

The Family Resource Network, Inc.  
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Oneonta, NY 13820

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@familyrn

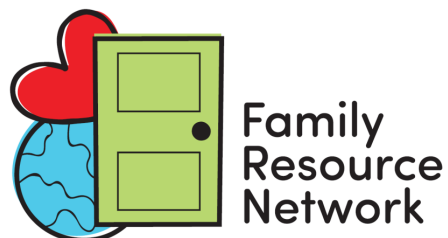


@family.resource.network

### 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 our board of directors.

For more information regarding the Family Resource Network, our mission statement and the role of a board member please contact board president Rhiannon Ham at (607) 278-5758 or call the Family Resource Network at (607) 432-0001.



# connections

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

November & December 2024  
in this issue:

Workshop: Special Education Regulations  
We're hiring! See inside for positions and details  
Training: Supplemental Needs Trust and Guardianship  
Teen Scene and Dragon Dates events



The Family Resource Network would like to thank all of our families, staff, board of directors, community members and sponsors who helped make our 30th Anniversary Celebration a huge success! Our special guests, FLAME the Band, were amazing and everyone in attendance enjoyed their great performance. Take a look inside our newsletter for a recap of the evening as well as special acknowledgements of our event sponsors.



After a busy Fall, the Family Resource Network will be finishing out the year with two months full of workshops and events! We are very excited to be offering a Sensory Friendly Showing of Moana 2 in Vestal for our Teen Scene and Dragon Dates Families. We will also be bowling, hosting a virtual cook-a-long and decorating cupcakes together, some of our favorite activities! For our younger participants, Little Dragons, we will be having a special event at Noah's World.

We will also be offering five parent trainings over the next two months that cover a wide range of disability related topics. We encourage you to check out this edition of our Connections Newsletter for all the details. We are looking forward to seeing many of our youth and families at these events in the coming months!



## 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.

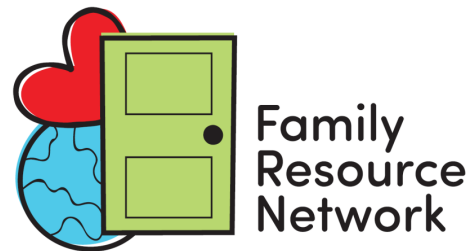
### Purpose:

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:

Terry Diluzio: Education Advocate  
Mary Fralick: Family Peer Advocate  
Karyn Kanzer: Family Peer Advocate  
Robin Piefer: FSS Supervisor  
Kristin Winn: HR Supervisor/Program Coordinator  
Michelle Zuk: Executive Director



Find us on Facebook:  
@familyrn

Find us on Instagram:  
@family.resource.network



### Family Resource Network Programs:

#### Services for Families with OPWDD Eligibility

Education Advocacy  
Intensive Advocacy Program  
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

#### 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

*Please join the Family Resource Network and Starbridge for an upcoming training:*

## “An Overview of Special Education Regulations”

**Wednesday, November 6, 2024**

**9:00-11:00**

**Online via ZOOM**

Participants will learn about legal requirements set forth in The Regulations of the Commissioner of Education Part 200-201, participants will learn how to use the regulations and understand that parents are equal partners in their child's education. Parents will also learn effective communication skills on how to work with the CSE and other staff in their child's education program, how to read the NYS Regulations and have the opportunity to learn what is included in the IEP and how it is individualized to meet the unique needs of a student.

If you are a Parent, Grandparent, Family Member, Medicaid Service Coordinator, or just interested in this topic then this training is for you!

Our Presenter: 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, go to [familyrn.org](http://familyrn.org) and click on “News and Events” and “Event Calendar”. For questions or assistance registering, please contact Terry at (607)287-3816.

\*\*\*This training is provided through a grant from the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities. Self-directing families will need to add “Training Groups” to their budget prior to attending. Please contact Robin at (607)287-6358 for assistance adding this program 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.

Support Groups meet every Tuesday evening and the first and third Thursday morning of the month.

### ***Registration is required.***

#### Tentative Support Group Dates:

Tuesday, November 5 6:30 pm Thursday, November 7 10:00am  
Tuesday, November 12 6:30 pm Thursday, November 21 10:00am  
Tuesday, November 19 6:30 pm Thursday, December 5 10:00am  
Tuesday, November 26 6:30 pm Thursday, December 19 10:00am  
Tuesday, December 3 6:30 pm  
Tuesday, December 10 6:30 pm  
Tuesday, December 17 6:30pm  
NO Support Groups on 12/24/2024 and 12/31/2024

To register, go to [www.familyrn.org](http://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 and Starbridge for an upcoming training: **“Teaching Self-Advocacy”**

Wednesday, November 20, 2024  
9:00-11:00 am  
Online

Self advocacy is the act of speaking up for yourself to protect your right to direct your own life, including your interests and needs. Families can help their children develop advocacy skills from a young age. This workshop will teach families strategies to ensure their child's voice will be heard throughout their life.

