



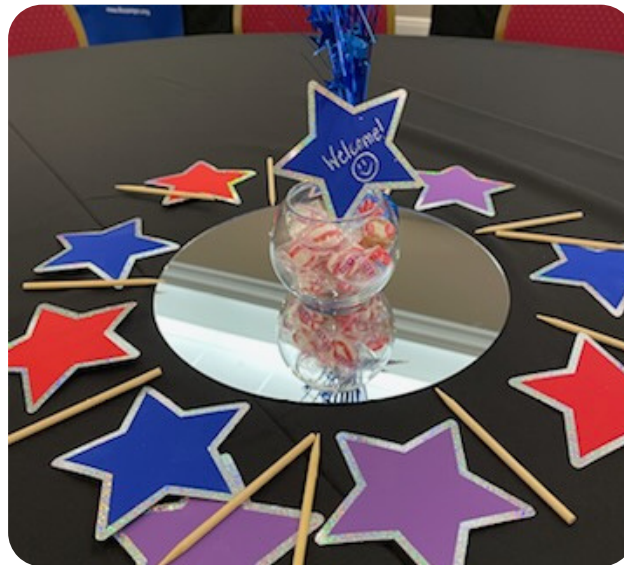
Southern Adirondack

Child Care Network

A Child Care Resource Center

Strengthening the Quality of Children's Early Care and Learning

Annual Report 2025-2026



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The *Southern Adirondack Child Care Network*, serving Hamilton, Warren, and Washington Counties, is a not-for-profit child care resource center, incorporated in 1992.

The purposes of the organization are:

- To develop, strengthen and improve area child care services.
- To recruit, assist and train child care providers.
- To assist parents with finding and selecting child care.
- To work with employers to assist with the child care needs of their employees.
- To assume a leadership role in supporting children, parents, child care professionals and employers through programs that champion the healthy development of children and families and promotes quality early learning.
- To inform the community of child care issues.

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From the Desk of the Executive Director



Colleen Maziejka
Executive
Director

The Child Care Network remains committed to our mission of “Strengthening the Quality of Children’s Early Care and Learning” and this year was no different. As you read this 2025/2026 Annual Report, we hope to inform you through program data of the impact we’ve had on children, families and child care providers throughout this past year. We are proud of the work that our dedicated team does daily as we strive to meet the ever-changing needs of our child care community, to improve the quality of care, and enhance the lives of children, families and providers.

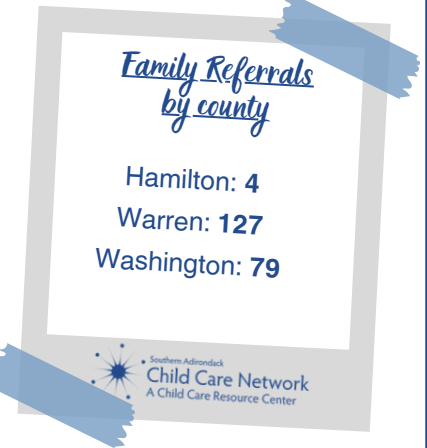
We worked with state initiatives to improve the sustainability of child care programs with extensive offerings through the Child Care Collective (Empire State Family Child Care Collaborative). We worked tirelessly to build the supply of child care, supporting potential providers through the licensing process and beyond. We worked with our neighboring Child Care Resource Centers and the team at the Adirondack Community Foundation to highlight the child care challenges that are unique to rural areas. We played an active role in collecting data and informing our elected officials of the local child care landscape, as well as educating and supporting local employers to better address their employee’s child care needs.

It has been our pleasure to work alongside other service providers in our community and appreciate all who have given us a platform to further our mission. We feel fortunate to live in an area that is rich with services and look forward to future collaborations. We look forward to the year ahead!

Services Provided

We Helped Parents Access Quality Child Care

Choosing child care is one of the most important choices parents make for their family. Our goal is to help families evaluate child care options to gain a better understanding of the importance that quality early learning plays and what constitutes quality programming. Comprehensive personal guidance to parents is offered with every referral. Based on information from follow up calls, the greatest barrier for parents seeking child care continues to be “no openings” and “the cost”. The child care assistance funding shortage had a major impact on parents' ability to pay for child care, causing many of them to find alternate forms of child care or leave the workforce. In 2024, we added an online parent referral search portal to our website. Since it's inception, it has proven to be a convenience to assist parents looking for child care.



