

# THE CHILD CARE CONNECTION

## CHILD CARE SUPPORT SERVICES

» SUMMER 2025 «

### BACKYARD DIY OBSTACLE COURSE IDEAS FOR KIDS

Obstacle courses are not just about having fun; they offer numerous benefits for children's development.

Obstacle courses provide an excellent opportunity for children to engage in physical activity and develop their gross motor skills. By navigating through various obstacles, kids can improve their balance, agility, and overall physical fitness.

Obstacle courses also stimulate cognitive skills. Children are required to plan their route, strategize their movements, and problem-solve as they encounter different challenges. These mental activities enhance their decision-making, spatial awareness, and critical thinking abilities.

Furthermore, obstacle courses often incorporate elements that require children to think quickly and make split-second decisions. For example, they may need to decide whether to jump or crawl under an obstacle based on its height and the space available. This quick thinking and decision-making improve their ability to react and adapt to different situations.

Obstacle courses may involve multiple participants, which allows children to develop essential social skills. They learn to communicate, cooperate, and collaborate with their peers as they navigate the course together. This collaborative experience fosters teamwork, empathy, and effective communication skills – all vital for their social development.

When children encounter a challenging obstacle, they may need to work together to figure out the best way to overcome it. They learn to communicate their ideas, listen to others, and compromise to reach a common goal. This teamwork not only enhances their ability to work well with others but also promotes empathy and understanding as they support and encourage their peers.

Obstacle courses often require children to take turns or wait for others to complete a task. This teaches them patience and respect for others, as they learn to be considerate of their peers' needs and abilities. These social skills are essential for building positive relationships and navigating social situations in the future.

Ensure that you have enough space to set up the obstacle course safely. Look for a spacious area that is free from any obstructions or potential dangers. Avoid setting up the course near busy roads or bodies of water to prevent accidents. When it comes to constructing the obstacles, consider using soft and impact-absorbing materials such as foam or rubber.

These materials can help minimize the risk of injuries in case of falls or collisions. Ensure that all materials are securely fastened and stable to prevent any accidents during use.

It's important to regularly inspect and maintain the materials used in the obstacle course. Check for signs of wear and tear, such as loose screws or frayed ropes, and replace them as needed. By regularly maintaining the course and its



materials, you can ensure its long-term safety and durability.

Always have adult supervision while kids are using the obstacle course, especially for younger children.

In addition to supervision, establishing clear rules and safety guidelines is essential. Communicate these rules to all participants before they start using the obstacle course. Emphasize the importance of following the rules to prevent accidents and injuries. Encourage open communication and remind participants to alert supervisors if they notice any potential hazards or unsafe conditions.

Furthermore, encourage children to take turns and wait for their chance to use the obstacle course. This will help prevent collisions and injuries caused by rushing or overcrowding. Teach them to respect one another's turns and remind them of the importance of patience and consideration for others' safety.

*Excerpted from: missiongrit.com*

### FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

The New York State Budget was approved and included continued investment in Child Care. Support for the Child Care Assistance Program is ongoing at 2.2 billion dollars. This includes \$400 million for districts that may need supplemental allocations to support increased caseloads. Many parents and child care providers have come up with funding roadblocks for CCAP cases. Many districts surrounding Otsego County and across the state have started waitlists for new and re-certifying families. At this time, Otsego County is holding steady.

There is a capital funding initiative totaling \$110 million for new and existing child care facilities, this includes \$10 million specifically for repair and renovation for home base programs.

For many years, child care providers have wanted to create a substitute pool. The budget has ear marked \$3 million for a pilot program. The funding will support the creation of a child care substitute pool pilot program which will expand the child care workforce by helping providers to find trusted and vetted professionals to support their programs.

In addition to the state budget, our current contracts for Child Care Resource and Referral are renewed with some added services that we are very excited about. We are thrilled to be partnering with Brightside Up to have our own Infant Toddler Specialist to serve Otsego and Schoharie County. This additional contract gives us the ability to hire a staff member to specialize in the infant toddler age group to do observations, assessments, trainings, and more. Molly will introduce herself later in this newsletter and will be seen out and about with our current staff meeting providers.

Creating a Staffed Family Child Care Network has been a priority of New York State. The goal of the network is to decrease the heavy burden of administration on home child care providers. A few years ago, OCFS led a pilot program at the regional CCRRs, the pilot showed a decrease in time that child care providers needed to spend on paperwork and an increase in revenue collected. Now, the model will be spread across New York State, led by the local CCRR's. The project starts 7/1 and will continue to be a work in progress but we are very excited to start this work and see how it can improve not only the business of child care providers, but also work/life balance and mental health. Stay tuned for more information!

