



May 29, 2018

Dear Friends:

OPWDD strongly recognizes the important work performed by families in fostering natural supports that help individuals with developmental disabilities living at home fully participate in their communities. The Family Support Services (FSS) Program is designed to assist the caregiver and thereby enhance family stability and unity.

Through local FSS Advisory Councils that operate across the state, New York's families of individuals with developmental disabilities play a key role in the design, development, review and oversight of the FSS programs and services.

One representative of each local FSS Advisory Council participates in the Statewide FSS Committee, where the representative brings the needs of families to the attention of the NYS OPWDD leadership. The Statewide FSS Committee and OPWDD leadership work together to review and assess FSS programs can best respond to those needs.

The local FSS Advisory Councils are made up of family members of individuals with developmental disabilities. The councils work with the OPWDD Regional Offices to design and review requests for proposals for new support programs and review how existing programs are working to support individuals who reside in their family homes. The councils are always looking to engage new family members in this work. Local councils strive for representation of all cultures, ages, levels of need and geographic location. We invite you to contact Jodi McNally, the FSS Liaison in the Western Council region (Cayuga, Cortland, Onondaga, and Oswego Counties), or Shirley Hurlburt, the FSS Coordinator for the Eastern Council region (Herkimer, Lewis, Madison, and Oneida Counties) who can give you information on how you may join your local FSS Advisory Council. Jodi can be reached at 315/473-6986 or at [Jodi.McNally@opwdd.ny.gov](mailto:Jodi.McNally@opwdd.ny.gov), and Shirley can be reached at 315/473-6902 or at [Shirley.A.Hurlburt@opwdd.ny.gov](mailto:Shirley.A.Hurlburt@opwdd.ny.gov). You may also contact Michelle Langdon, FSS Coordinator, for more information on the roles of the FSS Advisory Councils or information on joining. Michelle can be reached at 315/336-2300 ext. 247 or [Michelle.L.Langdon@opwdd.ny.gov](mailto:Michelle.L.Langdon@opwdd.ny.gov).

Families in New York State have a voice because parents like you became involved. Joining the local FSS Advisory Council is a wonderful opportunity to ensure the quality of your family member's future. We hope you will consider working with us to support the success of our families. Should you have any questions or concerns and want to talk to one of us directly, please contact your local Regional Office's FSS Liaisons or FSS Coordinator as listed above.

Sincerely,

The Family Members of the Central New York DDRO FSS Advisory Council