

# Letter to the Community

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

Happy New Year! The roller coaster of the past year is over and the Child Development Council is launching into the new year to promote the healthy development of children and families at home, in child care, and in the community. I wanted to give you all a glimpse of what is new at the Council.



***At Home*** - In 2009, the Council expanded its resources to help the neediest of young children. Baby formula, diapers, car seats, and safety gates are just some of the items we distributed to help parents with infants and toddlers get off to a healthy start. Upon the recommendation of a creative staff member, we developed new strategies to help families access transportation services to well-baby check ups. We received support from United Way, Community Foundation's Sandy and Jay True Fund, Tompkins Charitable Gift Fund, Ithaca Alternative Gift Fair, and the Federal Emergency Management Association to address these earliest contributors to healthy child development.



In 2010, we will expand our home visiting services. In collaboration with Tompkins Community Action, the lead agency, the Council will be taking on the home-based Early Head Start services that are new to Tompkins County. This program will be an exciting addition to the Family Support Services and Teen Pregnancy/Parenting Program and will alleviate the long-standing waiting list for home-based support for parents with infants and

***In Child Care*** - Over the past year, the Council has been working to plan for the future of Child Care Resource and Referral Services. Stepping into the techno age, the Council has now made it possible for people to search for child care on line, while maintaining phone and walk in support for the most challenging issues.

Our child care needs assessment had a strong return. We heard from parents with children of all ages about the challenges of finding and paying for child care. While this is not new for our community, the stories parents shared reflect that it is getting more and more difficult to balance child care and work.

We have been actively working on a partnership with Cortland Area Child Care Council (CACCC). Our goal is to make the best use of limited resources, while maintaining responsive, high quality services. Look for more information in the spring!



***In the Community*** - We finally launched our new name and a refashioned website! The added recognition brought many new people to our doors, helped old friends know about us in a new way, and renewed our focus on young children and their development.

We were pleased to announce the birth of a tiny new car! BorgWarner Automotive donated a Smart Car to the Child Development Council. Since better than half of our staff are on the road going to provider and family homes, the mileage savings alone have been incredible... now all we need is a fleet!

Borders and United Way teamed up in 2009 to contribute boxes and boxes of books! The Council has been grateful stewards and has passed these along to families and other caregivers of young children.

*A couple of staff announcements* - You can tell that we have been busy, and in 2009 we were short staffed too. We are looking forward to 2010 and restoring positions within the agency.

- Maureen Reedy has returned to her home visiting roots. Over the past year, she has served as Family Services Director on an interim basis (while continuing to serve as the Child Care Support Services Director). Now, with the expansion of home visiting and parenting programs, she will move full-time into the FSD position, overseeing the Teen Pregnancy/Parenting Program, Family Support Services and the Early Head Start home-based programming.
- Laurie Hobler has been the Team Leader for Child Care Support Services and will be stepping up into a broader leadership role as the CCSS Director. Laurie will oversee the Registration and Inspection activities, legally exempt enrollment services, and technical assistance and general support for child care providers.
- Newcomers - we will be working to fill a few positions, so please feel free to recommend people with experience and education in working with children and families or child care. We will be filling a Child Care Specialist position (Registration and Inspection) and 4 Family Support Worker positions to work with infants and toddlers. The job descriptions will be posted on the Council's website at [www.ChildDevelopmentCouncil.org](http://www.ChildDevelopmentCouncil.org).

Thank you for all your support. If you have any questions - as always, please feel free to contact us at the Council at 273-0259 or at [info@ChildDevelopmentCouncil.org](mailto:info@ChildDevelopmentCouncil.org).

Warmly,



Sue Dale-Hall  
Executive Director

