

# NORTHERN RIVERS FAMILY OF SERVICES

## MISSION, VISION, VALUES, AND CORE PRINCIPLES

Northern Rivers Family of Services is the parent organization to Northeast Parent & Child Society, Parsons Child & Family Center, and Unlimited Potential. Together, we are a family of human services agencies that work together to provide life-changing care to children, adults, and families. Our quality of care, depth of programs, combined size, and passion for the mission give us the strength to make positive change in our communities. Informed by our 188-year heritage, our 1,400-strong workforce provides services for 18,000 children, adults, and families throughout 41 counties in upstate New York.

**Our Mission** (why we exist and what we do):

Empowering children, adults, and families to change their lives and build stronger communities.

**Our Vision** (where we're going):

Northern Rivers leads the way in providing coordinated, innovative, comprehensive, and responsible delivery of human services.

**Our Values** (what we base our business and conduct on):

**HOPE** — Honor, optimism, progress, excellence

**Honor:** To help others is the highest calling; we strive to do what is right for those in our care.

**Optimism:** We believe that things can get better if we work together, aim higher, and set meaningful goals.

**Progress:** Every day provides an opportunity to improve, and we promise to continue striving.

**Excellence:** We hold ourselves to the highest standards, because our communities deserve the best from us.

### Our Five Core Principles

**Cultural Competence:** "Culture" implies a pattern of human behavior, including thoughts, communications, actions, customs, beliefs, and values of a racial, ethnic, religious, sexual, gender-based, work group, or social group. "Competence" implies the ability to function and interact effectively. Cultural competence incorporates culture, assesses cross cultural relations, attends to the effects of cross cultural differences, increases cultural knowledge, and adapts to meet the needs of those with culturally unique needs.

**Family and Youth Driven:** We believe that the experience of the families, youth and children we serve must always be our measure of success. As such, it is the youth and families who truly measure the impact of our services for them, and it is a partnership with the families we serve. This creates an environment driven by youth and families who value and seek out the experience of the youth and families engaged in our services every time they come into contact with Northern Rivers, its members agencies, and its dedicated staff.

**Strength Based:** Individuals have strengths, resources, and the ability to recover from adversity. A strength-based approach focuses on opportunities, hope, and solutions. It emphasizes developing skills, abilities, and positive attributes rather than the diminution of negative attributes. We assume individuals have the ability to help themselves. We see beyond the behaviors and characteristics of others—in particular children, youth, and families—to support the potential of what can be.

**Safety:** Physical safety is the ability to recognize and avoid danger, express feelings appropriately, and engage in practices that are consistent with good physical health. Social safety means feeling accepted for who you are. Boundaries are respected and people care about how you feel. Emotional safety means being free of shame and humiliation and having a sense of self-control and self-efficacy. Ethical safety means you can trust that what people tell you is the truth and decisions are made out of a sense of justice rather than self-interest.

**Trauma Informed:** Adverse experiences may have a negative effect on one's ability to be successful. Trauma-informed approaches assess for the impact of trauma. These approaches also support the use of strategies and interventions and in creating environments that help achieve safety, manage emotions, and develop healthy relationships. Trauma-informed care focuses on understanding and healing from loss, promoting and supporting self-care and wellness, and working toward a positive and productive future.

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