- Increase understanding of self-advocacy skills
- Increase knowledge of appropriate IEP goals to support self advocacy
- Increase understanding of the importance of self advocacy skills for transition planning and beyond

Our Presenter: 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.

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\*\*\*This training is provided through a grant from the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities. Self-directing families will need to add “Training Groups” to their budget prior to attending. Please contact Robin at (607)287-6358 for assistance adding this program to your budget.\*\*\*

*Please join the Family Resource Network for our upcoming Workshop:*  
**Supplemental Needs Trusts and Guardianship**  
Presented by Greg Catarella, Esq.

Friday, November 22, 2024  
9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.  
Online via Zoom

Have questions about setting up Trusts for your loved ones?  
Need advice about setting up a plan for a Guardianship?

Join us for an informational workshop presented by Greg Catarella and gain valuable information pertaining to financial planning for the future of your loved one with a disability.

Greg S. Catarella, Esq., is licensed to practice law in the State of New York. He concentrates his law practice in the areas of Elder Law, Estate Planning and Administration, Trusts, and Guardianships. For over 20 years, Greg has been helping clients and their families find peace of mind in a world that is unnecessarily complex.

**\*\*\*Registration Required\*\*\***

To register, please go to [familyrn.org](http://familyrn.org) and click on news and events and events calendar. For questions or help registering, please contact Terry at (607)287-3816

\*\*\*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 Robin at 607-287-6358 for assistance adding this to your budget.\*\*\*

*Please join the Family Resource Network for Our Upcoming Workshop:*  
**"Personal Power, Praise, and Positive Discipline"**  
Presenters: Robin Piefer and Terry DiLuzio, Nurturing Parenting Facilitators

Wednesday, December 4, 2024  
6:00-8:00 pm  
Online

This single session of the Nurturing Parenting for Parents of Children with Special Needs and Health Challenges will focus on:

- The concepts of Personal Power
- Types of Praise (being and doing)
- Ways to Empower your child
- The 3 steps to ACTion

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.

This is an interactive workshop and participants are encouraged to keep their cameras and microphones on during the session with the presenters. We do understand that everyone has different comfort levels when it comes to the use of video conferencing.

\*Registration is required\*

To register, go to [familyrn.org](http://familyrn.org) and click on "News and Events" and then "Events Calendar". For assistance with registration or for questions, please call Terry at (607)287-3816.

\*\*\*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 and Starbridge for an upcoming training:*

## **“Improving Your Advocacy Outcomes: Advocacy Steps and An Attitude of Gratitude”**

Wednesday, December 11, 2024  
9:00-11:00 am  
Online

Advocacy is the act of problem-solving with a purpose and a goal. A parent might engage in advocacy on behalf of their child; people who have a disability may advocate for themselves; a teacher may advocate on behalf of a student; groups of people may join forces in systemic advocacy efforts to change laws or policies. A step-by-step approach can guide us toward the desired outcome, regardless of the circumstance or scope. Participants will learn how to build a solid foundation of team members. Hands-on activities will reinforce the advocacy steps that lead to successful outcomes.

The expression of gratitude can have a positive influence in your life and in the lives of others with whom you interact. Kara Georgi will share what research reveals on the relationship between gratitude practices and both mental and physical well-being. Participants will learn:

- How optimism can be used to navigate difficult situations and improve advocacy outcomes
- Learn the benefits of gratitude and optimism
- Practice expressing gratitude in challenging situations

Our Presenter: 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, go to [familyrn.org](http://familyrn.org) and click on “News and Events” and “Event Calendar”. For questions or assistance registering, please contact Terry at (607)287-3816.

\*\*\*This training is provided through a grant from the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities. Self-directing families will need to add “Training Groups” to their budget prior to attending. Please contact Robin at (607)287-6358 for assistance adding this program to your budget.\*\*\*

## **Introducing the Family Resource Network’s Embark Program**

More families are being asked by OPWDD to use Family Support Services before qualifying for the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waiver. At Family Resource Network, we offer a variety of Family Support Services. Family Resource Network’s Embark Program is a group of services designed to support the families of young children with developmental disabilities. Our goal is to make caring for a child with a developmental disability easier by helping families to build confidence and understanding, learn advocacy skills, and connect with other families to reduce isolation.

