



January 19, 2021

Re: Family Education & Training Series

Dear Parent/Guardian and Care Coordinators,

The Family Education & Training Series (FET) 2021 is for families of children with developmental disabilities. These programs are provided through funding of the Home and Community Based Waiver schedule.

***These trainings are now available through virtual communication, as in-person training is not being offered at this time. The current list of programs are available and additional one-on-one sessions may also be scheduled. Please note, that the individual trainings will be arranged based on needs of the family/caregiver needs, as well as the ability of the instructors to provide the training based on their own schedules. The FET Coordinator will work with each family to arrange the best possible educational/informational experience during these unprecedented times. Currently, this virtual communication meeting is an option. That may change at any time and we will communicate with you accordingly.***

As defined by the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), Family Education & Training may be provided to families of people up to 18 year's old who are enrolled in the Home and Community Based Waiver Program. The purpose of FET is to enhance the decision-making capacity of the family unit, provide orientation regarding the nature and impact of developmental disabilities upon the person and their family, and inform them about service alternatives. Additionally, FET will assist the family unit in understanding and nurturing their child with a developmental disability.

For families who are enrolled in the Home and Community Based Waiver and who have FET listed as a service, FET is funded through OPWDD and will provide up to 2 sessions per year. Each family is expected to attend at least one session per calendar year to remain enrolled in the Home and Community Based Waiver. If this is the only Waiver service received, it is imperative that you attend at least one session per year in order to maintain Medicaid funding. These classes must be chosen from the enclosed list. People Inc. cannot give credit for classes taken through other agencies.

Wondering how to register? Fill out the form attached at the end of this packet (page 9) and mail it in to: FET Coordinator, 280 Spindrift Drive, Williamsville NY 14221, or by email (preferred) to: [FET@people-inc.org](mailto:FET@people-inc.org).

If you need more information, contact your Care Coordinator or FET by email at [FET@people-inc.org](mailto:FET@people-inc.org) or call: WNY 716.880.3751/Greater Rochester region 585.441.9300.

Sincerely,

Linda Rinaldo  
Director of Admissions

## 2021 SCHEDULE

### Overview of the Special Education Process

Presented by Elizabeth Assad-Penner, Educational Advocate

During this informative session, you will learn about the laws of special education, special education process, parental consent, timelines, due process, disciplinary procedures, and extended school year services. Special concerns may also be addressed.

**Date offered:** Wednesday, April 7 5:00-7:00 p.m.

This FET is available by appointment for 1:1 session

### The Transition Process: What is the Plan for my Child After High School?

Presented by Elizabeth Assad-Penner, Educational Advocate

This training is essential for parents of children with disabilities ages 14-21 years of age. Learn about what should be included in your child's IEP regarding transition services.

**Dates offered:** Wednesday, February 10 5:00-7:00 p.m.  
Wednesday, July 7 5:00-7:00 p.m.

This FET is also available by appointment for 1:1 session

### IEP Development and Parent Advocacy at the IEP Meeting

Presented by Elizabeth Assad-Penner, Educational Advocate

The IEP meeting can be an overwhelming experience. Learn how to plan for the meeting and advocate for your child.

**Dates offered:** Wednesday, August 18 5:00-7:00 p.m.  
Wednesday, December 8 5:00-7:00 p.m.

This FET is also available by appointment for 1:1 session

### Environmental Modification and Adaptive Technology: The Process through the HCBSW

Presented by Emod Team Member

The Home and Community Based Waiver provides Environmental Modifications and Adaptive Technologies for individuals with developmental disabilities. This presentation will provide you with an overview of the process and provide a forum for questions to be addressed.

**Dates offered:** Wednesday, April 28 4:00-6:00 p.m.  
Thursday, August 26 3:00-5:00 p.m.  
Wednesday, November 17 1:00-3:00 p.m.

## Financial/Benefits

Presented by Chris Parisi, Benefits and Entitlements Access Coordinator

An overview of SSI and Social Security Disability Benefits: their similarities and differences. We will focus on when to apply for benefits, summary of the application process, as well as how work affects these benefits. In addition, an overview of Medicaid and Medicare programs will also be discussed. Questions will be solicited and addressed.

<b>Dates offered:</b>	Thursday, February 4	4:30-6:30 p.m.
	Tuesday, April 20	4:30-6:30 p.m.
	Thursday, June 17	4:30-6:30 p.m.
	Thursday, August 19	4:30-6:30 p.m.
	Thursday, October 14	4:30-6:30 p.m.
	Tuesday, November 9	4:30-6:30 p.m.

## Guardianship, Wills, and Trusts

Presented by Tracy Harrienger, General Counsel

This presentation is an overview of legal guardianship and the process, including the responsibilities a legal guardian has. A portion of the training will focus on Supplemental Needs Trust and details provided on how your loved one may benefit from the service. Questions will be solicited and addressed.

