The Children & Youth Fund supports basic needs of young children

Healthy environments foster healthy children. This is why the Children & Youth Fund has supported basic needs for disadvantaged families with a grant to the Child Development Council. This support meets basic needs such as a sturdy stroller for a family that needed a safer way to get to and from the bus stop. Sometimes hand-me-down equipment can be missing important safety straps or is not sturdy, creating a safety hazard. A sturdy high chair keeps a mobile baby safe and secure during mealtime. Bus passes and gas cards support families to get to important doctor visits that establish long relationships with health care professionals for both the young child and new parent.

This grant also supported our community’s young children with baby gates, cribs, diapers, car seats and cabinet locks. These items are offered to families during home visits where relationships with a caring professional are established. These home visits assure that stable healthy environments help children reach optimal development, physically, socially and emotionally. Supplemental formula (a lifeline for babies that are not breastfed), is offered while professionals talk with parents about the rapid brain development in their infants and how it links to good nourishment. During these visits, families are encouraged and supported to access a range of services available to young families in our community. The Child Development Council works closely with other providers such as the Tompkins County Health Department. They also receive referrals from the
Medicaid Obstetrical and Maternal Service (MOMS) and work closely with the nurses to ensure healthy birth outcomes. They refer families to WIC and also reinforce nutritional guidelines and provide transportation support to keep WIC enrollment and benefits. These collaborations are important as they assure the greatest amount of support for young and often vulnerable families.

The Children & Youth Fund is advised by an engaged group of experienced individuals carrying out community investments. **Among their interests is supporting healthy environments assuring the safety and health of our community’s youngest children.**

Written by Janet Cotraccia