

Child Development Council of Central New York, Inc
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CHILD DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL TO OPEN FAMILY RESOURCE CENTERS IN TOMPKINS AND CORTLAND COUNTIES

ITHACA, New York- August 17, 2026: The Child Development Council of Central New York, Inc. (dba Child Development Council) is a mission driven organization that has been serving the local community for over 59 years. The Child Development Council is pleased to announce an expansion of services for families with young children and those that are pregnant by opening Family Resource Centers in Tompkins and Cortland Counties in late 2026.

The Child Development Council's Family Resource Centers will offer a welcoming, inclusive space, designed for children and their families focused around a play space with toys and activities for children ages 0-8 and areas for caregivers to participate in parenting groups and classes. Family Resource Centers will provide a variety of services to the community and member families including family events, play groups, community cafes, case management and resource navigation, parenting education, parent leadership groups and mental health support. There will be open play hours for the community. Traveling Family Resource Centers will bring these services to the rural areas of Tompkins and Cortland Counties. All services are provided at no cost.

Family Resource Centers have demonstrated strong, evidence-backed improvements in child safety, parental well-being, economic stability, and community resilience. According to studies conducted across the country, Family Resource Center outcomes show: \$4.93 return on investment for every dollar spent; 63% reduction in child abuse cases; 50% fewer foster care placements; 26% lower investigation rates; and improvements in protective factors, family functioning, and social connectedness. (Mobile Family Resource Centers (FRCs) National Learning Brief.)

"The Child Development Council is honored to have been selected to receive funding from the Office of Children and Family Services to host Family Resource Centers in Cortland and Tompkins Counties. Having a supported play space available to the community is a core component of the Child Development Council's 2025-2028 strategic plan and Family Resource Centers directly align with that vision." states Melissa Perry, CEO of the Child Development

Council. “There will be wonderful, welcoming play areas filled with inclusive, quality materials and activities for children through the age of 8. In addition to play spaces, Family Resource Centers are resource hubs for families; one-stop-shops to access services and support from caring, qualified Community Support Specialists who provide caregiving support, child development information, and connections to community resources to meet family needs using a strengths-based, family-focused approach.”

“I am thrilled to have the opportunity to bring Family Resource Centers to both counties. Far too often, families with young children have limited support in their early parenting journey. Providing support for families with young children in a welcoming environment is what the Child Development Council’s Family Resource Center aims to do.” states Malinda Rees, Community Services Director. “We have had our Family Services home visiting programs for a long time. Our new Family Resource Centers will provide another avenue for families to access supportive services.”

Family Resource Centers bring families together through intentional events and activities, offering an opportunity for children to play together and caregivers to develop friendships. The primary focus of Family Resource Centers is to prevent child abuse and neglect by reducing parental stress, strengthening family bonds, and offering connections to community resources so basic needs are consistently met.

The Council’s Family Resource Centers will be located in the cities of Ithaca and Cortland and will operate a weekly schedule that will provide day and evening hours. Monthly service calendars will be available to the community on our website: www.childdevelopmentcouncil.org. For more information about the Child Development Council’s Family Resource Centers contact Malinda Rees, Community Services Director, at malinda@childdevelopmentcouncil.org or by calling (607) 273-0259.

The Child Development Council promotes and advocates for the healthy development of children and families at home, in child care, and in our community through inclusive, individualized services, education, and connections to community resources.

To learn more about the Child Development Council, visit: www.childdevelopmentcouncil.org.

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