~ Rebecca Matthews

## TRAINING

### **Books and Math for Infants and Toddlers: ITERS Informed Make & Take Workshop**

**Date: September 18, 2025**

**Time: 6:00 – 8:00 PM**

**Location: FoxCare Center, Oneonta**

▪ This two-hour training will incorporate both a Math and Book Make & Take portion. During the Books for Infants and Toddlers portion, we will discuss how positive experiences with books and language are foundational for learning and development. During the Math for Infants and Toddlers portion, we will be discussing how children's experiences with math activities and materials set the foundation for their understanding of concepts such as size, quantity, numbers, and shapes. We will use the Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS) to take a look at how to choose books for your library and materials for math experiences.

### **Mandatory Annual CACFP Training: Helping Little Eaters Grow: Tools for the Choosy Child**

**Date: September 25, 2025**

**Time: 6:00 - 8:00 PM**

**Location: TBD**

▪ This will be the only annual CACFP training offered in 2025.

### **P.A.L.S. - Physical Activity Learning Sessions**

Several Physical Activity Learning Sessions will take place throughout the summer, each session will be 1 to 1.5 hours, the last session will be around 2 hours and contains a goal setting and action planning component. Each session focuses on the importance of daily physical activity for all age groups, including adults. See dates, times and topics below. **At least 4 participants are required to hold each class.**

**July 17, 2025:** Physical Activity is Important in Early Childhood

**July 24, 2025:** Best Practices for Physical Activity in ECE settings: Time and Space

**July 31, 2025:** Best Practices for Physical Activity in ECE settings: Type, Daily Activities, and Providers' role

**August 14, 2025:** Best Practices for Physical Activities in ECE settings: Families, Training & Resources, and Policies & Goal Setting and Action Planning (Tentative Date)

**Time: 5:30 PM**

**Location: TBD**

▪ This series includes the opportunity for three additional hours of on-site training at your program.

### **The Growing Brain Training Series**

Our second session of Zero-to-Three's The Growing Brain training series will be 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. Please RSVP by October 10th to hold your place for the first session

**Date: October 16, 2025 : The Growing Brain - The Basics**

**Time: 5:30 - 8:30 PM**

**Location: TBD**

▪ This class is mandatory to participate in any other session.

## Introducing Catholic Charities' newest Child Care Team member!

Molly Todd will be stepping into the role of Infant/Toddler Specialist!



With 10+ years of childcare under her belt, she is ready to assist you with any technical assistance you may need.

Throughout her years, she has worked with children from the ages of 3 weeks to 21 years old and has extensive experience with Special Education students, primarily pre-school and secondary school age. Providers can reach out to her at [mtodd@charitiesccdo.org](mailto:mtodd@charitiesccdo.org) or at the Warnerville Catholic Charities office at 518-234-3581 extension 108.

## SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM

*Schedule*

### **Grab and Go Child Meal Sites**

**Available Monday - Friday**

**July 7th - August 22nd**

**All children through age 18 are welcome.**

*Greater Plains School*  
**11:00-11:30am**

*Wilber Park Pool*  
**11:00-11:30am**

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



## SUMMER REGULATION ROUND-UP!

During these Summer and Fall months, you may be transporting your children for field trips. Be sure to read through the Transportation section of regulations (417.6). Parents/guardians must agree to a transportation plan and children must be secured in appropriate child safety seats. **\*Please let us know if you will not be at your child care site due to a field trip.\***

417.6 (a) The Registrant must obtain written consent on forms furnished by the Office or approved equivalents from the parent of the child for any transportation of the children in care at the family day care home provided or arranged for by a caregiver.

417.6 (e) Each child must board or leave a vehicle from the curb side of the street.







## Pineapple Coleslaw

### Ingredients:

- 1/3 Cup Mayonnaise
- 3 Tablespoons Apple Cider Vinegar
- 2 Tablespoons Lemon Juice
- 1 Teaspoon Pepper
- 2 Cups Shredded Red Cabbage
- 1 Cup Julienned Carrots
- 2 Cups Broccoli Slaw Mix
- 3 Cups Finely Chopped Fresh or Canned Pineapple



### Directions:

Whisk mayonnaise, vinegar, lemon juice and seasoned pepper in a large bowl. Add cabbage, carrots, broccoli slaw and pineapple; toss to coat. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes (and up to 1 day) before serving.

*myfoodprogram.com*

## Strawberry & Waffle Kebabs with Maple-Yogurt Dip

### Ingredients:

- 3/4 Cup Vanilla Greek Yogurt (ensure it meets sugar limits)
- 1 Tablespoon Maple Syrup
- 6 Mini Frozen Waffles (at least 1/2 ounce each)
- 3 Cups Fresh Strawberries



### Directions:

1. In a small bowl, combine yogurt and maple syrup. Whisk until well-blended.
2. Lightly toast waffles for 3–4 minutes. Cut each waffle in half.
3. Build kebabs by putting 1/4 cup of strawberries and 1/2 waffle on a stick.
4. Serve kebabs with yogurt dip.

