

Save the Date!



Families Together
in New York State

FAMILY EMPOWERMENT DAY 2026

SAVE THE DATE
MONDAY, MARCH 30TH

RALLY & MARCH AT THE CAPITOL
The Well, Legislative Office Building
198 State St, Albany, NY 12210

www.ftnys.org

The Family Resource Network is excited to share we will be hosting a charter bus to transport families to Family Empowerment Day this year! The bus will depart from Binghamton and make two stops along the way to Albany to accommodate families. For more information please reach out to FRN @ 607-432-0001.

Registration is required.

To register through the FRN and reserve your space on the bus please follow the link below:

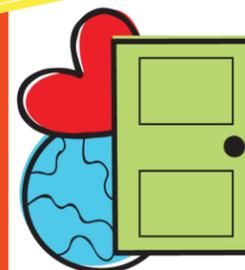
<https://forms.gle/gY2n7GaNvCn8miwX8>

connections

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

March & April 2026
in this issue:

FRN is returning to Neahwa Park in 2026 for our 8th Annual Duck Derby and Family Fun Day!
Online and Phone Family Support Groups
Upcoming Teen Scene, Dragon Dates and RCCP Events
FTNYS Family Empowerment Day 2026



Family
Resource
Network

Pathways to Thriving

Pathways to Thriving is the Family Resource Network's commitment to not only continue to do the work that we have been doing for over 30 years to provide support and assistance to families, but to increase our partnerships and engagement with all sectors of our communities to raise awareness of what youth and families need to thrive. This effort will be considered successful when every family, school, community organization and business has the information that they need regarding how we grow young people that have the tools that they need to be active, positive participants in their own lives and larger communities. This information needs to be provided in conjunction with solid, trusted information on how to keep individuals safe from physical, sexual and emotional abuse.

FRN staff recently received a very generous scholarship from Families Together in NYS (FTNY) that enabled staff to receive training from the Search Institute about the 40 Developmental Assets. The Search Institute partners with organizations to cultivate the strengths, relationships and opportunities necessary for young people to learn, grow, contribute and thrive. Their research shows what many of us already understand- that the more assets an individual has, the more likely they are to thrive.

We are already bringing trainings on the 40 Developmental assets out to the community. FRN can bring this information to any family, school, PTA, Rotary Club or business that is interested. We are working with many community partners including the Otsego County Child Advocacy Center, the YMCA Preschool Program, RSS, Catholic Charities, NYS Office of Mental Health, OFO VIP Program and many others to bring solid, trusted information regarding the best practices for keeping individuals safe from physical, sexual and emotional abuse. We will be incorporating education and training on the 40 Developmental Assets along with abuse prevention and personal safety information from the Monique Burr Foundation for Children, The Mama Bear Effect and Bloom Safe into the work with do with our families. We will be sharing this information broadly in the community through our newsletters, social media and workshops with anyone interested.

We believe this project will achieve the goal of-

The entire community working together to build happier, healthier and safer communities where people want to live and work and raise families.

Please reach out to the Family Resource Network if you are a family, school, community organization or business that is interested in being a part of these efforts.

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:

Joanna Brach: Education Advocate
Skylar Collins: Social Media, Marketing & Volunteer Coordinator
Harlie Dumond: Family Peer Advocate
Mary Fralick: Family Peer Advocate
Jessica Marrero: Family Peer Advocate
Ruth Modinger: Education Advocate
Robin Piefer: FSS Supervisor
Marcia Shaw: Bookkeeper
Cassandra Smith: Education Advocate
Kristin Winn: HR Supervisor/Program Coordinator
Michelle Zuk: Executive Director



UNITED WAY
Mid Rural New York

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
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 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 2026, 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, March 10, 2026 6:30-7:30 pm
Tuesday, April 14, 2026 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 for our upcoming training:

Preparing for your Child's CSE Meeting

Thursday, March 12, 2026

9am-11am

Online via ZOOM

As this year's CSE Meetings approach, it is important to be prepared. What can you do to prepare for your child's CSE meeting and ensure you have meaningful participation in the IEP Process?

Education Advocates will discuss:

- Preparing for in-person, video-conference, and telephone conference meetings
- 6 things you can do to prepare for your meeting
- 5 things to remember during your meeting
- 3 things you should do after your meeting

Registration is required

To register online go to our website at www.familyrn.org and click on Events. Then click on the Events Calendar and select the event you want to register for.

