

THE CHILD CARE CONNECTION

CHILD CARE SUPPORT SERVICES

» WINTER 2026 «

INVESTING IN YOURSELF

As a child care provider you spend most of your day supporting the children that attend your program, and in many instances, supporting their families as well. You have created spaces that are welcoming for families. You allow children to feel safe and secure to learn and make mistakes, be creative and silly, and build confidence in their abilities. A great amount of your work is done before children arrive for the day, after they have gone home, and on weekends to ensure that you are following all child care regulations. This includes cleaning, paperwork, shopping, planning, and completing mandatory training. It can seem so daunting to find training courses that will be beneficial to your program, but also fit into the required training categories. This means that we often fall back onto watching the same training videos year after year so that we can check off boxes and be done. In the new year when you are making your resolutions, we encourage you to resolve to invest in yourself. Reframe your thinking around training and look at them as opportunities for professional development instead.

There are many opportunities for you to invest in yourself and your program through professional development. The first step is self-reflection. It can be hard to look at ourselves/our programming with a critical lens, but it is a necessary step for growth. This process will help you to determine where your program excels, and where you may want to make improvements, so you can choose your professional development goals. We have a couple of tools to assist you in your self-reflection. The Core Body of Knowledge Assessment and Professional Development Planning Tool allows you to assess your areas of strength, steady progress being made, and areas of opportunities across the core competencies. If you are looking to strengthen more of the business portions of your program, you can reach out to Renee and she will work with you on those aspects using the Business Administration Scale (for F/GDC) or the Program Administration Scale (for Centers).

With your goals in mind you can seek out your preferred professional development methods. While online trainings do have their benefits, in-person sessions allow you to interact with not only the facilitator, but your peers. You can connect with other child care providers to talk about your successes and your struggles. Talking with others who truly understand the ins and outs of caring for children supports you in a way that is not possible with prerecorded content. Our resource center offers many in person professional development opportunities. We would love to create learning opportunities around your needs and interests.

These traditional training opportunities are not the only way to hone your skills. Other opportunities for professional development could be creating a community of learners that meets on a regular schedule to deepen the group's understanding of ideas in the world of early child education

and child care. Communities of Learners could be informal with topics chosen for each meet up or be more in depth where one topic or book would be studied over many sessions.

If attending in person professional development is currently not doable, we have monthly Zoom office hours with a member of our child care team. Please see the training section of this newsletter for more information) and reach out if you need the link to join. Another option would be working with a member of our team or a fellow child care provider on an individual basis in a coaching or mentorship capacity. In this way you would work on your program and professional goals in your program and in your own time.

Another option for professional growth is to continue your education by obtaining your CDA (Child Development Associate) credential, or obtain your Associates, Bachelors, or Masters Degree. These options will require the most amount of time and do come at a cost, luckily there is some financial assistance available through PDP or the Early Childhood Career Development Center. Please reach out to Kim and she can point you in the right direction.

Above all we want you to invest in yourself in the ways that feel best for you and your program because that will give you the best chance of being successful in your goals for growth! Our team is here to assist you in any way you need.

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Change is always on the horizon, and seems to come quicker than ever. The new year is a good time to pull out program management paperwork to ensure it is still accurate, up to date, and appropriate for the program. What has been working well that you want to maintain? What can be improved?

New York State minimum wage is set to increase to \$16.00 an hour effective January 1st 2026. Paperwork for staff getting a wage adjustment will be need to updated, and you may need to look at how that increase effects the pay scale of the staff as a whole. Across the board, child care workers are not paid nearly what we'd like to see, but what you can look at, and have a little more control over, is additional incentives to attract and maintain staff. Things like flexible hours and schedules are things that have historically drawn people to this field. Assistance in continuing education can be a big draw, especially with higher education costs rising. Exploring ways to stay competitive in offering financial assistance, especially as we require advanced education, will help fill those critical roles.

Work environment and culture have also proven to be a driving factor in turnover. The staff at Catholic Charities are always willing to come out and help facilitate team building and stress reducing activities for staff. Give us a call to talk about what we can offer!

