

The Family Resource Network, Inc.
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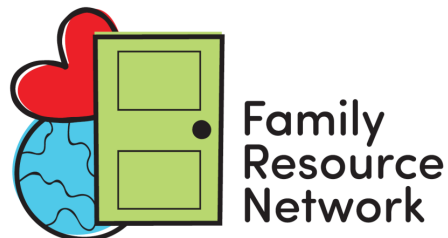


@family.resource.network

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.

September & October 2025
in this issue:

WE'RE HIRING! Education and Family Peer Advocate Positions
Workshop: Introduction to Social Stories and Visual Schedules
Training: Bullying Intervention Strategies
Upcoming Teen Scene, Dragon Dates and RCCP Events



The Family Resource Network is excited to introduce our newest Family Peer Advocate, Harlie Dumond. Please join us in welcoming her to our team!

My name is **Harlie Dumond**, I was so honored when The Family Resource Network gave me the opportunity to put my bank of knowledge to good use. With my many years of experience with working alongside OPWDD services, navigating the Mental Health systems and my time as a foster parent. I learned a few things along the way; it takes a village, an ear to listen and safe space to work through challenges. My number one goal has always been to see families and individuals around me thrive. "I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the water to create many ripples"- Mother Teresa. I may not be the village but I can bring the village to you.



The Family Resource Network is continuing to expand our team! We are currently hiring for the positions of Education Advocate and Family Peer Advocate. If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about these openings, please look inside this edition of FRN's newsletter for additional details and how to apply.

FRN also encourages our readers to check out the trainings and events we have scheduled for this fall! Our Teen Scene, Dragon Dates and RCCP programs will be hosting one of our annual favorites-Apple Picking at Middlefield Orchard! All of the details for this event and everything else we have planned can be found inside our newsletter and at our website as well! We look forward to seeing many of you in the coming months.

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 disabilities 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
Kristin Winn: HR Supervisor/Program Coordinator
Michelle Zuk: Executive Director



Find us on Facebook:
@familyrn

Find us on Instagram:
@family.resource.network



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
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

Please join the Family Resource Network for an upcoming workshop on:
“Introduction to Social Stories and Visual Schedules”

Tuesday, September 23, 2025

6:00-8:00 pm

Online via ZOOM

Children with Autism and other developmental disabilities may have trouble transitioning from one activity to another or trying something new. School programs will often use tools like social stories or visual schedules to help. Join Family Resource Network to learn more about these tools and how you can use them at home.

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 disabilities 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, September 9, 2025 6:30-7:30 pm
Tuesday, October 14, 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:

Bullying Intervention Strategies

Friday, October 3, 2025
9:00am-11:00am
Online via ZOOM

Bullying is an increasingly serious problem in schools. Families, teachers, and children need help and support in knowing how to respond. This workshop introduces participants to definitions of bullying, how to recognize it, and how to respond to it both at home and in school.

- Be able to define bullying behavior and distinguish it from typical peer conflict
- Identify your own emotional responses to your child or student being bullied
- Learn coping strategies for yourself and strategies to help your child or student
- Learn effective ways to intervene in the child's school or home environment

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 and Dragon Dates Programs for our Annual Apple Picking Event!



Saturday, September 27, 2025
1:00pm-3:00pm

Middlefield Orchard
2274 State Hwy 166
Cooperstown, NY

Enjoy an afternoon at Middlefield Orchard, picking apples and participating in other fun fall activities. Family Resource Network will pay for up to 10lbs of apples per family and provide apple cider and donuts.

Please Register by September 25th

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 and Dragon Dates Programs for a Bowling Event!



Sunday, October 26, 2025
2:00pm-4:00pm

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 October 24th

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: Self-Perceptions

Saturday, September 13, 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 Tree of Self, decorative mask and lifeline history as we consider our self perceptions. A pizza lunch will be provided.

Please Register by September 11th

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: Letting Go and Emergency Preparedness

Saturday, October 11, 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 a Fear and Strength Collage, Letting go Leaves and Water Circles. In addition to these projects our Family Peer Advocates will also be discussing and sharing valuable information about Emergency Preparedness. A pizza lunch will be provided.

Please Register by October 9th

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!

Job Title: Education Advocate

Location: Flexible: Work from home, from the office, or hybrid

Salary: \$21 per hour; \$22 with bachelor's degree

About the Role:

We are seeking a passionate and dedicated Education Advocate to join our team of passionate dedicated professionals. Empower families and ensure their voices are heard in planning their children's educational services. The ideal candidate will help families navigate the education system, connect them with vital resources, and support them in advocating for their children's needs. Full and part time positions available.

Key Responsibilities:

- Serve as a liaison between families and educational professionals
- Assist families in understanding and participating in the planning of their children's educational services
- Provide information and guidance about available resources and services
- Support families in advocating for appropriate educational accommodations and supports
- Facilitate workshops, support groups, and informational sessions for families
- Maintain up-to-date knowledge of educational policies, resources, and community services
- Document and track family interactions and outcomes
- Meet with families in the office, in the community, or in their homes

Qualifications:

- Preferred: Lived experience as a parent or primary caregiver of a child with a disability
- Bachelor's degree in Psychology, Education, Social Work, or a related field (or equivalent experience)
- Experience working with families, children, or in educational settings
- Strong communication, advocacy, and interpersonal skills
- Knowledge of local educational systems and community resources
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team
- Strong time-management skills
- Bilingual abilities are a plus

Benefits:

- Flexible work schedule
- Opportunities for professional development
- Supportive and mission-driven team environment
- Annual Retention Bonus

How to Apply:

Please send your resume and a brief cover letter outlining your interest in the role to kwinn@familyrn.org.

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 \$21.00 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, Annual Retention Bonus

