CAPtion

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FROM CAP SERVICES, INC.
NOVEMBER 2026

LOCATIONS

Portage County
Administrative Office
2900 Hoover Road
Stevens Point, WI 54481
715-343-7500

Program Office
1608 West River Drive
Stevens Point, WI 54481
715-343-7100

Marquette County
Early Learning Center
222 South Franklin Street
Oxford, WI 53952
608-586-4404

Outagamie County
Program Office
400 N Richmond St, Suite F
Appleton, WI 54911

Waupaca County
Program Office
101 Tower Road
Waupaca, WI 54981
715-258-9575

Waushara County
CAPsell Center
205 East Main Street
Wautoma, WI 54982
920-787-3949

844-314-8004
capservices.org

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Children's Discovery Center Announces Childcare Rate Freeze



Local families can find greater financial stability thanks to a rate freeze at CAP's Children's Discovery Center (CDC) in Stevens Point.

Families currently enrolled at CDC, along with new families who enroll by December 31, 2026, will have their childcare rates locked in for the duration of their enrollment. The freeze applies to infant, toddler and preschool care, with all existing discounts and financial assistance remaining in place.

The initiative comes at a time when affordable, reliable childcare continues to be a challenge for many families. A recent Portage County childcare survey found that 23% of households missed at least one day of work in the previous six months due to childcare issues. Additionally, reduced work hours resulting from childcare challenges are estimated to cost the local economy approximately $5.7 million annually.

"By keeping rates stable, we hope to make quality childcare more accessible and affordable while providing families with one less financial uncertainty," said April Niemi, CAP's Vice President of Early Childhood Development.

The rate freeze reinforces CAP's commitment to helping families thrive. By providing high-quality early childhood education and predictable childcare costs, CDC helps parents maintain employment, pursue educational opportunities and build a more stable future for their families.

Interested in learning more? Contact Jill Schultz at jschulz@capmail.org or 715-544-4991, ext. 122, for information about enrollment and childcare rates.

"Plunge" Explores Ways to Build Healthier Digital Future for and with Youth



Community members, school representatives, local partners, and youth gathered in Wild Rose on October 13 to "plunge" into data collected from recent youth and parent surveys about digital media. The event was hosted by ThedaCare's Community Health Action Team (CHAT) and the Supporting Youth, Nurturing Connection (SYNC) Coalition. CAP's Ashley Podoll serves as the Community Coordinator for the Wild Rose SYNC Coalition.

"We're working to strengthen connections between schools, families, and community organizations to identify needs, share ideas, and turn conversations into meaningful action," Podoll shared. "Most importantly, we're centering youth voices throughout this process."

The SYNC movement is designed to shift local norms from continuous scrolling to intentional technology use, creating connections rooted in belonging. The "plunge" represents the first step in quantifying relationships between digital media habits and youth mental health outcomes in order to move from insight to impact.



You can help build on this momentum! If you'd like to join the Wild Rose SYNC Coalition, email Ashley at apodoll@capmail.org.

Giving Tuesday: An Opportunity to Thrive

This Giving Tuesday, December 1, we invite you to transform lives with a gift that provides individuals and families with the **Opportunity to Thrive**.

Every day, CAP helps people overcome challenges, build stability, and create brighter futures. Whether it's finding safe housing, accessing mental health services, gaining employment skills, or receiving support during difficult times, our programs open doors and provide a path forward.

On Giving Tuesday, follow us on Facebook as our staff highlight the ways CAP helps people overcome barriers, build stability, and pursue their goals.

Your generosity can make twice the impact! Thanks to a generous $10,000 Challenge Match from the J. J. Keller Foundation, new and increased donations will be matched dollar for dollar.

Make your gift at givebutter.com/Opportunity-to-Thrive.

CAP Working to Strengthen Mental Health Support in Rural Communities

CAP's Mental Health Navigation (MHN) program will launch the *Recognize. Respond. Connect.* project in early 2027 to improve mental health awareness and access to behavioral health services in rural communities. Over the course of three years, this initiative will serve residents in rural Marquette, Outagamie, Portage, Waupaca, and Waushara County communities, helping individuals and families receive support before mental health concerns become crises.

