



NEWSLETTER

Monthly Edition
December 2025



Meet Kaitlin-Our New EAP Manager



I wanted to take a moment to introduce myself and share a recent staffing update. My name is Kaitlin Smith, and I have been with Family Service of the Chautauqua Region since March 2025. I recently transitioned into the role of Employee Assistance (EAP) Manager. Please note that Tim Cunningham is no longer with Family Service of the Chautauqua Region.

During my time here, several things have stood out to me. Family Service truly prioritizes mental health and well-being, and I've seen firsthand the positive impact this has on employees. I've also been impressed by the compassion of our staff and the organization's commitment to transparency and confidentiality. These values are deeply rooted in our culture, making my transition into this role both exciting and rewarding. I am passionate about the work we do and the difference it makes.

The Employee Assistance Program plays a vital role in supporting employees, promoting work-life balance, and improving mental health and overall well-being. Challenges such as stress, anxiety, depression, grief, financial concerns, and personal situations can significantly affect health and job performance. Employers who invest in their employees and foster a healthy work environment make a meaningful difference.

As a member of the Employee Assistance Program, you have access to five free sessions for services such as Mental Health Counseling, Attorney Consultation, and Financial Counseling. If life feels heavy or something is impacting your personal or work life, please know it's okay to reach out. These services are free, confidential, and designed to help you thrive. You deserve to take care of yourself and prioritize your well-being. On the next page of this newsletter, you'll find details about the Employee Assistance Program and how to access these resources. Take that step —you're worth it.

• Deadline for property tax

• Last day to file October 31

Thank you for taking the time to read this update. My goal as EAP Manager is to support your organization and your employees. I plan on achieving this goal by fostering an environment where everyone inside your organization feels supported and empowered to use the resources available to them. Together, we can create a workplace where well-being is a priority and everyone feels valued.

A Mental Note

What is EAP?

EAP is a free gift from an employer to its employees. Each employee receives five annual sessions to be used for the following services: Mental Health Counseling with a licensed therapist at either Family Service or an affiliated counselor. Example of reasons to see counselor: Marriage, Divorce, Stress, Anger Management, Anxiety, Grief, etc...

Financial Counseling provides financial education and/or advice. Examples include bringing your income and bills to create a monthly budget, determine what you can afford when purchasing a new home, direction to start saving for the future and so much more!

Attorney Consultation provides a 1/2 hour consultation with an attorney via phone or in person (non-work related issues). Examples include a class action lawsuit, neighbor dispute or questions about a will, etc...

EAP sessions reset annually but do not carryover from year to year. Every year on the company renewal date, each employee is eligible for 5 new sessions.

Who can use EAP?

EAP can be used by the employee or anyone in their household. A total of five sessions can be used per employee family. For example: Let's take a family of four with two parents and two children. The one parent has job stress and talks to a counselor (1 session). A few months later, the one child is having issues at school so the parents make an EAP appointment with a counselor for the child (1 session). The family wants to move out of their rental unit into a house but cannot get things in order financially. They call to schedule an EAP financial counseling session (1 session). The other parent was named in a lawsuit but doesn't understand why so an EAP Lawyer session is set up. (1 session). This family has used 4 of their five sessions so far.

How is EAP used?

Just call Family Service of the Chautauqua Region at 716-488-1971 or visit the website at familyservicechq.org to start using EAP. Let them know that you are using EAP, who your employer is and what EAP service you would like to use. A front desk administrator will then ask a series of questions depending on what service is selected.

Why is insurance information asked for?

In the event that you exceed the 5 sessions allotted, Family Service will then begin to bill your insurance. Once more EAP sessions become available on the company renewal date, EAP can then switch you back to EAP sessions.

Please reach out to Family Service of the Chautauqua Region (716-488-1971) if you have any questions or need clarification on any aspect of EAP. Don't be afraid to seek help.

Creating a Long-Term Plan For Financial Wellness

Money matters affect your overall health. Research shows 72% of Americans feel stressed about money, which can impact both mental and physical well-being. After the holidays, finances can feel even tighter—76% of Americans report “money wounds” from seasonal spending.

Healing from financial stress takes time. Building long-term financial wellness means ongoing reflection, emotional management, and mindful spending year-round. While the new year is a popular time to set goals, you can start anytime.

