

The Family Resource Network, Inc.
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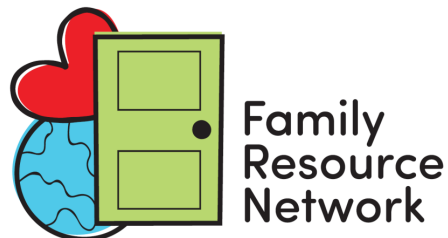


@family.resource.network

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

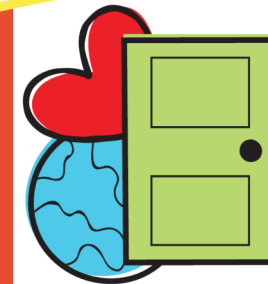
Information, Resources, and Updates from The Family Resource Network, Inc.

July & August 2025
in this issue:

NEW: On Demand Training Option

NEW: Rural Community Connection Program and Events
Training: Helping Children Cope with Grief, Change and Loss

Upcoming Teen Scene and Dragon Dates Events



Family
Resource
Network

Congratulations Mary Fralick!!

This month we would like to recognize one of our extremely dedicated Family Peer Advocates. Please join Family Resource Network in congratulating **Mary Fralick** on receiving the **2025 Family Peer Advocate of the Year** award from Families Together in New York State (FTNYS). Mary joined the Family Resource Network team in 2018 and from day one it was clear that she was going to be a very positive addition to the Family Peer Advocacy community.

In the letters of support for her nomination people wrote – “her desire to empower the families and individuals that she works with is evident in everything that she does.” Another wrote- “Throughout my career, I have worked with multiple different agencies in our area and when I see Mary linked to a family, I have faith and relief that the family is going to get the help and support that they need. Another wrote- “I have had the pleasure and privilege of working with Mary for many years. She represents the highest values of a Family Peer Advocate in respect, empowerment, ethical services, professionalism, positive attitude and general support. She always strives to lift people up to reach their fullest potential, regardless of anything else.”

Families often tell us that even though they are involved with many agencies, it is **MARY** that makes the **real help** happen!

People talk a lot about compassion in this work and Mary has an abundance of compassion. But being a great advocate takes so much more than that. Mary brings kindness, resourcefulness, respect and most of all courage to her work. She is guided by a north star of integrity that allows her to be brave enough to have difficult conversations with both families and providers. She is always able to make these difficult conversations strength-based and it is often these conversations that make it possible for families to move forward toward their goals.

FRN has a long and positive history of working with FTNYS and we deeply appreciate their recognition of Mary for the outstanding work that she does. The families and communities that we serve are very fortunate that she has chosen to do this work and we are very grateful that she has chosen to do it on the Family Resource Network team!



The Family Resource Network, Inc. Mission & Purpose

Mission Statement:

Individuals with disabilities 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:

Harlie Dumond: Family Peer Advocate
Mary Fralick: Family Peer Advocate
Karyn Kanzer: Family Peer Advocate
Robin Piefer: FSS Supervisor
Marcia Shaw: Bookkeeper
Ryan Tucker: Education Advocate
Kristin Winn: HR Supervisor/Program Coordinator
Michelle Zuk: Executive Director



Find us on Facebook:
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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 for an upcoming workshop on:
"Helping Children Cope with Grief, Change, and Loss"

Wednesday, July 23, 2025
6:00-8:00 pm

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

Grief and Resilience

How to provide Transition Support for Grief - the five "P's"
The Developmental Stages and Responses to Grief
Activities to help reinforce what you learn

Presenter: Robin Piefer, Nurturing Parenting Facilitator

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 and click on "News and Events" and "Event Calendar". For questions or assistance registering, please contact Robin at (607)287-6358.

This training is provided through a grant from the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities. Self-directing families will need to add "Training Groups" and "Social Skills" 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.

In 2025, we will be offering one online support group per month.

These support groups will take place on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 6:30 pm. Our support groups will meet on:

**Tuesday, July 8, 2025 6:30-7:30 pm
Tuesday, August 12, 2025 6:30-7:30 pm**

Registration is required.

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 Robin at (607)287-6358.

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:

"Pathways to Graduation"

August 2025
Date and Time TBD

Learn what "pathways to graduation" are available for students who have disabilities in New York State. What does each diploma, credential, and certificate offer for a student's future? What is the difference between a local diploma, a Regents diploma, and a Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential? This workshop will help you and your student make informed decisions regarding school, placement, and services.

- Understand the difference between each diploma and credential and the impacts on postsecondary options
- Gain information to help you and your child make informed decisions regarding school, placement, and services

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 Required*****

To register, please go to familyrn.org and click on news and events and events calendar. For questions or help registering, please contact Robin at (607)287-6358.

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.

New in 2025! **On Demand Trainings**

We recognize that families are busy and can't always make it to a training at the scheduled time. In 2025, we will be offering many of our training topics on demand!

Who is eligible? If you are the parent or family member of a child or adult who is eligible for services through the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), you are eligible to request on demand trainings. If you have self-directed services, "Training Groups" must be added to your child's budget before scheduling. On demand trainings will be scheduled at a time that is convenient to you, either in-person or via Zoom. If more than one parent is interested in the same training, we will schedule it at a time that works for all interested parents.