Through the project, CAP plans to provide at least 80 mental health awareness trainings reaching 1,800 community members. Trainings will include Mental Health First Aid, suicide prevention education, and other opportunities for educators, healthcare professionals, first responders, employers, and community members. The initiative will also strengthen local partnerships and help connect at least 300 rural residents with behavioral health services.

"Rural communities face unique challenges in accessing mental health care, including shortages of professionals, transportation barriers, long wait times, and stigma," notes Frank Bellamia, MHN Program Manager. "Our project aims to address these challenges by equipping community members with the knowledge and tools to recognize mental health concerns and connect individuals with appropriate services."

Building on nearly 20 years of experience through the Mental Health Navigation Program, *Recognize. Respond. Connect.* will help create stronger, more supportive communities where individuals and families can access the mental health care they need.

If you would be interested in hosting a group training session, please contact Frank at fbellamia@capmail.org.

CAP Recognized for 60 Years of Impact



The Clintonville Chamber of Commerce honored CAP Services at their Annual Meeting and Awards Banquet on November 5. Scott Norder, CAP's Director of Community Engagement, proudly accepted the award recognizing 60 years of service to the community.

As we celebrate this milestone, we remain committed to our purpose: creating opportunities for individuals and families to thrive.

Help us make an impact for the next 60 years! Make a gift today at givebutter.com/60-years-of-impact.

Increase CAP's Impact with Thrivent Action Teams!

Are you a Thrivent member? You can help support CAP's upcoming fundraising events through the **Thrivent Action Teams** program!

Eligible Thrivent members can apply for a **$250 Action Team grant** to strengthen CAP's **Take A Ride fundraiser** and **Community 2000 Golf Outing**. These funds help us maximize the impact of our events and advance our work with individuals and families throughout our communities.

We also welcome your ideas! Thrivent Action Teams are a great way to bring family and friends together to host educational events, service activities, or other fundraisers.

Interested in helping? Contact Scott Norder at snorder@capmail.org to learn more about how you can support CAP through a Thrivent Action Team. It's a simple way to turn your Thrivent membership into meaningful community impact.

Partner Spotlight: The Oaks on Maria

As answered by name, title, The Oaks on Maria



What is the mission and vision of The Oaks on Maria?

The mission of The Oaks on Maria is to provide quality, affordable housing in a welcoming and supportive community where residents can feel comfortable, safe, and proud to call home. Our vision is to create more than just apartments; we strive to build a community where our residents have the opportunity to establish stability, build connections, and thrive.

What are some of the services and amenities offered by Oaks on Maria?

The Oaks on Maria offers affordable, income-restricted housing with a variety of one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartment homes. Beyond housing, we strive to connect residents with valuable community resources and supportive services to help meet their individual needs.

What makes The Oaks on Maria unique?

The Oaks on Maria is more than just a place to live; it is a community built around creating opportunities and helping people thrive. We believe everyone deserves a place they are proud to call home.

How does The Oaks on Maria partner with CAP Services?

The Oaks on Maria and CAP Services share a strong commitment to supporting individuals and families in our community. Our partnership includes a collaborative referral process, where we connect individuals and families with one another based on their needs and the resources available. CAP will also have a dedicated space within The Oaks on Maria, allowing their team to work directly with residents and provide access to additional resources, guidance, and support.



Having these services right within our building will help remove barriers, strengthen connections, and make it easier for residents to access the assistance they need. We believe that successful housing is about more than having a place to live; it's about having the support and resources to build a stable future.

What impact does The Oaks on Maria hope to make in the Portage County community?

The Oaks on Maria hopes to make a lasting, positive impact by increasing access to quality, affordable housing and helping strengthen the community as a whole. By providing housing opportunities for individuals and families with a range of income levels, we hope to create greater housing stability, encourage community connections, and contribute to a stronger, more inclusive Portage County.