

YMCA Child Care and Early Learning Center to expand services

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EXCERPTS

The Bradford YMCA Child Care and Early Learning Center soon will be expanding its services to better serve more Bradford area children and infants. Thanks to partial funding from the Blaisdell Foundation and the support of the community, the facility will be expanding next door to where the UPMC Cardiology offices were formerly located.

“We are looking forward to expanding the YMCA Early Learning Center to allow more opportunities for children in the community to experience a high quality child care center to ensure kindergarten readiness. Our children are the future and the YMCA Early Learning Center is excited to help them become everything that they want to be,” said Kira Schine, YMCA Early Learning Center assistant director.

“The expansion is an amazing addition to the wonderful services the Y already offers our community. It’s not just the Y’s expansion — it’s the community’s as well,” added Dawn McGriff, YMCA Olean branch marketing and membership director.

The expansion, which is anticipated to be completed mid-February, will add three more spacious classrooms, separate early infant and older infant rooms, as well as a large kitchen area. The addition of the kitchen will allow staff to serve a hot lunch, aside from the breakfast and snacks already offered. Schine noted the expansion will allow for the care of an additional 50 children.

In addition, each room will be monitored by security cameras and the facility will be equipped with a Procure system, requiring a fingerprint to enter, with doors locked at all times for further safety.

The center, which is now a Keystone Stars 4 facility, currently provides a safe, educational environment for children six weeks to five years of age, including nursery preschool and pre-school programs. In addition, the school age program provides year-round child care for children from kindergarten through 12 years of age. Before school care provides breakfast, morning homework help and access to a variety of fun and educational activities. The school age program also entails an 11-week YMCA summer camp, which includes a variety of organized activities, including field trips and daily swimming.

“We like to get the kids outside and involved in the community,” explained Schine.

In addition, she emphasized that lesson plans used in the classrooms are individualized to meet each child’s individual needs, instead of just the classroom as a whole.

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