

The Child Care Connection

Child Care Support Services

» SPRING 2026 «

PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT THROUGH SELF-ASSESSMENT

It seems as if spring may be here to stay, finally! For many people the arrival of spring brings with it a sense of renewal. The snow melts away, flowers begin to bloom, and robins return. Windows and doors are opened up to let the fresh air in after being closed up all winter. This period of renewal is a great time to look at your program with fresh eyes. The schedule that you have been following through the winter may have you spending too much time indoors. The toys and materials that you have available for children may need to be changed out as children are aging up or their interests are changing. You may want to update your policies, contract, and procedures to better align with your current practices.

Spring is also a great time to complete a self-assessment of your program, to see what other improvements you can make. Conducting a self-assessment can feel overwhelming or intimidating. It requires you take a hard look at your program; everything from your day-to-day activities and structure, to your business policies and record keeping practices. Through self-assessments you will be able to identify areas of your program that are working very well. They can also help make you aware of components that are missing from your program or need to be tweaked.

The positive thing about assessing your program is that it is not an all or nothing thing. You can choose to assess specific parts of your program that you know you want to improve, or you can work through assessing your whole program in small pieces at a time.

We would love to support you in doing this by helping you to choose which tool is the best fit for your needs and help you to work through the process. Two options for self-assessment are:

- *The Business Administration Scale (for home programs) or Program Administration Scale (for daycare centers).* This tool is designed to help you improve your overall quality of business and professional practices, including fiscal management, work environment, recordkeeping, provider-family communication, marketing, risk management, and family engagement.
- *The Core Body of Knowledge Assessment and Professional Development Planning Tool.* This tool focuses on your work with children and families, and helps you to develop goals for professional development. It centers on the core competencies of child growth and development, family relationships, observation and assessment, environment and curriculum, health, safety, and nutrition, professionalism and leadership, and administration and management.

Please reach out to us if you are interested in more information about the self-assessment process and how we can assist you!
Kim Ahearn and Renee Roof

naeyc®

Week
of the
Young
Child

Celebrating
April 11-17, 2026



FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Spring is on the horizon, which means green grass, start of highway construction, and budget season. The New York State budget is due April 1st; the Governor and state legislators are deep into negotiations and possibly even as you are reading this are making tweaks and updates. During Governor Hochul's State of the State address, she made it clear that child care needs are still paramount for New York State. There were many initiatives aimed primarily at expanding 3PK and starting a 2-care program in NYC in the hopes of continuing the move towards Universal Childcare.

Priorities for the rest of the state include increased funding for full-day Pre-K for all four-year-olds in the State by the start of School Year 2029, so that each school district is offering full day UPK. This funding includes increasing districts' per-pupil amount. The Executive Budget provides an additional \$1.23 billion to bolster the Child Care Assistance Program (subsidy). This is a 40 percent increase in funding for CCAP, year over year. In addition, there are three pilot programs to begin contracted care in the state. The programs will be in Dutchess, Monroe, and Broome Counties.

All this to say that the support for child care remains strong and the funding is there. However, there is a continued need to advocate that day care centers and home day cares are essential to the early childhood landscape.

Rebecca Matthews

TRAINING

[BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE ESSENTIALS: POSITIVE STRATEGIES FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS](#)

Time: 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Location: Zoom

▪ Join us for this **FREE** Training Series designed to enhance your daily routines and help children build skills for a lifetime. This is a collaboration between Catholic Charities and Delaware Opportunities Infant/Toddler Specialists. Register by emailing mtodd@charitiesccdo.org OR Eventbrite: **Me-Then-You.eventbrite.com**

April 16: First Me... Then You: A Closer Look

May 14: First Me... Then You: Next Steps

June 11: Behavior is Communication: Naming the Why

July 9: Behavior is Communication: Tuning in

August 20: Co-Regulation: Building Skills for a Lifetime

September 10: Designing the Environment: Setting Up for Success

[THE GROWING BRAIN TRAINING SERIES: EVERYDAY PLAY](#)

