

# 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.

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### 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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](mailto: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](mailto: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!



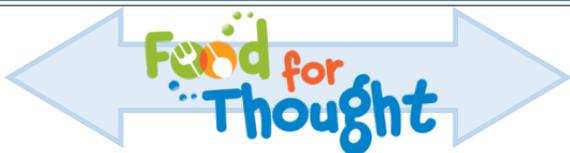
### WINTER REGULATION ROUND-UP!

#### **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*

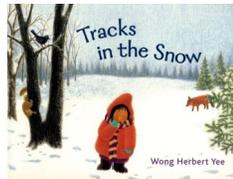
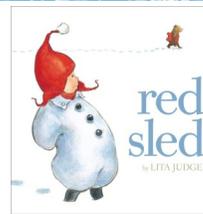
*Yield: 6 Servings*

*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](http://charitiesccdos.org) for more information!

[www.CharitiesCCDOS.org](http://www.CharitiesCCDOS.org)  
176 Main St., Oneonta NY



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### 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  
 Q L J A N U A R Y X J O Y R M R T G D T  
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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