<b>Dates offered:</b>	Tuesday, January 12	3:00-5:00 p.m.
	Tuesday, March 9	3:00-5:00 p.m.
	Thursday, April 15	3:00-5:00 p.m.
	Tuesday, June 8	3:00-5:00 p.m.
	Tuesday, September 14	3:00-5:00 p.m.
	Tuesday, October 12	3:00-5:00 p.m.
	Tuesday, December 7	3:00-5:00 p.m.

## Self-Directed Services

Presented by Harpreet Saran-Rokicki, Program Director

This class will provide an introduction of Self-Directed Services. You will be given an overview of budgeting, learn a new model for service delivery, and discover a world in which you can self-direct your life or support those you love to a greater level of independence.

<b>Dates offered:</b>	Wednesday, February 3	5:00-7:00 p.m.
	Wednesday, May 26	5:00-7:00 p.m.
	Wednesday, September 22	5:00-7:00 p.m.
	Wednesday, December 1	5:00-7:00 p.m.

## **“I Don’t Know What I Want to Be When I Grow Up”: Building a Career Path with Your Child**

Presented by Megan Logan, Senior Employment Supervisor

This training will educate families on how to have ongoing conversations about career aspirations, building skills, identifying talents/desires and learning about what services are available post high school. There will be an overview of the following job related services: Community Pre Vocational, Supported Employment, ACCES-VR, Pathways to Employment and ETP.

<b>Dates offered:</b>	Thursday, February 4	4:00-6:00 p.m.
	Thursday, April 1	4:00-6:00 p.m.
	Thursday, June 3	4:00-6:00 p.m.
	Thursday, August 5	4:00-6:00 p.m.
	Thursday, October 7	4:00-6:00 p.m.
	Thursday, December 9	4:00-6:00 p.m.

This FET is also available by appointment for 1:1 session

## **Self-Care for the Caregiver**

Presented by Megan Logan, Senior Employment Supervisor

Caregiving can be physically, emotionally and spiritually exhausting. Whether you are in the profession of caregiving or taking care of a loved one, it is important to remember to practice self-care. For family members, caregiving can carry other stressors such as: financial strain, family conflict, and social withdrawal. Over time, caregiver stress can lead to burnout. Burnout can be manifested as irritability, fatigue, problems with sleep, weight gain, feelings of helplessness or hopelessness, and social isolation. This training is offered to parents and caregivers to develop healthy coping skills and an active self-care plan.

<b>Dates offered:</b>	Thursday, January 7	4:00-6:00 p.m.
	Thursday, March 4	4:00-6:00 p.m.
	Thursday, May 6	4:00-6:00 p.m.
	Thursday, July 8	4:00-6:00 p.m.
	Thursday, September 9	4:00-6:00 p.m.
	Thursday, November 4	4:00-6:00 p.m.

This FET is also available by appointment for 1:1 session

## **Traveling for medical appointments**

Presented by Carol Miller, Residential Director

Learn about getting a second opinion, what to bring, lodging options, reimbursement programs, insurance preauthorization's, and navigating the MAS process.

<b>Dates offered:</b>	Wednesday, April 21	4:00-6:00 p.m.
	Thursday, October 21	3:00-5:00 p.m.

This FET is also available by appointment for 1:1 session

## **Making a Safety Plan**

Presented by Carol Miller, Residential Director

This includes a training on preparing an emergency contact list, an emergency bag (medication supply, sensory items, clothes and diapers) and obtaining items such as smoke detectors, CO2 detectors and medical alert bracelets.

<b>Dates offered:</b>	Wednesday, January 27	3:00-5:00 p.m.
	Wednesday, May 18	4:00-6:00 p.m.
	Tuesday, September 21	3:00-5:00 p.m.

This FET is also available by appointment for 1:1 session

## **Operation EDITH**

Presented by Thomas Ess, VP/Emergency Management Safety and Security

“EDITH” stands for “*Exit Drills in The Home.*” A majority of the nearly 4,000 fire-related deaths that occur every year happen in the home during normal sleeping hours. A planned and practiced EXIT PLAN can reduce this number. Residential smoke detectors and the planning and practice of exit drills in the home have helped to reduce the number of lives lost to fire in recent years.

<b>Dates offered:</b>	Wednesday, February 3	5:00-7:00 p.m.
	Wednesday, April 14	5:00-7:00 p.m.
	Wednesday, June 2	5:00-7:00 p.m.
	Wednesday, August 4	5:00-7:00 p.m.
	Wednesday, October 6	5:00-7:00 p.m.
	Wednesday, December 8	5:00-7:00 p.m.

## **Surviving and Thriving during a Pandemic, Loss and Other Stressors in our Lives**

Presented by Noel Schmitt, Associate Program Director of Quality Improvement

Stress can occur during a national crisis or due to small events that are closer to home. Learn about using some of the healing arts to de-stress and cope with what life throws us. A guided meditation will be used during this training and discussion on how to use other de-stressors.

<b>Dates offered:</b>	Friday February 12	2:00-4:00 p.m.
	Friday May 14	10:00 a.m.-noon
	Tuesday July 13	4:00-6:00 p.m.
	Monday October 4	5:00-7:00 p.m.