Date: April 16, 2026

Time: 5:30 - 8:30 PM

Location: Bugbee Children's Center, Oneonta NY

▪ This is the last session of Zero-to-Three's The Growing Brain training series. The greatest rate of growth and development in 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. At least 4 participants are required to hold each class. *You must have attended the 1st session in this series to participate in this last session.*

[ILLUMINATING CHILD CARE](#)

Date: April 25, 2026

Time: 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM | Registration: 8:15 - 8:45 AM

Location: Morris Conference Center, SUNY Oneonta

Cost: \$50.00 per person - Payments Accepted: EIP, Cash, Check, Credit Card, Paypal (*If paying with EIP, prepayment is required*)

▪ Guest Presenter: Carol Garboden Murray, M.ED. Carol is the author of the revolutionary book, *Illuminating Care: The Pedagogy and Practice of care in early childhood communities*. Carol has been an early childhood educator for 30 years. *Illuminating Care* shines a light on the inseparability of education and care, detailing how to practice the daily rituals of caregiving as honorable encounters with children. Contact Kim Ahearn to register 607-251-1437 or kahearn@charitiesccdo.org.

[FAMILY DAY CARE ORIENTATIONS](#)

April 14, 2026 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM

April 16, 2026 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

May 12, 2026 10:00 AM - 11:30 PM

May 14, 2026 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

June 16, 2026 10:00 AM - 11:30 PM

June 18, 2026 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

Location: Catholic Charities, 176 Main Street, 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! Call Kasey to register at 607-607-251-1435 or email: kpajerski@charitiesccdo.org.

LEARNING CAFE CONVERSATIONS

On many occasions, family and group family providers are unable to take advantage of learning opportunities simply because they are offered during program hours. One of these learning opportunities are the monthly Learning Cafes hosted by the Early Care & Learning Council. They cover a wide variety of topics for child care providers, are valuable learning experiences, and offer the opportunity for further discussion about what is happening in our community and in each family/group family setting.

Starting in May, and quarterly thereafter, we will be hosting a rebroadcast of ECLC's Learning Café followed by a deeper discussion of the topic and how you can use the knowledge in your program.

[LET THEM PLAY: WHEN POLICING PLAY LEADS TO EXCLUSION - AND HOW PROVIDERS CAN PUSH BACK](#)

Date: May 7, 2026

Time: 5:30 - 7:00 PM

Location: Online: Zoom OR In Person:

Catholic Charities, 176 Main St., Oneonta

Call or email Kim to sign up. Kahearn@charitiesccdo.org or 607-251-1437.

[LOOKING AT THE BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION SCALE \(BAS\): INCOME AND BENEFITS](#)

The Business Administration Scale (BAS) is an assessment tool for home daycare programs. One aspect of running a business that can be challenging is setting fees and paid time off. It is important to increase your fees yearly to keep up with inflation and rising business costs. A typical rate increase is 3-5% yearly. Increasing your rates in small yearly amounts may be easier for families to adjust to than doing one large increase every few years.

The BAS tool suggests that a program contract includes a minimum of 6 paid holidays and 10 additional days of paid time off per year (vacation, sick, professional development, or personal days). This is important for your own wellness and to prevent provider burn out.

It is also important to think about insurance and retirement as a small business owner. Do you have health insurance? Are you contributing to a retirement plan? Do you have disability income insurance? If you do not have any of these things, please make it a priority to set them up, for your personal and financial well-being.

[LOOKING AT THE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION SCALE \(PAS\): HUMAN RESOURCES](#)

The PAS is an assessment tool for daycare centers. The first item on this scale is Human Resources, which assesses the hiring and orientation procedures. It is important to have strong onboarding procedures to ensure that staff feel confident and prepared for their new role. Hiring should include an interview, providing candidates with the job description, and at least six additional practices such as having two or more staff involved in the interviewing process, interviewers reflect the diversity of the children and families served, and employee benefits are communicated. Get in touch if you would like to discuss other effective hiring practices!



