Family Peer Advocate:

Jessica Morton

In Need of Assistance this Holiday Season?

Opportunities for Otsego

Holiday Meals/Delivery available in Oneonta area:

Thanksgiving Dinner: St. Mary's Parish

607-432-3920, ext. 212

Friends of Christmas Diner: First United Methodist Church

607-432-4102

Holiday Food Baskets: Available in November and December from:

Family Service Association: 607-432-2870

Salvation Army: 607-432-3960

Toy Bank: Norwich, Oneonta, Walton, Downsville, Johnson City, Boiceville

Christmas gifts are provided through the toy bank and families can walk in and sign themselves up at the Community Bank. When gifts are ready the family is called and they go pick gifts up, take up to 300 children.

Christmas Assistance for Chenango County (Christmas Food Baskets)

Families are instructed to call and give their name/phone number and say they are calling for Christmas Dinner Basket. 607-334-8244 (more information in middle of November)

Margaretville Community Christmas Project

Food baskets and gifts are given to children who still attend school. Families should contact Theresa Goodchild by December 10th at school, 845-586-2408 or goodchild@catskill.net. Food baskets and gifts will be delivered on Saturday December 17th.

Salvation Army Angel Tree

Provide eligible families with gifts or holiday food baskets. Sign up is from October 3rd-31st and November 10th, 11th, 14th and 15th. When signing you must have ID (medical card, birth certificate, driver's license, insurance card) for everyone in the household and proof of residence. Toys and gifts for children ages 14 and under and a food basket for Christmas dinner. Local families in Oneonta can go to 25 River Street to sign up. Office hours are Monday-Friday 9:30am-12:00pm and 1:00pm-4:00pm. 607-432-5960

The Family Service Association (FSA)

Thanksgiving food basket project allows families to receive a food basket. Christmas adopt a family project provides food/gifts to families. Applications can be picked up at FSA located at 277 Chestnut Street, Oneonta NY or families can call 607-432-2870. Applications are due November 3rd. They decide eligibility for these projects based on income sheets.

Santa's Helpers – Downsville

Forms available for pick up in Community Bank or entrance of school. Return to Mrs. Shaver in guidance office (363-2100) or mail to Alumni Association, PO Box 205, Downsville, NY 13755. Due at end of November, delivered by second week of December.

Operation Merry Christmas: Tri-Town Area

Taking sign-ups for 10 years of age and under until October 31st. Call 563-8119 to sign up, if there is no answer please allow 12-24 hours for a response.

The Family Resource Network will be collecting winter clothing (gently used/new coats, boots, snowpants, hats, gloves, etc) at our office now through December 10th. All clothing collected will be donated to the Holiday Clothing Drive hosted by the Norwich City School District and the Liberty Partnership Program which provides over 500 youth with a new seasonally appropriate outfit annually. Thank you in advance for your support!



Teen Social Skills Program

Located at Our Lady of Sorrows, 801 Main Street, Vestal, NY 13850

Our Teens (a.k.a. Geckos) enjoy making a meal after school and everyone participates! They plan the menu, cook the dinner, set the table and clean up. This single activity is lots of fun and provides the teens with several opportunities to communicate and socialize with each other in a natural, relaxed atmosphere. After dinner, the group likes to form teams and play the X-Box or board games, participate in role play situations, sing, or exercise and talk about the day.

Our Social Skills Program accepts applications for teens diagnosed on the Autism Spectrum. Our goal is to create opportunities for teens to build age-appropriate social skills, interact with peers and form relationships.

There is no charge for teens who are eligible for services through OPWDD and who meet the criteria below.

Social Skills Program eligibility...teens must be:

- 13-19 years of age
- Residents of Broome, Tioga, Delaware, Chenango, Otsego, or Tompkins counties
- Enrolled in a regular education program during the school year
- Non-injurious to self and others
- Without aggression or violent behaviors
- Without history or risk of flight
- Live at home

Our Social Skills Program offers teens opportunities to:

- Sharpen their communication skills
- Develop social appropriateness
- Mix and mingle with peers and adults
- Participate in interactive activities

Teens meet on the first and third Monday of each month, during the school year.