This FET is also available by appointment for 1:1 session

## **Building Self-Esteem in My Child**

Presented by Emily Sheehan, Behavior Intervention Specialist and Licensed Mental Health Counselor

The way we feel about ourselves has a huge impact on how we think and act. Building someone's confidence and self-esteem can provide them with positive reinforcement that may last a lifetime! In this class concepts of self-esteem and confidence will be further explored. Additional topics and handouts will be provided covering concepts of irrational and misleading thoughts, conversation and social skills, giving and receiving respect and gaining attention in positive ways. Participants will leave with an increased knowledge on these topics as well as a "workbook" of information to take home to their child so they can begin building and improving their own self-esteem!

<b>Dates offered:</b>	Friday, February 19	noon-2:00 p.m.
	Friday, March 12	noon-2:00 p.m.
	Tuesday, June 8	5:00-7:00 p.m.
	Thursday, September 9	5:00-7:00 p.m.
	Thursday, November 18	6:00-8:00 p.m.
	Friday, December 10	noon-2:00 p.m.

***Please continue to next page for the sessions available by appointment only***

***The following sessions are available by appointment only:***

*Email your interest in one of these classes listed below to FET@people-inc.org, and we will reach out to the instructor to follow up with you to schedule.*

**My Child and Prader-Willi Syndrome** This class is offered by appointment only

Presented by Gabrielle Landis, Behavioral Intervention Specialist

Prader-Willi Syndrome or (PWS) is a rare disorder present at birth that results in a number of physical, mental and behavioral problems. This class will discuss a brief overview of PWS, including behavioral methods to support the person diagnosed with Prader-Willi Syndrome. The trainer will work with your family to identify specific concerns regarding your child and develop individualized supports. Sessions will be held at a convenient time and location that will be arranged with the presenter.

**Dealing with Grief** This class is offered by appointment only

Presented by Ashley Keagle, Director of Life Transitions and Mercy Doula Program

This class will help families, parents and children understand the stages and process of dealing with grief. We will discuss concepts and examples of grief and how it can affect one's feelings, thoughts and behaviors.

**Educational Advocacy** This class is offered by appointment only

Presented by Elizabeth Assad-Penner, Educational Advocates

The Educational Advocate will define the role & process of the Committee for Special Education (CSE), implementation of Individual Education Plans (IEP), assessments, and the parent's role as an advocate. Special concerns may also be addressed.

**Understanding Positive Reinforcement** This class is offered by appointment only

Presented by Amber Sarubbi, Behavior Intervention Specialist-Assessment

This training discusses how to focus on what your child is doing right rather than concentrating on what your child is doing wrong. We discuss strategies to help increase the likelihood that the behaviors you want to continue to see will be repeated. Positive strategies to help support your child through enthusiasm, labeled praise and encouragement and rewards systems are discussed.

**Overview of Dietary Choices** This class is offered by appointment only

Presented by Melissa Pukalo, Dietetic Technician

The objective of this training is to create an informed approach to creatively feeding your child with a developmental disability. All parents, not just those of children with special needs, can be familiar with the stress and confusion associated with nourishing their child. Due to the strain this situation can create, parents are often tempted to give in to the demands of their child and poor eating habits are established. These issues may be further exacerbated when a child has difficulties with sensory processing, tactile defensiveness, allergies, intolerances, and other dietary restrictions. This training will prepare you with a baseline of knowledge to navigate all of your options, some creative approaches to trying new things, and recipes that you may like to try with your own child.

**Deaf Culture & Language** This class is offered by appointment only  
Presented by Jodi Chibi, Director, Deaf Access Service

Learn more about Deaf culture, Deafness, and American Sign Language (ASL). In addition to beginning to understand the Deaf experience, you will also see how the use of ASL, a visual language, can benefit people from all different backgrounds including hearing, non-verbal, and young children.

**A Guided Process to Toileting Training** This class is offered by appointment only  
Presented by Behavior Intervention Specialist

In an effort to help parents with what can be seen as an overwhelming challenge, we have created a guided process to toileting training. We begin the process by observing the child and having the families complete a toileting questionnaire on the child's present level of toileting independence. Preparation of toilet training is a major key to success. Before toilet training begins, we will create together a charting system for the child's current toileting schedule and fluid intake. Families will then be provided with a personalized toileting guide that will walk them through the toileting process for their child.

**An Overview of Care Coordination/Care Management** This class is offered by appointment only  
Presented by Maria McMorrow, Care Coordination Supervisor

The Care Coordinator (CC) plays a very important role in accessing valuable services. This session will help you develop skills to form a working relationship with your CC with the goal of making your monthly meeting productive and meaningful. You will learn more about available services, the process for obtaining these services, and getting the most from the services your child will be receiving.





## Family Education & Training Registration Form

**Please return this form to:** FET Coordinator  
280 Spindrift Drive  
Williamsville, NY 14221

or: [FET@people-inc.org](mailto:FET@people-inc.org) (preferred)

*Remember you must attend at least one session per year.*

**Please sign me up for the following training(s):**

Training Session	Date of Session

Your Name	Address	Telephone Number & Email Address	Care Coordinator	Child's Name