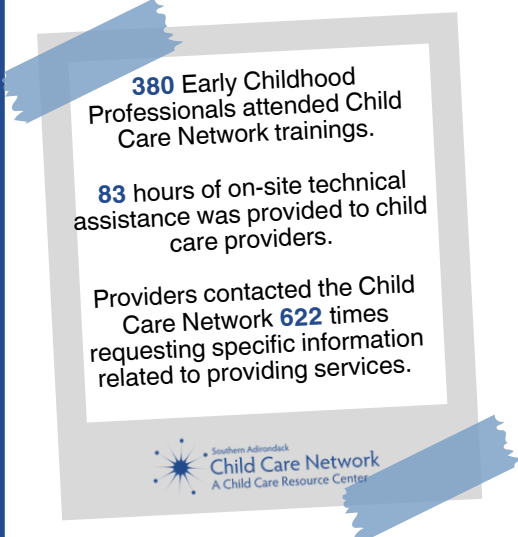
The services we provide include:

- Providing information on the types of and options for child care.
- Referrals to family, group family, centers and school age programs that fit the family's needs.
- Helping families become informed consumers about quality child care and selecting care that best meets their needs.
- Information about financial assistance, such as the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP).
- Referrals to other community resources .

We Improved the Quality of Child Care

Training and Technical Assistance

The Child Care Network staff provided a variety of professional development opportunities for early care and education professionals to learn the latest ideas and the most recent research on topics pertinent to providing quality early learning programs for children. We offered both in-person and virtual workshops. We also provided one-on-one mentoring/coaching on-site at programs. Workshops included a 4-session Spring Lecture Series, a 4-part Eco Healthy Child Care series and monthly training opportunities on such topics as business practices, child development, programming, environments, behavior management, and health and nutrition. Many on-site workshops at various programs were also offered.



Early Childhood Education Conference

The SACCN 30th Annual Early Childhood Conference was held in the fall of 2025, at the Fort William Henry Hotel and Conference Center. It was our largest attendance ever, for the two day event with 118 early childhood professionals in attendance on Friday and 81 in attendance on Saturday. The conference included 2 dynamic keynote speakers and 24 workshops presented by numerous experts in the early childhood field.

This conference is highly regarded within the early childhood education field and continues to grow each year, providing exceptional professional development opportunities for all attendees.



Legally Exempt Child Care Enrollment

The Child Care Network is now in our 20th year of providing enrollment services to legally exempt child care providers which include comprehensive background checks and helping to ensure that basic standards of health and safety are met. With additional funding we developed fire safety prevention totes filled with health and safety items such as, but not limited to: a fire extinguisher, a fire extinguishing blanket, a fire engine floor puzzle, fire prevention and safety books for children, smoke alarms and more. Legally exempt child care providers care for children receiving child care assistance through the local Department of Social Services.

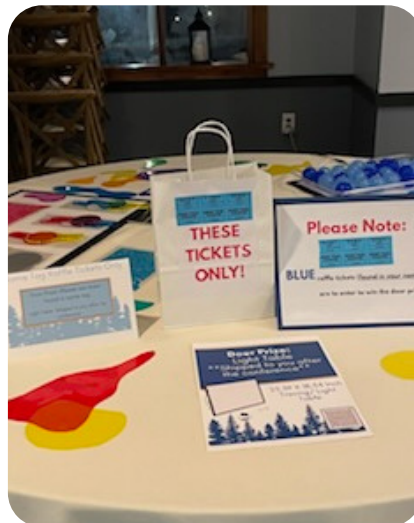


We Worked to Expand the Supply of Child Care

We responded to 243 (many potential providers call multiple times) requests for assistance in opening a child care program. 5 new family or group family child care businesses and 1 child care center opened between July 1, 2025 and June 30, 2026.

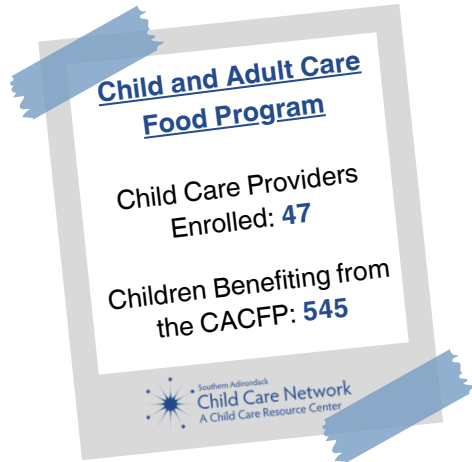
Our early childhood and business support specialists offer technical assistance and training in starting a quality child care program, including information on state regulations, insurance, business management and sustainability, child development, and maintaining a healthy and safe environment. We also assist with completing the NYS OCFS licensing application.

With funding from Warren County, Washington County, and the Adirondack Foundation (for Hamilton County), we have been able to offer start up grants to 9 people interested in opening family or group family child care programs. This funding covers the required health and safety training, First Aid/CPR training, compliance items, and high quality equipment and supplies necessary for opening a quality program.



