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connections

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

September & October 2026
in this issue:

Upcoming workshop: Bullying: Intervention Strategies
Online and Phone Family Support Groups
Upcoming Teen Scene, Dragon Dates and RCCP Events-
Sensory Friendly Movies, Apple Picking and Bowling!



The Family Resource Network has had an amazing Summer! We have been super busy hosting and participating in various community events. While the summer flew by and we are sad to see it go, we are also looking forward to all the fun things we have planned for the Fall! But first, a quick summer recap!

This June we hosted our 8th Annual Duck Derby and Family Fun Day at Neahwa Park. With over 25 other area non-profits and service providers participating and well over 300 community members who attended the event throughout the afternoon, it was one of our largest and most successful Duck Derbies to date! We are extremely grateful to everyone who helped make this possible. From our sponsors and community partners to our volunteers, staff, BOD members and everyone who came on the day of the event, we couldn't have done it without your support!



In August, we brought back our very popular Family Picnic and were welcomed by Beaver Valley Campgrounds and Campsites. It was a great day for our families. We were particularly honored that The NYS Office of Mental health sent representatives out to our event. They spent the day with us and really listened to the feedback that our families had to share regarding their experiences with their mental health services. We were also excited to have our good friends from Families Together in NYS and Bravehearts M.O.V.E New York.

They very next day we were honored to host the Rural Youth Isolation conversation in Sidney. This was made possible by the generosity of our friends at Families Together in NYS. We again had representatives from the NYS Office of Mental Health join us to listen to the concerns in our area. It was a great conversation that had input from Otsego, Chenango and Delaware Counties. We look forward to this important conversation continuing.

Thank you again to everyone who has participated in or helped make these events possible. We hope to see many of you at the community events and workshops we have planned for the next two months. Please look inside this edition of FRN's Connections Newsletter for details.



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
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

Legacy Resource Fund

Source of financial assistance

Save the Date!

The Family Resource Network will be hosting a community event for parents, caregivers, community members and children ages 12 & up.

October 22, 2026

6-8pm

**@ Foothills Performing Arts Center
(upstairs at the Loft)
Oneonta, NY**

Richard Guerry from the Institute for Responsible Online and Cellphone Communication will be presenting:

Online Safety:

Understanding how your Social Media presence affects your digital footprint.

Key Discussion Points:

- Intro to Public and Permanent / Having a Digital Consciousness and what it means
- Cyber Cruelty Prevention & Consequences
- Safe Communication in Gaming
- Removing the Social Privacy Myth
- The importance of Empathy in our digital decision making



Bring Public and Permanent™ To Your Community

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

Bullying: Intervention Strategies

Presenter: Kara Georgi

When: October 2026

Date and Time TBD

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

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.

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, September 8, 2026 6:30-7:30 pm

Tuesday, October 13, 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.

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

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

Sunday, September 20, 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 September 18th

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.

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 Annual Apple Picking Event!



Sunday, September 27, 2026
12:00pm-3:00pm

Maplewood Farm and Orchard
596 Miller Avenue
Bovina Center, NY

Enjoy an afternoon at Maplewood Farm and 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.

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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 a Bowling Event!

Sunday, October 25, 2026
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 23rd
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.

The Sidney Chamber of Commerce is presenting a My Fastest Mile Race and Fundraiser. The Family Resource Network is excited to be tabling at this event! Come out and see us on 9/13/26 and join in on the fun!

MY FASTEST MILE
9.13.2026

**SUNDAY
SEPTEMBER 13TH**

DAY OF REGISTRATION 9:00 - 10:30 AM
PACKET PICKUP 9:00 - 11:30 AM
SIDNEY PLAZA, MAIN ST SIDNEY NY

11:00 | KIDS FUN RUN
PRIZES, **KIDS 12 & UNDER FREE**, STROLLERS ALLOWED
TETHERED REQUIRED

11:30 | OPEN DIVISION
PRIZES FOR EACH AGE GROUP

12:00 | ELITE DIVISION
1ST PLACE: \$500 (MALE AND FEMALE)
2ND PLACE: \$250 (MALE AND FEMALE)
3RD PLACE: \$100 (MALE AND FEMALE)

**RACE BEGINS UPPER WEST MAIN STREET
NEAR FORMER HILLCREST ROLLER RINK
AND ENDS AT SIDNEY PLAZA**

COURSE IS COMPLETELY DOWNHILL

REGISTRATION FEES
OPEN DIVISION \$25
ELITE DIVISION \$35
KIDS FUN RUN - FREE

REGISTER TODAY ONLINE OR WITH QR CODE
[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/2ZSE4NEK](https://tinyurl.com/2ZSE4NEK)
KIDS FUN RUN DAY OF REGISTRATION ONLY