**I truly believe that each state and individual county should offer Family Resource Centers. They provide significant opportunities for community members to connect and better their individual lives.**

What’s an example of the value of a Family Resource Center for a parent and her community? Click here to read the remarks Heather Balch, a parent leader from the Jennie Mose Family Resource Center in upstate New York, gave at the NFSN Briefings at the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate earlier this year.

**PARENT TESTIMONIAL**

My name is Heather Balch and I am a Mother of three children ages 3, 6, and 10. I first started visiting the Family Resource Center (FRC) when my oldest was about nine months old. I enjoyed getting out of the house and having a safe place for her to play with children in her age group. I was in need of time spent with other adults as I was a full-time stay-at-home Mother.

My two older children have diagnosed disabilities and the acceptance and support we found at the FRC was invaluable. The FRC soon became like a second home for me. I loved being able to talk with other adults and have a safe, judgement-free place for me and my children.

I participated in groups such as Parent Child Mother Goose, Baby Doll Circle Time, and Readiness to Kindergarten (to name a few) and found my level of confidence greatly improved as I was accepted and heard. Later I also attended Parent Education classes like Parenting with a Heart, Flip-it, and Conscious Discipline. Altogether these courses and programs have had a huge impact on me, my family, and on my ability to be the best parent I can be. I have been able to make many friends and celebrate many special moments at the FRC.

Another change, for me personally, was brought about because of the greater confidence I achieved through the FRC. I began to want to play a greater role in my community and expressed this desire to the FRC Director. She offered me a location to host a Parent Group for families and children with special needs and offered to help out in whatever way she could. I ended up forming my support group several months later and the group has been meeting once a month.

Besides the support group, I have trained through the FRC to become a Flip It instructor to enable me to train others in the parenting methods I have learned. I also now serve as a board member for Aspire Hope NY and a Policy Council member for the Head Start Program. I completed a training session to enable me to co-host Community Cafes in my small community. At the Community Cafes we have been planning and working toward getting a small playground and book corner that our community has needed for many years.

I truly believe that each state and individual county should offer Family Resource Centers. Rural areas in particular could benefit from having such a location to aid parents and provide great places for children to play. Besides families, small daycare providers benefit from the use of the FRC for daytime activities in science, literacy, and social skills - all valuable skills in prepping the children in their care for future schooling. In total, Family Resource Centers provide significant opportunities for community members to connect and better their individual lives.

I hope to continue making memories with my children and my FRC family for many more years. I will continue to participate in parent education and training sessions at my local FRC. I also will
continue to spread the word to other parents within my community about the amazing resources available for parents at the FRC.