

Press Release

Resource Center for Independent Living (RCIL) receives \$1,067,854 from the New York State Education Department to provide free and confidential information, support and referral services to families and professionals working with children (birth to age 5) who have special needs, or whom are suspected of having a delay in their development.

(December 9, 2015) Utica, NY – The Resource Center for Independent Living (RCIL) is pleased to announce it has received a five-year \$1,067,854 grant from the New York State Education Department to operate the Central Early Childhood Direction Center through its office in Utica. Early Childhood Specialists at RCIL will provide parents of children with disabilities from birth to age 5, or a child whom they suspect may have a delay in their development, the information and resources they need to access services and supports for their children.

The Central Early Childhood Direction Center covers a large area of Central New York including Jefferson, Lewis, Herkimer, Oneida, and Madison Counties. Parents will receive assistance to access assessments, evaluations, and services to help their children succeed by identifying and addressing disabilities at the earliest possible stage of development.

Early Childhood Specialists will be available to answer parent questions, provide workshops and informational events, and help parents connect with schools and service providers. The Early Childhood Specialists are also available to provide information and technical assistance to agencies and preschool providers to promote placement of preschool students in settings with non-disabled peers. The goals of the project are to enhance parents' understanding of the preschool special education process; promote timely evaluations and placements of preschool students in least restrictive environments; and improve the transitions of children with disabilities from early intervention to preschool special education and on to school-age special education.

All Central Early Childhood Direction Center information will be available on the RCIL website at www.rcil.com, including a calendar of workshops and events of interest to parents of children with disabilities and links to local services and resources.

For more information about the Early Childhood Direction Center (ECDC), please call (315) 272-1887, email ecdc@rcil.com or like us on Facebook.

To learn more about RCIL, please visit www.rcil.com.