



December 2021

Contact Opportunities
for Otsego at
607.433.8000
or
www.ofoinc.org

Keep Connected

OFO's mission is to be the leader in developing innovative solutions that promote healthy lives,
thriving families and caring communities.

Give Your Child A 'Head Start'

Families learning and growing together from pregnancy to preschool

When you enroll your child in Head Start or Early Head Start, you are getting much more than an educational program.

Did you know...

...children who attend Head Start or Early Head Start are more likely to enter Kindergarten ready to learn

...that Head Start and Early Head Start focus on the well-being of the whole family and not just the enrolled child

...that Head Start and Early Head Start provide health and developmental screenings for your child

As a Head Start or Early Head Start parent or family, you will have the opportunity to participate in Parent Group meetings, Policy Council, family engagement, field trips and more!



educational activities and field trips for your child and family

- Provide program leadership by joining Policy Council
- Help make a difference in your child's education

In the classroom, your child will...

...have the opportunity to learn through play and exploration of their environment

...socialize and learn how to interact with peers

...enjoy trying new foods that they help create and cook

...go on field trips in their community, such as the library, local fire department, and the Farmers' Museum

...enjoy participating in science experiments and sensory play

...make life-long friendships

Highlights of enrolling:

- Receive education on new topics each month
- Receive parent education materials
- Enjoy guest speakers from the community
- Connect with other parents and families
- Assist in planning fun,

Did You Know?

You can now apply for Early Head Start and Head Start online at :

www.ofoinc.org/hsapply

Table of Contents

Introducing...	3-4
Early Head Start Socializations	5
Unique Ways of Keeping Our Families Involved	6-7
Field Trips & Community Involvement	8



Studies show that positive experiences during the first five years of life lead to success in school and life. When young children have nurturing interactions with adults and engage in constructive play, they naturally develop the skills they need for later learning.

Introducing...

**Please join us
in welcoming the new
Head Start Training and Data Coordinator**

Hello Everyone!

My name is Kimberly Ross. I have worked for OFO for five and a half years. I started as an Assistant Teacher, became a Family Partner, and am now in my current role as Training and Data Coordinator. I am excited for this new journey as this position is also new. I look forward to becoming one of the front line staff our new employees will meet getting them started with their new career.



**Please join us
in welcoming the new
Head Start Operations Manager**

My name is Heather Conklin and for the past 15 years I have had the joy of being part of the early childhood field.

My journey started with the Head Start program two years ago as the Schenevus Head Start Family Partner. Then I was fortunate enough to be part of the Unadilla Head Start team serving as the Teacher/Center Director. When the opportunity of becoming the Head Start Operations Manager was available I knew I had to take the chance to apply. Head Start is such an important part of our community and I only want to see the program grow and flourish.



Introducing...

**Please join us
in welcoming the new
Dental/Nutrition Specialist**

My name is Maria Arnot and I am the new Dental/ Nutrition Specialist for Head Start and Early Head Start.

After graduating from Milford Central School in 2008, I received my undergraduate degree from Castleton University in Vermont. Following graduation, I relocated to Southern West Virginia where I spent the next seven years. In West Virginia, I worked for a small nonprofit as the Director of Community Agriculture, managing farmers' markets, community gardens, and community supported agriculture projects, with the



goal of increasing access to fresh produce and nutrition education.

In 2019 I moved back north, and recently completed my Masters in Public Health from Cornell University, graduating in the Food Systems and Health cohort. I applied immediately after finding the Dental/Nutrition Specialist posting.

Through this role, I see the potential to have a positive influence on children around my hometown, and hope to improve oral health and nutrition health outcomes.

Early Head Start Socializations

Early Head Start provides two socialization opportunities a month.

Socializations include activities for the children to do along with the parents in a group setting. Parent education and a snack or meal are also provided.

In September, those enrolled in Early Head Start went to the Middlefield orchard to go apple picking, and Covered Bridge Farms in Unadilla. In November, participants went to the Pittsfield Firehouse to learn about fire safety and the Hartwick Community Center for a pajama party.



Unique Ways Of Keeping



Our Families Involved ...

The pandemic has all our staff thinking 'outside the box' as to how to keep our families as involved as possible while limiting the number of visitors coming into our centers or classrooms. While we cannot let parents inside the classroom just yet, our goal is to still have families involved as much as possible.

Ways we are doing that include ...

- Walks on campus
- Partaking in community events such as parades and holiday events
- Setting up seasonal activities in our community
- Planting flowers
- Sending materials home so families can do projects together, and sharing those projects in classrooms or center-specific Facebook groups
- Dad's Take Your Child To School Day



Field Trips & Community Involvement

Field trips, getting out in the community, and having community members come visit our classrooms are very important parts of our program. There have been limitations with the pandemic, but we are doing the best we can to continue offering these opportunities whenever possible.