We Helped Improve the Health and Nutrition for Children

Children of working parents spend a significant amount of time in child care. Through a variety of programs and services, we assist child care professionals to offer nutritious foods, support breast feeding mothers, and give providers access to health-related information.



Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

We helped to promote quality child care by assisting providers to improve the nutrition of young children by joining the Child and Adult Care Food Program. The goal of the program is to provide nutrition education through training and technical assistance to providers that help children develop positive eating habits at the earliest stages of development. In addition, providers receive reimbursement for meals served to the children in care. CACFP also helps create Breast-Feeding friendly child care communities by increasing the number of programs that have their breast-feeding friendly designation.

With donations made in memory of Pat Auer, former Warren County Public Health Director, our CACFP Program was able to create The Pat Auer Project. Pediatric dining aids are designed to help make mealtimes enjoyable, comfortable, and independent for children. From gripped and curved cutlery, suctioned and sectioned plates, to transitional cups, these products are created to address the specific needs of young users during mealtime routines. Ensuring that children have the right tools for mealtimes is crucial for their development, comfort, and confidence. Aids are thoughtfully designed to promote proper eating habits and make mealtimes a positive experience for both the child and their caregiver.

We Provided Child Care Business Sustainability Support

The Child Care Network has partnered with the New York State Office of Children and Family Services, Warren and Washington Counties, and the Adirondack Foundation's Birth to Three Alliance on projects focused on building the supply of care and increasing the sustainability of existing and new programs throughout the state.

Business Support Services

As part of our Child Care Resource Center project work, we provided technical assistance and training on quality business practices to centers and in-home programs, with the goal of assisting them to set up quality business practices. Business support services were also offered to prospective providers who are in the process of starting a child care program.

Northeast Shared Services Alliance

With funding from Warren and Washington Counties, SACCN is a founding partner of the Northeast Shared Service Alliance. The Alliance is dedicated to supporting high quality sustainable early childhood education. The partners include the Adirondack Foundation Birth to Three Alliance, and the Child Care Resource Centers serving Clinton, Franklin, Essex, Hamilton, Warren, and Washington Counties. The purpose is to develop and offer cooperative strategies for reducing the administrative and financial burden of providing high-quality early childhood education. Current services include a subscription to child care management software, access to the NY Early Learning Hub, and enrollment in the Adirondack Employee Assistance Program. Currently there are 7 programs enrolled in the Alliance.

The Care Collective

Widely known throughout NYS as The Empire State Family Child Care Collaborative, SACCN has adopted The Care Collective in collaboration with Early Care and Learning Council to support licensed/registered family and group family day care providers with personalized business tools, coaching, and utilization of child care management software — all at no cost to them. The purpose of The Care Collective is to provide direct and individualized support to participating providers within Warren, Washington and Hamilton Counties with the goal of offering strategies to reduce financial burden, time spent on administrative tasks, and improved quality of programming. Current offerings include, but are not limited to, annual subscriptions to Brightwheel child care management software, the National Association for the Education of Young Children with access to their NY Early Learning Hub, and the Family Child Care Association. Participating providers are also offered their choice of a one year membership to BJ's Wholesale Club, Costco, Walmart+ or Instacart+. Additional offerings included technology to operate Brightwheel, and much more! The Child Care Network was excited to extend to our participating providers and their assistants, the opportunity to enroll in supplemental insurance policies.

Currently there are 12 programs enrolled in The Care Collective.

We Spoke Up for Children, Families, and Our Future

Public Policy Initiatives

While 2026 saw significant statewide investments in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), it was not sufficiently funded at a level to meet the need. The expansion of income eligibility levels allowed more families to qualify for subsidized care, yet the funding shortfall prevented eligible families from taking advantage of the program. Families across the state were denied enrollment and placed on long waitlists. In Warren and Washington counties families who depend on this assistance to gain or remain employed were some of the first in the state to feel these effects. The waitlists that began in the early spring of 2025, persisted for a full year. Parents were forced to make difficult decisions about using lower quality, unreliable and sometimes unsafe care and/or leaving the workforce all together. Employers, businesses, and our local economy undoubtedly began to realize the effects of this crisis. The child care workforce, already strained and at a critical breaking point due to low pay (on average earning less than 96% of the workforce in our area) and limited benefits, found themselves further tested.