Tuscan White Bean Pasta

Ingredients

- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup white onion, diced
- 1 1/2 cup carrots, diced
- 2 (24 oz) jars pasta sauce
- 1/2 tsp dried sage
- 3/8 cup parmesan cheese
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 cup vegetable broth
- 2 (15 oz) cans cannellini beans or navy beans, drained and rinsed
- 4 oz whole wheat linguine, cooked



Directions

1. In a large skillet, add carrots and just enough water that covers the carrots. Cover and boil for 10 minutes. Drain the water from the skillet.
2. Add oil and onion to the skillet, cook on medium-high heat. Sauté for 8-10 minutes until onion is tender.
3. Then, add sauce, sage, cheese, salt and pepper. Allow sauce to heat through until hot.
4. In a small pot, add broth and beans. Heat through.
5. Serve 1/4 cup linguini in a bowl then with a slotted spoon scoop 3/8 cup (6 tablespoons) of beans onto the linguine and add 1/2 cup of sauce.

*Time: 35 min. | Servings: 8
Components: Meat/Meat Alt., Grains, Vegetable*

Pineapple BBQ Crock Pot Baked Beans

Ingredients:

- 2 (15oz) Cans White Beans, Rinsed and Drained
- 15oz Can Pineapple Chunks, Drained (reserve juice, if desired) OR 1/2 Fresh Pineapple, Cubed
- 2 Tablespoons Chopped Bacon
- 18oz Bottle BBQ Sauce
- 2 Tablespoons Brown Sugar
- 2 Tablespoons Worcestershire Sauce
- 1/2 Cup Water OR Reserved Pineapple Juice

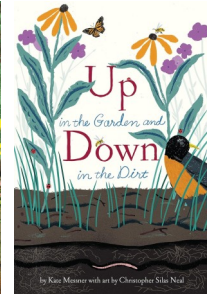
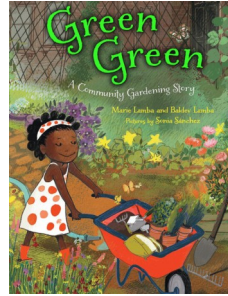
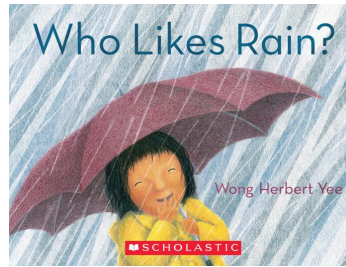
Directions:

1. Add everything to a 4-5 quart slow cooker and stir until well combined.
2. Cook on low for 4 hours. Stir.
3. Serve garnished with chopped green onions, if desired.

Toddler = 1/4 cup; Preschooler = 2/3 cup; School Age = 1 cup as vegetable and fruit as a side at lunch/supper.



Spring Reading



12TH ANNUAL BUILDING HEALTHY FAMILIES

COMMUNITY BABY SHOWER

**SATURDAY, MAY 9
10AM - 2PM**

Everything you want to know about pregnancy, birth, breastfeeding, fatherhood, babies, and beyond.

ALL FREE - GIFTS, GAMES, PRIZES & PRESENTATIONS



**SOUTHSIDE MALL
5006 STATE HIGHWAY 2B, ONEONTA**





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

Child Care Providers Needed in Otsego County!

As a child care provider, you can:

- Be your own boss
- Work from the comfort of your home
- Offer an essential service to families in your community
- Shape bright futures for the children in your care

Child Care Support Services of Catholic Charities, the Resource and Referral Center for Otsego County, will help you through each step of the process!

607.432.0061

www.charitiesccdos.org



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SPRING

WORD SEARCH

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BEE	BUTTERFLY	GRASS	LILY	SEEDS
BLOSSOM	CHICK	KITE	NEST	SPROUT
BUD	EGGS	LADYBUG	PUDDLE	TULIP
BUNNY	FLOWER	LAMB	RAIN	WORM