What if you do not have a child with OPWDD eligibility? Please reach out to us for your options. We may be able to accommodate you through one of our other programs.

Available Training Topics:

Understanding the NYS IEP
Preparing for Your Child's CSE Meeting
All About Assessments
Services and Supports in NYS for Children with Developmental Disabilities
Intro to Social Stories
Intro to Visual Schedules
Your Due Process Rights: What to do when you don't agree
Kid, Teen and Adult in a Book
Advocating for Your Medically Involved Child
The Nurturing Philosophy
Personal Power, Praise, and Positive Discipline
Stress: Coping, Calming, and the Brain
Helping Children Cope with Change, Grief, and Loss
Praise, Encouragement, and Family Rules
The Power of Play and Socialization
Communication and Advocacy

On Demand Trainings continued
In addition to single session trainings, the Family Resource Network also has the following multisession training opportunities available through our new On Demand Training program design.

Mind the Gap:

The Mind the Gap program is for families of children ages 0-18 with a developmental disability who live in Broome, Chenango, Delaware, Otsego, Tioga or Tompkins Counties. Families will be connected to a Peer Navigator. Peer Navigators have undergone thorough training through the University of Rochester and are parents of children with special needs themselves who have experience navigating the special needs service system. This short 4–6-month program offered to families includes 12 flexible coaching sessions with a peer navigator in which parents are guided and supported as they learn and understand their child's diagnosis and get access to resources and services.



Nurturing Parenting: Parents & Children with Special Needs & Health Challenges

This parenting curriculum is a 12 session program is designed to help parents and their children with chronic or life threatening medical conditions, developmental delays, life-altering disorders and disabilities add to their parenting toolboxes.



Nurturing Parenting®
Established 1983

Come join the Family Resource Network's Teen Scene, Dragon Dates and RCCP Programs for our Mini Golf Event!



Saturday, July 19th
11:00am-1:00pm

Oneonta Sports Park
132 County Hwy 47
Oneonta, NY

Enjoy a round of mini golf with the Family Resource Network! The Family Resource Network will cover a game of Mini golf for each family member followed by a pizza lunch at the picnic area at the Sports Park.

Please Register by July 17th

Registration is REQUIRED.

To register please visit our website @ 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.

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.

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

Come join the Family Resource Network's Teen Scene, Dragon Dates and RCCP Programs for our Mini Golf Event!



Saturday, August 16th
11:00am-1:00pm

Oneonta Sports Park
132 County Hwy 47
Oneonta, NY

Because mini golf is always a family favorite, we figured why not play again this month while the weather is nice! Enjoy a round of mini golf with the Family Resource Network! The Family Resource Network will cover a game of Mini golf for each family member followed by a pizza lunch at the picnic area at the Sports Park.

Please Register by August 14th

Registration is REQUIRED.

To register please visit our website @ 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.

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.

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

Rural Community Connection Program (RCCP)

The Family Resource Network is very excited to announce that we have been awarded a grant from the United Way of Mid Rural New York to provide the Rural Community Connection Program. This is a partnership between the Family Resource Network and HALo's. The purpose of the RCCP is to connect families and youth in Chenango, Delaware & Otsego Counties to support and resources that will increase the health and resiliency of our communities. We will have monthly events and look forward to helping families to make positive connections.

Please join the Family Resource Network and HALo's for our upcoming event

Art for Wellness: Family Dynamics

Saturday, July 12, 2025

10:00am-1:00pm



HUB
146 Main St.
Afton, NY 13730

Please join the Rural Community Connection Program for an Art for Wellness event. Participants will be doing a variety of mental health related art projects. There will be multiple projects including a kinetic family drawing, family tree and genograms as we consider our family dynamics.

Please Register by July 10th

Registration is required

To register please visit FRN's website @ www.familyrn.org and click on "News and Events" and then "Events Calendar". To register by phone please call 607-432-0001 and ask for Kristin.

Families from Chenango, Delaware & Otsego Counties are eligible to attend.

The Rural Community Connection is a partnership between the Family Resource Network and HALo's. Funding has been provided by the United Way of Mid Rural New York.

****This is a family event. FRN and HALo's are not responsible for supervision.****

Please join the Family Resource Network and HALo's for our upcoming event
Art for Wellness: Color Associations

Saturday, August 9, 2025

10:00am-1:00pm

HUB
146 Main St.
Afton, NY 13730

Please join the Rural Community Connection Program for an Art for Wellness event. Participants will be doing a variety of mental health related art projects including feeling wheels, emotional landscapes and feeling identifications as we use colors to express various emotions and feelings. A pizza lunch will be provided.

Please Register by August 7th

Registration is required

To register please visit FRN's website @ www.familyrn.org and click on "News and Events" and then "Events Calendar". To register by phone please call 607-432-0001 and ask for Kristin.

Families from Chenango, Delaware & Otsego Counties are eligible to attend.

The Rural Community Connection is a partnership between the Family Resource Network and HALo's. Funding has been provided by the United Way of Mid Rural New York.

****This is a family event. FRN and HALo's are not responsible for supervision.****

The Family Resource Network is hiring!

All applicants should submit a resume with a cover letter to 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. \$19.00 per hour (\$20.00 with Bachelor's Degree in related field) 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. 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 \$19.00 per hour, plus mileage reimbursement.

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