Rebecca Matthews



TRAINING

The Growing Brain Training Series

Time: 5:30 - 8:30 PM

Location: Southside Mall Community Room, Rt. 23, Oneonta

Our second session of Zero-to-Three's The Growing Brain training series is being offered through the fall and early winter months. The greatest rate of growth and development on the human brain takes place in the first years of life and occurs during the same time a child is making critical connections with their outside world. This series covers the growth that occurs, and how early experiences, including relationships with adults, have a foundational impact on the growing brain. At least 4 participants are required to hold each class.

- **January 15:** Cognition and Executive Function
- **February 19:** Social and Emotional Development
- **March 19:** Understanding Behavior
- **April 16:** Everyday Play

Meaningful Milestones

Date: January 22, 2026

Time: 6:00 PM

Location: Schoharie County Community Action Program, 795 East Main Street Suite 5, Cobleskill

•Catholic Charities will be providing a **Meaningful Milestones** training for child care providers and the community! This training introduces the CDC's **Learn the Signs, Act Early** resources and how to recognize appropriate milestones in children. If you are interested in signing up, please email mtodd@charitiesccdo.org or call **518-234-3581 ext. 108**.

This training will be offered in the Oneonta area come March (information coming soon!) Please reach out for more information if interested!

ACES 201

Date: January 29, 2026

Time: 5:30 - 8:30 PM

Location: Southside Mall Community Room, Rt. 23, Oneonta

▪ This workshop begins to unpack science-aligned interventions for both children and adults to create regulated spaces in child care programs. Providers will practice the key relational skills of co-regulation and reframing of behavior to strengthen a provider's response to children's stress behavior. **Prerequisite: ACES 101**

Family Day Care Orientations

Date: January 13, 2026

Time: 10:00 - 11:30 AM

Location: Huntington Memorial Library, Oneonta

Date: January 15, 2026

Time: 6:00 - 7:00 PM

Location: Southside Mall Community Room, Rt. 23, Oneonta

• Learn about the process to become a registered or licensed family day care home and how Child Care Support Services can help you through the process! Kasey to register at 607-432-0061 ext. 105 or email: kpajerski@charitiesccdo.org.

REMINDER

We have **winter weather gear** in our loaner closet if there are providers who need it!

We have snow pants, gloves, and snow suits for infants!

We also have outside play items like shovels, buckets, bins and shapers for playing out in the snow!



ZOOM CHILD CARE TEAM OFFICE HOURS

The First Thursday of Every Month

During this time, you can join the zoom and speak with a member of our team about anything you need - planning activities, conflicts between children, behaviors, room arrangement, nap time, meal times (whether you are on CACFP or not), contracts, policies and procedures, fee collection, communication with families, setting up a time for a member of our team visit to your program etc.

COOKIE DECORATING!

Thank you to all who came out for our evening of cookie decorating in Worcester!



WINTER REGULATION ROUND-UP!

Shelter-In-Place

Regulation 417.5(b)(4) states, "Each program must hold two shelter-in-place drills annually during which procedures and supplies are reviewed. Parents must be made aware of this drill in advance."

We encourage you to conduct these two drills throughout the year so that you and the children have regular, periodic practice at sheltering-in-place. Be sure to document it so you can show that you are meeting the regulation.

When you hold the shelter-in-place drills, be sure to notify your families. This is a great opportunity to make sure their contact information is up to date. You should also check to make sure your supplies are sufficient. Providing children with a variety of quiet activities such as books, puzzles, and coloring materials, will help to keep them calm and engaged while you practice.



Mexican Street Corn in a Cup

Ingredients:

- 1 (16 oz) Frozen Corn Kernels
- 1/4 Cup Light Mayonnaise
- 1/4 Cup Plain Greek Yogurt
- 3 oz Crumbled Cotija Cheese or Queso Fresco
- 1/2 Bunch Cilantro, Chopped
- Chili Powder (to taste)
- 1 Lime, sliced into 6 wedges



Directions:

1. In a medium saucepan, boil corn kernels for 2-3 minutes. Or in a microwave safe bowl, heat corn on high heat for 4 minutes, rotating corn every minute. Drain water and keep corn in pan or bowl.
2. Add mayonnaise and yogurt to the corn. Mix until all corn kernels are coated.
3. Scoop 1/2 cup of corn mixture into a 5 oz cup. Add 2 tablespoons of cheese, 1-2 tablespoons of cilantro, a pinch of chili powder or more if desired.
4. Squeeze juice from 1 lime wedge over corn. Repeat 4 more times and serve warm.