The need to raise awareness, educate, and speak on behalf of children, families and child care providers remained more crucial than ever, and the Child Care Network met this need head on. The network worked diligently collecting stories from parents, providers, and employers, sharing them with key stakeholders and government officials. In February of 2026, the Child Care Network participated in the Empire State Campaign for Child Care Advocacy Day supporting the campaign's public policy priorities and urging elected officials to prioritize child care when developing and voting on budgets. The final NY State Fiscal Year 2027 Budget includes a great deal of wins for the early childhood community. This includes a monumental investment of over \$3 billion in the Child Care Assistance Program which includes an allotment to address the shortfall in this current year's budget. Several current projects received continued funding including those focused on improving sustainability of current child care programs.

While the enacted budget includes many wins for the child care community, a significant investment in the early care and education workforce is essential to addressing the child care crisis and was visibly absent in this year's budget.

In the coming year, the Child Care Network will continue its efforts to support and elevate the early care and education workforce, as well as spotlighting the vital role that child care plays in the economic infrastructure as an economic driver.

If you're not already thinking about child care...
You should be!

Community Outreach and Collaboration



The Child Care Network has been involved in a variety of community outreach opportunities including tabling at events, making presentations to local organizations and participating in a variety of community meetings. The goal is to raise awareness of our services and the importance of quality early care and learning.

One of our most exciting initiatives started in 2024, and has continued through to this year, is the Joyce Stock Snuggery Project at Glens Falls Hospital. We delivered 155 Sleep Safe books, a Gerber Onesie with our SACCN logo on the front, SACCN's program information brochure, start-up flyer, legally exempt flyer and the Child Care Assistance Program information wrapped with a bow!

Community Partners: Working Together for Children

- Adirondack Employee Assistance Program
- Warren County Head Start
- Hudson Headwaters Health Network
- LEAP Washington County
- Warren County Department of Social Services
- Washington County Department of Social Services
- Warren County ARPA Committee
- Adirondack Community Foundation B3 Alliance
- Adirondack Community Foundation Stand Up for Child Care
- Family Service Association of Glens Falls
- Hamilton County Department of Social Services
- Warren County Health Services
- Washington County Public Health and WIC
- Adirondack Regional Chamber of Commerce
- ARCC Health and Wellness Council
- ARCC Non-Profit Business Council
- ARCC Women's Business Council
- Arrow Bank
- Warren County Workforce Development
- Warren Washington Saratoga Workforce Development Board
- Warren County Economic Development Corporation
- Washington County Children's Services Committee
- SUNY Adirondack
- Southern Adirondack Independent Living Center
- Warren Washington Community Services



Funding Sources

- The New York State Office of Children and Family Services
- New York State Department of Health
- Warren County American Recovery Act Funds
- Washington County American Recovery Act Funds
- Adirondack Community Foundation
- Various fees for services

*We are grateful
to our funders...*

Honorable mentions-

Provider Appreciation:

The child care providers within our service area received a special gift for Provider Appreciation Day 2026. The theme was "Fill Your Bucket". The gift included a sand pail and shovel and was filled with the following items:

- Calming Adult Coloring Book with Colored Pencils
- Custom-made Sugar Scrubs Set from the Sunflower Collection
- Mindfulness Cards
- Stewarts Gift Card
- Variety of Snacks



Legally Exempt:

Legally Exempt Providers received a Health and Safety tote that focused on fire safety and Prevention that included:

- Fire and Safety Children's Book
- Fire Extinguisher
- Fire Extinguisher Blanket
- Fire Engine Floor Puzzle
- Fire Escape Ladder
- Smoke Alarm
- Firefighter's Dress Up Kit

Early Literacy Project for Child Care Providers and Children:

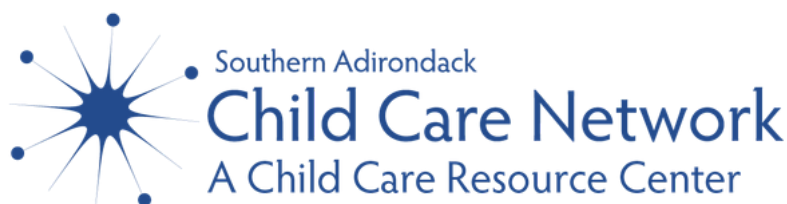
This winter, SACCN team members developed two separate projects which involved visiting child care programs to read stories and lead literacy themed child centered activities.

One of the projects was based on a winter theme which included snow, snowmen and animals that thrive in winter. During the visit, various theme related stories were read, songs and fingerplays were sung with the children along with some fun gross motor circle time activities. A related book was left for each program and each child in the program. Information was provided discussing the importance of having a print-rich environment that supports pre-literacy skills in children.

The second project was titled What Makes A Rainbow? The children explored rainbows by reading stories, participating in music and movement activities, and playing a vocabulary game with rainbow ribbon rings. The story What Makes a Rainbow was read and a copy left for each program. Each program also received a felt story board kit.



Website



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