Set both short- and long-term goals:

- Short-/mid-term: a few months to a few years
- Long-term: several decades

Examples of goals:

- Build an emergency fund
- Save for a down payment
- Pay down debt
- Save for college or complete a degree
- Repay student loans
- Invest for retirement
- Organize financial documents

Through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), you have access to professional financial planning support—credit analysis, budgeting, debt management, goal setting, and more. These services are available at no cost to you. Contact Family Service of the Chautauqua Region at 716-488-1971 to get started.

Citations:

Self Inc.- By Ana Gonzalez-Ribeiro, MBA, AFC®
Phycology Today - By Nathan Astle, MFT, CFT-I
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A Little Extra

Snickerdoodle Blondie Bars

For the blondie base:

- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1 cup salted butter (softened to room temperature)
- 1 1/2 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 cup light brown sugar (packed well)
- 1 cup white sugar
- 2 large eggs

For the cinnamon-sugar topping

- 1/4 cup white sugar
- 1 1/2 tsp cinnamon



Instructions

Step 1: Prep

- Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C).
- Line a 9×13 inch baking pan with parchment paper, allowing some overhang for easy removal later.
- Lightly grease any exposed parts of the pan and the parchment paper to prevent sticking.

Step 2: Mix the Blondie Batter

- In a large bowl or stand mixer, cream together the softened butter, 1 cup white sugar, and 1 cup light brown sugar until the mixture is light and fluffy.
- Add in the eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition.
- Mix in the vanilla extract.
- In a separate bowl, whisk together the all-purpose flour, salt, baking powder, and 1 1/2 teaspoons cinnamon.
- Gradually add the dry ingredients to the wet mixture, mixing until the batter is smooth and no streaks of flour remain.

Step 3: Press Batter Into Pan and Add Topping

- Lightly grease your hands to prevent sticking.
- Press the blondie batter into an even layer in the prepared pan, making sure to reach the corners.
- In a small bowl, mix together 1/4 cup white sugar and 1 1/2 teaspoons cinnamon to make the cinnamon-sugar topping.
- Sprinkle this mixture evenly over the top of the pressed batter. I like to pat the cinnamon-sugar gently onto the surface so it adheres nicely during baking.

Step 4: Bake the Blondies

- Place the pan in the preheated oven and bake for 25-30 minutes, or until the edges are lightly golden and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean or with just a few moist crumbs.

Credit: Mollyshomeguide.com



Our Participating EAP Companies

A CHILDREN'S PLACE
 BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB
 BROOKS TLC HEALTH SYSTEMS, INC
 BUSH INDUSTRIES INC.
 CHAUTAUQUA ADULT DAYCARE CENTERS INC.
 CHAUTAUQUA HUMANE SOCIETY
 CHAUTAUQUA HOSPICE & PALLIATIVE CARE
 CHAUTAUQUA PATRONS INSURANCE COMPANY
 CHAUTAUQUA REGION COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
 CHAUTAUQUA-CATTARAUGUS LIBRARY SYSTEM
 CHILD ADVOCACY PROGRAM (CAP)
 CITY OF DUNKIRK
 DAHLSTROM ROLL FORM
 DAWSON METAL COMPANY , INC
 ELLISON BRONZE
 FALCONER CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
 FAMILY SERVICE OF THE CHAUTAUQUA REGION
 FREWSBURG CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
 HANSON SIGN CO.
 JAMES PRENDERGAST LIBRARY
 JAMESTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT
 KERESEY & ASSOCIATES, PC
 LAKE SHORE FAMILY CENTER
 LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES
 MONARCH PLASTIC, INC
 NORTHWEST ARENA
 PREVENTION WORKS, INC
 SOUTHWESTERN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
 STEUBEN RURAL ELECTRIC CO-OP
 SUPERIOR GRINDING
 TITANX ENGINE COOLING INC.
 UNITED WAY
 VILLAGE OF FALCONER
 VILLAGE OF SILVER CREEK
 VILLAGE OF WESTFIELD
 WESTFIELD FAMILY PHYSICIANS

CONTACT INFO

📞 716-488-1971

✉️ eap@familyservicechq.org

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

Family Service of the Chautauqua Region,
wishes you a fun and safe holiday season!



MEAT RAFFLE
 Friday, May 8th

REMINDER



Please reach out to our EAP office if:

1. You have an idea or request for a featured topic.
2. Would like to add a name(s) to our newsletter distribution list.
3. Need Brochures, Wallet cards or Handouts.
4. Just need more information on a topic.
5. Have a new EAP contact at your company

We are here to help!