*myfoodprogram.com*

## Peachy Oatmeal Bake

### Ingredients:

- 3/4 Cup Rolled Oats (dry, not quick)
- 1/2 Cup Low-Fat Milk
- 3 1/2 Cups Peaches (canned, diced, drained)
- 1 Tablespoon Maple Syrup
- 1 Teaspoon Ground Cinnamon

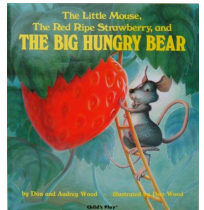
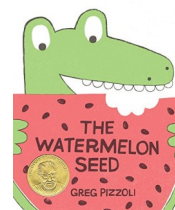
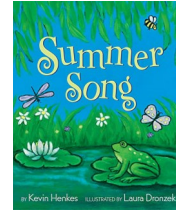
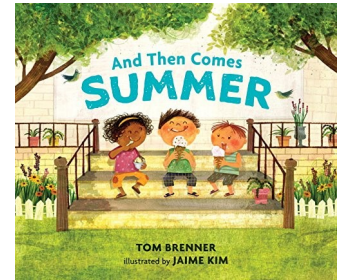
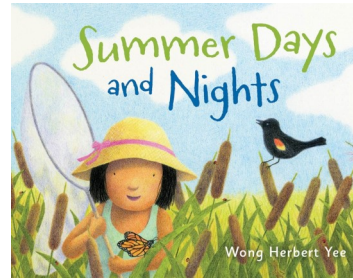


### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 400°.
2. In a small bowl, mix oats, milk, peaches, maple syrup and cinnamon until combined.
3. Add mixture to a greased 8"x8" baking dish.
4. Bake for 30 minutes or until bubbling and golden brown

*myfoodprogram.com*

# Summer Reading



## Easy and Fun DIY Obstacle Course Ideas

Here are some easy and fun DIY obstacle course ideas that you can incorporate into your backyard setup:

### The Classic Tire Run (or Hula Hoop)

Arrange a series of old tires on the ground, spacing them out to create a pathway. Kids can either jump inside the tires or step from one tire to another, testing their balance and coordination skills.

### The Balancing Beam

Place a narrow and sturdy wooden beam or plank on the ground. Kids must walk across the beam, testing their balance and focus. For added safety, place cushions or mats around the beam in case of falls.

### The Crawl Under

Create a tunnel-like challenge using large cardboard boxes or PVC pipes. Kids must crawl underneath, improving their agility and body control. Ensure that the tunnel is wide enough for safe passage.

### The Jump Over

Set up small hurdles or cones at intervals along the course. Kids must jump over these obstacles, enhancing their leg strength and explosive power. Adjust the height of the hurdles according to the children's age and abilities.

### Over-Under Hurdles

Set up a series of hurdles using PVC pipes or wooden beams at varying heights. Participants have to either jump over or crawl under each hurdle as they make their way through the course.

### Agility Ladder

Lay out a ladder-shaped structure on the ground using ropes or tape. Participants have to step or jump into each ladder square as quickly as possible without touching the lines.

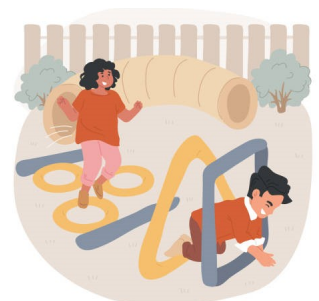
### Wall Climbing

Build a wall using wooden panels or repurpose a sturdy outdoor structure. Participants must find a way to climb up and over the wall to continue the course.

### Monkey Bars

Install a set of monkey bars or a horizontal ladder between two sturdy posts or trees. Participants need to swing across the bars without falling off.

*\* Remember, there must be a cushioned surface under all outside play equipment that present a fall hazard.*





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

## Family Child Care Providers NEEDED!

Start your own business today!

Catholic Charities is seeking qualified individuals in **Otsego County** looking to give back to our community!



Benefits of becoming a Family Child Care Provider:

- Self-Employment - Be your own boss!
- Stay at home with your child while boosting your family's income!
- \$500 grant per year from CSEA!
- Health, Dental and Vision Insurance through CSEA!



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

Please call (607) 432-0061 or visit [www.charitiesccdos.org](http://www.charitiesccdos.org) for more information



We provide CACFP Meal Reimbursement and free child care referrals to families to get your business going!



Follow Us On Social Media



## BEACH WORDSEARCH

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### WORD LIST

BEACH	OCEAN	SEAGULL	SWIMSUIT
BIKINI	SAILBOAT	SEASHORE	TOWEL
DUNE	SAND	SHELL	TROPICAL
FISHING	SANDALS	SNORKEL	UMBRELLA
LAGOON	SCUBA	SUN	WAVE

*Homemade*  
GIFTS MADE EASY