Visit our website at www.gandetherapies.com to download an Application. Participants who qualify are enrolled on a first come first served basis.

For more information, contact MWilson@gandetherapies.com or call 1-877-GandE07(426-3307) ext 3.

We are always looking for community volunteers to share their special talent, hobby or interest with our teens! If you or someone you know may be interested in this opportunity, please give us a call!

Teen Scene:

Teen Scene is a group of youth, ages 13-20, who meet once a month and participate in a variety of activities. Discussion topics can include dealing with bullying, dating, conflict resolution, communication, and leadership. The group also attends community events and participates in community service projects.

Upcoming Meetings & Events

Thursday, November 16th 5:30-7:30pm @ Elm Park United Methodist Church

Pie Night! We will all have the opportunity to make our own personal mini pies! We will get to choose between three different pie fillings: Blueberry, Apple & Pumpkin! Not only will we be making our own personal pies, but we will also be making pies to donate, along with Twill blankets and hats to local agencies and organizations that serve our community. These organizations will have a representative attend to accept our donation and share more about what their organization does and ways that we can get more involved! When you RSVP please specify what pie you would like to make to ensure we have enough for everyone.

There will be no Teen Scene meeting in December. Have a wonderful Holiday Season and we will see you in January!!

Dinner is provided so **please RSVP** by the day before the group.

Want more information on Teen Scene? Contact FRN at 607-432-0001. To register, e-mail Blake at bstensland@familyrn.org with your contact information in the body of the email.

Family Resource Network Support Group:

The FRN Support Group works to support and empower families. Dinner is provided, as well as childcare (if requested before the meeting). Various workshops are given as well, when the group requests.



Upcoming Meetings:

Monday, November 27th 5:30-7:30pm @ Elm Park United Methodist Church

Speaker Nathan Carentz from Mobile Crisis Assessment Team (MCAT) will be joining us to share information about the services they offer.

Monday, January 22nd 5:30-7:30pm @ Elm Park United Methodist Church

Speaker Jaclyn Brownell will be joining the group to share information about The Big Buddy Program, a mentoring program for at-risk youth in Delaware and Otsego Counties. The program offers the opportunity for a child to have a one-on-one relationship with a big buddy volunteer.

There will be no Support Group meeting in December. Have a wonderful Holiday Season and we will see you in January!!

As always, please register prior to the date so we can ensure dinner will be provided for all attendees! To register, call Barbara Finkelstein at 432-0001 or e-mail bfinkelstein@familyrn.org

Please join The Family Resource Network for their fall conference on autism.

The Power of Communication: Everyone has a Story to Share

For individuals with complex communication needs there is often a great deal of untapped potential that families and providers struggle to bring out.

This presentation will focus on utilizing assistive technology, primarily tools and strategies related to augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) from low tech to high tech, to support communication and language development for individuals with complex communication needs. The attendees will have the opportunity to participate in hands-on activities to further their knowledge and skills in the area of AAC, to support individuals at home, school and in the community.

About Our Speaker:

Tina N. Caswell, MS, CCC-SLP is a Clinical Assistant Professor in the Department of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology at Ithaca College, teaching and supervising in the area of augmentative and alternative communication (AAC). Ms. Caswell's clinical experience encompasses private practice, early intervention, public schools, long term care, and university settings. She has dedicated her professional career to the field of AAC, advocating, consulting and presenting at local, state and national conferences on the topics of social communication, literacy development, and academic participation for children with complex communication needs.



Thursday, November 9, 2017

Check in begins at 8:30 am

Morning Session: 9 am to 12 pm

Buffet lunch included: 12 pm to 1 pm

Afternoon Session: 1 pm to 4 pm

The Owego Treadway

1100 State Route 17c

Owego, NY

Registration required.