For assistance with registration or for questions, please call 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 FRN for assistance adding this to your budget.

The Family Resource Network is partnering with the Unadilla Public Library to present

GAME DAYS!

Join us on the third Saturday of the month for an afternoon of new friends, fun and laughter for the whole family!

Unadilla Public Library

193 Main Street

Unadilla, NY

Upcoming Dates:

Saturday, March 21

Saturday, April 18

11am-2pm



This event is FREE but 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.

The Rural Community Connection (**RCCP**) is a partnership between the Family Resource Network and the United Way of Mid Rural New York. Families from Chenango, Delaware & Otsego Counties are eligible to attend.

Every participant will receive a \$5 gift card to the House of Consignment!

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

On Demand Trainings

We recognize that families are busy and can't always make it to a training at the scheduled time. 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 a Bowling Event!



Sunday, March 29, 2026
3:00pm-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 March 27th

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.

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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 an afternoon at

ClarkSportsCenter



Sunday, April 19th, 2026
1:00pm-5:00pm

Clark Sports Center
124 County Highway 52
Cooperstown, NY



Enjoy an afternoon at Clark Sports Center with Family Resource Network! Registrants and their family will have access to many fun activities at the gym including Bowling and Swimming. Any youth ages 5-18 may participate in Kid's Climb and utilize the Rock Wall during our event as well. In addition, everyone will have access to the open gym, game room, ping pong tables and racket ball courts! This event is free for registered Teen Scene, Dragon Dates and RCCP participants and their family members. A pizza lunch will also be served.

Space is limited and registration is **REQUIRED**.
Please Register by April 17th

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

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The Rural Community Connection (**RCCP**) is a partnership between the Family Resource Network and HALo's. Funding has been provided by the United Way of Mid Rural New York. Families from Chenango, Delaware & Otsego Counties are eligible to attend.

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

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

Saturday, March 21, 2026
Registration begins at 9:45 am
Movie begins at 10 am

Southside Mall Cinema
5006 St Hwy 23
Oneonta, 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 snack sized popcorn and drink!

Please Register by March 19th

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

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Sunday, April 12, 2026
Registration begins at 9:45 am
Movie begins at 10 am

Southside Mall Cinema
5006 St Hwy 23
Oneonta, 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 snack sized popcorn and drink!

Please Register by April 10th

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

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Art for Wellness: Social Justice

Saturday, March 14, 2026
10:00am-1:00pm

HUB
146 Main St.
Afton, NY 13730

Please join the Family Resource Network and HALo's for an Art for Wellness event. Participants will be doing a variety of mental health related art projects including a Collaborative Wall College. This will allow participants to express individual stories and identities using small wooden tiles which would then be displayed as a single piece.

A pizza lunch will be provided.

Please Register by March 12th

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.

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

Come join the Family Resource Network's Teen Scene, Dragon Dates and RCCP Programs for our upcoming event

Art for Wellness

Saturday, April 11
10:00am-1:00pm

HUB
146 Main St.
Afton, NY 13730



Please join the Family Resource Network and HALo's for an Art for Wellness event. Participants will be doing a variety of mental health related art projects.

A pizza lunch will be provided.

Please Register by April 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.

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



The Family Resource Network is excited to announce we will be returning to Neahwa Park on Saturday, June 13th, 2026 for our



8TH ANNUAL DUCK DERBY AND FAMILY FUN DAY!

Single Ducks



Ticket Sales have already kicked off!

\$5 each or \$20 for a Six Quack!

6 Pack Of Ducks



The Family Resource Network is currently looking for sponsors for our 2026 event! There is also a Resource Fair the day of the event which is a great opportunity for local agencies to share information about the services they provide.

For more information on how to get involved please call the Family Resource Network at 607-432-0001 and ask for Kristin. If your business is interested in being a sponsor or you would like to reserve a space for your agency to table at the event please send an email to kwinn@familyrn.org for more details!



Thank you to all of the Sponsors who have already donated to our 2026 Event! If you are interested in becoming a sponsor please reach out to mzuk@familyrn.org or by calling the FRN office at 607-432-0001.



Cooperstown Beaver Valley Cabins and Campsites

MILLER FINANCIAL SERVICES



OTSEGO MEDIA



HELEN'S LITTLE KITCHEN



Preferred Mutual
Live Assured



NBT BANK



Family Resource Network

