

## **Northeast Regional Center for Children & Youth with Special Health Care Needs at Children's Wisconsin helps connect families to resources they need**

The Northeast Regional Center for Children & Youth with Special Health Care Needs (The Regional Center), based at Children's Wisconsin Hospital-Fox Valley, provides information, resources, guidance and referrals to community service providers for families with children who have special health care needs, including those with long-term physical, developmental, behavioral or emotional conditions.

While families may be referred to The Regional Center for one specific need, other needs are often uncovered for siblings or the family as a whole, including challenges with transportation, accessing healthy, affordable food and paying their rent or mortgage. Families experiencing housing insecurity in the Fox Valley area face shortages in available homes and years-long waitlists for Section 8 housing, which have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. During 2020, The Regional Center enhanced their partnerships with both community organizations and local school district housing coordinators to support families in their search for safe and stable homes.

A mom with three children, including one who was being discharged from Children's Wisconsin Hospital-Fox Valley, had postpartum depression and, during the COVID-19 pandemic, had been evicted and needed a safe place to stay with her and her children. The Regional Center connected her to a community partner that provided her the rapid COVID-19 test she needed so she and her family were able to access shelter as they planned their next steps. Ensuring families in need are connected to community resources is critical to helping promote child and family health and well-being.

-Children's Wisconsin