- Access to 1:1 support from one of our advocates to help you understand your child’s disability, connect with resources and services, and navigate the special education system, OPWDD, mental health, and other systems for your child.
  - An online support group for families of children under 8 with developmental disabilities. This will meet twice a month.
- Monthly trainings geared toward the needs and interests of families of young children with developmental disabilities.
- Embark “Little Dragons”: Monthly social/recreational activities for all family members enrolled in the Embark program.

### **In November and December Embark Support Groups:**

Thursday, November 14, 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.  
Wednesday, November 27 Cancelled  
Thursday, December 12, 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.  
Wednesday, December 25 Cancelled

### **Trainings:**

Wednesday, November 6, 6:00-8:00 pm: “Overview of Special Education Regulations”  
Wednesday, December 4, 6:00-8:00 pm: “Personal Power, Praise, and Positive Discipline”

Check out our other great trainings in September and October, too!

### **Little Dragons Events:**

Saturday, November 23, 11am-1pm: Noah’s World, Oneonta, NY  
Saturday, December 14, 12:00-3:00pm: Cupcake Decorating, Afton, NY

To register for the Embark program, please contact Robin at (607)287-6358 or [fss@familyrn.org](mailto:fss@familyrn.org).

Please join the Family Resource Network Teen Scene and Dragon Dates Programs for our upcoming event

## Virtual Cook-a-Long: Baked Ziti Dinner

**Monday, November 18th**  
**5:00pm-7:00pm**  
**Online via ZOOM**

The Family Resource Network is excited for this month's virtual cook-a-long. For November we will be preparing a hearty Baked Ziti Dinner. FRN will lead participants through the recipes for Baked Ziti, Garlic Bread and a Garden Salad



and we will help cover the cost of the ingredients. FRN will be providing families gift cards and a supply list that they can use to get the ingredients they need for the recipes. **Please register by Monday, November 11th in order to receive your gift card prior to the event.** You will have the option to select from Walmart, Hannaford or Price Chopper and we will mail your gift card after the registration deadline.



### **Registration is required**

To register please visit our website @ [www.familyrn.org](http://www.familyrn.org) and click on "News and Events" and then "Events Calendar".

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

**Dragon Dates** events are for the families of individuals with OPWDD eligibility living in the family home in Broome, Chenango, Otsego, Delaware, Tioga or Tompkins County. Self-directing families will need to add "Social Skills" to their budgets before attending. Please contact Robin at (607)287-6358 for assistance adding this program to your budget. Questions? Call FRN at 607-432-0001 and ask for Kristin.

Come join the Family Resource Network's Teen Scene and Dragon Dates Programs for a Bowling Event!



**Saturday, November 30, 2024**  
**2:00pm-5:00pm**

**East Main Lanes & Lounge**  
**1 East Main Street**  
**Sidney, NY**

Enjoy a couple hours of fun at the Bowling Alley! Family Resource Network will pay for shoe rental and two games of bowling per family. A pizza lunch will be provided!

Please Register by November 26th

### **Registration is REQUIRED.**

To register please visit our website @ [www.familyrn.org](http://www.familyrn.org) and click on "News and Events" and then "Events Calendar". To register by phone or for additional information please call FRN @ 607-432-0001

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

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***\*This is a family event. FRN is not responsible for supervision.\****

Join the Family Resource Network's Teen Scene and Dragon Dates Programs  
for a Sensory Friendly Showing of:

## Moana 2

Saturday, December 7th, 2024  
Registration begins at 9:45 am  
Movie begins at 10 am

AMC Town Square  
2425 Vestal Parkway  
Vestal, NY



FRN has rented out an entire auditorium to ensure that the lights in the theatre are brighter, the sound is lower and our families can feel comfortable. In addition to free admission to the movie, all attendees will also receive a free small popcorn and drink!

Please Register by December 1st

Registration is REQUIRED.

To register please visit our website @ [www.familyrn.org](http://www.familyrn.org) and click on "News and Events" and then "Events Calendar". To register by phone or for additional information please call FRN @ 607-432-0001

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*\*This is a family event. FRN is not responsible for supervision.\**

Please join the Family Resource Network Teen Scene and Dragon Dates Programs for our upcoming event

## Holiday Cupcake Decorating

Saturday, December 14th  
12:00pm-3:00pm  
HALos Building  
146 Main Street  
Afton, NY



FRN is very excited to be partnering with HALos! We will be utilizing their amazing space in Afton! This month, participants will have the opportunity to make their own buttercream frosting from scratch and decorate a dozen cupcakes to take home with them. Lunch will be provided.