Parents of Individuals with OPWDD eligibility living in their family home in Broome, Tioga, Tompkins, Chenango, Otsego or Delaware County register for free by sending their name, phone number, name and TABS# of their loved one with OPWDD eligibility to register@familyrn.org. For questions or to register by phone call 607-437-0077.

For all other parents and providers there is a \$25 fee that covers lunch and materials. Payment must be made prior to the conference. Payment is by check, cash or Paypal only, POs will not be accepted.

Non-OPWDD parents and providers can register at www.familyrn.org. Click on the News & Events /conference links.



SAVE THE DATE Autism Awareness Night



Floyd L. Maines Veterans Memorial Arena

1 Stuart Street

Binghamton, NY

Friday, April 6

Game starts @ 7:05PM



VS



Please join the Family Resource Network and the Binghamton Devils Hockey Team as we Light it up Blue! for Autism Awareness Month.

Autism Awareness Month is a time to educate our community about autism and its prevalence in our area. We look to celebrate this month by increasing awareness about the importance of early diagnosis and about the many services that are available throughout the counties we serve. Throughout the evening local agencies will be set up with information regarding the programs and services they offer. By bringing together the resources in Broome County we hope to give voice to the many families and individuals in our communities that need our support. We hope to join hands in a team effort to inspire compassion, empowerment, and hope within the lives of those affected.

*****If you would like more information about this event or to find out how your agency can participate please contact Kristin at the Family Resource Network by calling 607-432-0001 or via email at kwinn@familyrn.org*****

SPECIAL EDUCATION TASK FORCE PRESENTS: Resources to Assist Students on their Journey to Careers After High School



Date: November 3, 2017

Time: 9am - 11:30am

Location: Southern Tier Independence Center
(Helen Keller Room)
135 East Frederick Street
Binghamton, NY

The following will be covered:

A review of the key components of Career Development Occupational Studies (CDOS) Credential

Where to find resources including Broome-Tioga BOCES Work-based Learning opportunities

How CDOS relates to careers and community resources

Presenters:

Jennifer Wisnieski, MEd, Work-based Learning Coordinator, BT BOCES
Amy Wallick, MEd, Work-based Learning Coordinator, BT BOCES
Karen Lawrence, MEd, Community Employment Specialist Coordinator,
Southern Tier Independence Center

To register please call Shelley at 607-437-0077.

Need accommodations? Contact Sue Ruff, STIC, 724-2111 or at advocate@stic-cil.org

If local schools are closed due to a weather event, the workshop will be re-scheduled.

Join the Family Resource Network, Inc. for Our Upcoming Dragon Dates Events:

Please join us for a cooking class specifically for individuals with special needs



Monday, November 13th
5:30pm-7:30pm

ARC Otsego Oneonta Day
Services Location
63 Lower River St.
Oneonta, NY.

Individuals will be able to participate in a cooking night! The lesson and cooking will be instructed by the nutrition educator for Cornell Cooperative Extension in Otsego County.

Please register by November
Thursday, November 9th.

There will be no Dragon Dates event for the month of December but we are excited for January and our Sensory Friendly Viewing of:



AMC Town Square
2425 Vestal Parkway
Vestal, NY

Saturday, January 13th
10:00am

These FREE events are for individuals with OPWDD eligibility living in the family home in Broome, Chenango, Otsego, Delaware, Tioga or Tompkins County. Parents/Caregivers must attend the events. Siblings are encouraged to come too!

Registration for both events is required.

To register please call Blake at (607)432-0001. Please have name, age, and TABS# of the individual with OPWDD eligibility, and total number of participants joining us. If leaving a message please provide a phone number that we can contact you at.

Family Resource Network, Inc. is not responsible for supervision.



The Family Resource Network would like to say a huge thank you to:

**Oneonta Job Corps Academy
Susquehanna Auto Sales &
Families Together in New York State**

for partnering with us at our

2nd Annual Community Softball Game!

We would also like to thank all of our Youth and Families who participated in this spectacular community event. We are already looking forward to next year!

