

Profile of ABCD at Newfane The Rathgaber Center

Agri-Business Child Development (ABCD), founded in 1946, is committed to providing the highest quality early childhood education and social services to farm worker and other eligible families across New York State. Children, 8 weeks old through school age, benefit from the culturally and linguistically diverse programming recognized nationally as a hallmark of Agri-Business Child Development.

Agri-Business Child Development has provided services to the Niagara County agricultural community since the mid 1960s. In 2004, ABCD at Newfane ~ The Rathgaber Center replaced the seasonal ABCD center in Olcott, New York. The new center is a 7,200 square foot facility located on 5.6 acres in Newfane, New York. This larger and more modern center operates year round.

Niagara County is one of the top 10 producing counties in New York State for apples, grapes, corn, oats, wheat, cabbage, and tomatoes. Other major crops include: plums, sweet cherries, tart cherries, peaches, and pears.

The Rathgaber Center is named in honor of Sister Jean Marie Rathgaber. Sr. Jean, devoted to improving the lives of the children of farm workers, has given over 30 years of exceptional service to Agri-Business Child Development. Sr. Jean's dedication has influenced the lives of countless children and families and is an inspiration to all who know her.

Services Provided: As a provider of Migrant and Seasonal Head Start, Agri-Business Child Development ensures that each child receives comprehensive educational, health and social services. ABCD at Newfane is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Children Served: Children of eligible families aged six weeks to compulsory school age.

Number of Children Receiving Services on an Annual Basis: 120 +/- on average in 2 infant, 3 toddler and 3 pre-school classrooms.

Hours of Operation: 8-12 hours a day, 5 days a week.

Eligibility: Eligibility requirements for local agricultural workers, as well as, the Migrant and Seasonal Head Start program include household income, employment status, and child(ren)'s age(s). The center utilizes a system of points, in accordance with the Head Start Performance Standards, to ensure that the neediest of the eligible families receive services.

Transportation: Given the rural location of families served and the lack of public transportation, busing is provided for infants, toddlers and preschoolers to and from the center on DOT inspected school buses. Educational activities are provided while children are in transit.

Staff Possess Special Skills and Knowledge: Staff must meet State and Federal mandated educational requirements. Teaching staff reflect the culture and linguistic diversity of the children served.

Geographic Areas Served: Areas of highest eligible farm worker family concentrations in Niagara County.

For additional information, please contact:

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