Please Register by December 10th

**Registration is REQUIRED.**

To register please visit our website @ [www.familyrn.org](http://www.familyrn.org) and click on "News and Events" and then "Events Calendar". To register by phone or for additional information please call FRN @ 607-432-0001

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

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***\*This is a family event. FRN is not responsible for supervision.\****

### ***The Family Resource Network is hiring!***

All applicants should submit a resume with a cover letter to [kwinn@familyrn.org](mailto:kwinn@familyrn.org). For more information please call the Family Resource Network at 607-432-0001 and ask for Kristin.

#### **Education Advocate**

Family Resource Network is hiring a 30 hour per week Education Advocate. \$18.00 per hour (19.00 with Bachelor's Degree) plus mileage reimbursement

##### **Responsibilities will include:**

- Assisting families to navigate the Special Education system by phone, email, video-conference, and in person in the office, in family homes, and in the community.
- Advocating for families and their children at CSE and other school meetings
- Assisting families to collect documents needed to apply for services through the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD)
  - Facilitating Support Groups in-person and through video-conferencing
  - Planning, advertising, and facilitating workshops and conferences for families
    - Some travel required
    - Some weekend and evening hours are required
      - Generous paid holidays and vacation
    - Must have a valid driver's license and a reliable vehicle
  - Must provide proof of vehicle registration, inspection, and insurance

##### **Qualifications:**

###### ***Minimum:***

- General understanding of the special education system
  - Strong verbal and written communication skills
- Proficient in basic features of Microsoft Windows, Word, and Excel

###### ***Preferred:***

- Personal or professional experience advocating for individuals with developmental disabilities.

###### ***Strongly preferred:***

- Bachelor's Degree
- Personal experience navigating the special education system as the parent or guardian of a child with an IEP

***Benefits: Flexible schedule with frequent opportunities to work from home, Paid time off, End of year bonus***

### ***The Family Resource Network is hiring!***

All applicants should submit a resume with a cover letter describing your personal lived experience of being a parent or guardian of a child with a social, emotional, behavioral, mental health or developmental disability to [kwinn@familyrn.org](mailto:kwinn@familyrn.org). For more information please call the Family Resource Network at 607-432-0001 and ask for Kristin.

#### **Family Peer Advocate**

Family Resource Network is hiring a 40 hour per week Family Peer Advocate \$17.00 per hour, plus mileage reimbursement. Salary will increase after credentialing.

Family Peer Advocates have 'lived-experience' as the parent (biological, foster, adoptive) or primary caregiver of a child/youth with a social, emotional, behavioral, mental health or developmental disability. They receive training to develop skills and strategies to empower other families. They foster effective parent-professional partnerships and promote the practice of family-driven and youth-guided approaches. Lived experience is extremely valuable when working with families in need of resources, support and advocacy.

##### **Applicant must:**

- Possess excellent organizational and communication skills
  - Complete progress notes in a timely manner
  - Conduct home visits with families to identify need
  - Submit to a background/fingerprint check (at no cost to applicant)
- Have experience advocating within the service systems (i.e. Mental Health, Special Education, DSS, Juvenile Justice, SPOA, Foster Care)
  - Have working knowledge of Microsoft Office software

High School Diploma or Equivalent required.

***Benefits: Flexible schedule with frequent opportunities to work from home, Paid time off, End of year bonus***



**Thank you to all of our 2024 Duck Derby  
Sponsors!**



Five Star Subaru

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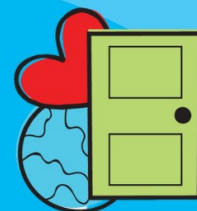
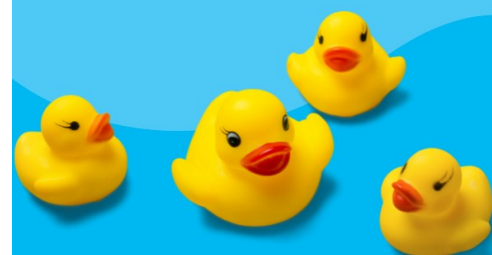
**LIQUOR DEPOT**



**HELEN'S LITTLE  
KITCHEN**



**DJ CAM**  
Professional DJ Services  
by Camden Decker



Family  
Resource  
Network



**Thank you to all of the sponsors of the  
Family Resource Network's  
30th Anniversary Celebration:**



**Arby's Foundation**

**AAA Northeast**

**City of Oneonta OCI Program**

**Community Bank, NA**

**DJ Cam Professional DJ Services by  
Camden Decker**

**Families Together in New York State**

**KeyBank**

**Sweet Peach Smokehouse Food Truck**

**Tootie and Bugs Bakery**



**The Family Resource Network would like to  
extend our sincere appreciation to these  
local businesses who helped make our 30th  
Anniversary Celebration possible!**

# Family Resource Network's 30th Anniversary Concert with Special Guests FLAME the Band

Thank you for celebrating with us!