*One serving provides: 1/2 cup vegetable
1/2 oz eq meat alternate.*

Mediterranean Quinoa Salad

Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 Cups Cooked Quinoa
- 1 1/2 Cups Chickpeas
- 1 Cup Diced Cucumber
- 1/2 Cup Shredded Carrot
- 1/2 Cup Feta, Mozzarella or Cheddar Cheese
- 1/4 Cup Sunflower Seeds
- 1/4 Cup Fresh Lemon Juice
- 1/4 Cup Olive Oil



Directions:

1. Mix all ingredients except lemon juice and oil together in a large bowl.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together juice and oil.
3. Toss dressing with the rest of the ingredients.

Meal Type: Snack

Meal Pattern Contribution: Grain Vegetable

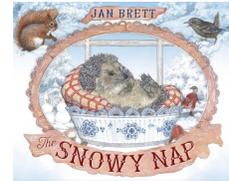
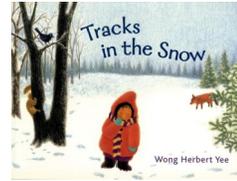
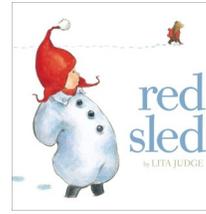
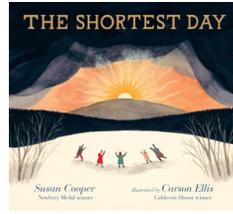
Yield: 6 Servings

Portion Sizes:

Toddler 3/4 Cup, Preschool 3/4 Cup, School-age 1 Cup



Winter Reading



Winter SCAVENGER HUNT

| | | | |
|----------------|----------------|-----------|-------------|
| | | | |
| Gloves/mittens | Snow shovel | Scarf | Hat |
| | | | |
| Coat | Boots | Ice | Fuzzy socks |
| | | | |
| Carrot | Hot chocolate | Snowflake | Sweater |
| | | | |
| Sled/Tube | Fire/Fireplace | Blanket | Soup |

ART: PROCESS VS. PRODUCT

| Process-Focused Art | Product-Focused Art |
|--|--|
| There are no step-by-step instructions | Children have instructions to follow |
| There is no right or wrong to explore and create | There's a right and a wrong way to proceed |
| The art is focused on the experience and the exploration of techniques, tools, and materials | There is a finished product in mind |
| The art is unique and original | The children's finished art all looks the same |
| The experience is relaxing or calming | The children experience frustration |
| The art is entirely the children's own | The teacher provides a sample and often fixes mistakes |



Catholic Charities
of Delaware, Otsego and Schoharie Counties
176 Main Street
Oneonta, NY 13820



Family Child Care Providers Needed!

We are seeking qualified individuals in Otsego County looking to give back to our community!

Benefits of becoming a Family Child Care Provider:

- ✓ Self-Employment
- ✓ Annual Grant from CSEA
- ✓ Health, Dental and Vision Insurance Through CSEA

Catholic Charities is the Family Child Care Registrar in Otsego County. Our Child Care Specialists are here to help you through every step of the registration process - and beyond!

Call (607) 432-0061 or visit: charitiesccdos.org for more information!

www.CharitiesCCDOS.org
176 Main St., Oneonta NY



Follow Us On Social Media



WINTER WORD SEARCH FIND THE WORDS!



A Y G X D V Q O S O O L H R R S C A R F
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BOOTS
COLD
FREEZING
HAT
SCARF
SLEDDING
SNOWFLAKE

CHRISTMAS
DECEMBER
FROST
ICE
SHOVEL
SNOWANGEL
SNOWMAN

COAT
FEBRUARY
GLOVES
JANUARY
SKIING
SNOWBALLS
WINTER