



New Milford Social Services



"To Listen, To Advocate, To Empower"

NOV/DEC 2016

Greetings from Peg Molina:

Issue 11-12.2016



The mission of New Milford

Social Services is to help residents meet basic needs of food, housing, clothing maintenance of health and wellbeing, and to help provide various seasonal goods and programs for residents experiencing financial hardship.

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There's a book about depression written by neuroscientist Alex Korb called *The Upward Spiral*. In it he explains the brain's chemistry and suggests several small actions to re-wire the brain, creating an upward spiral toward a happier life. Two of these rituals seem particularly apt as we glide into the "holiday season".

The first is a true favorite of mine, and now I can say we have science to back us up! It's being grateful, and showing gratitude. Do you know what the antidepressant Wellbutrin does? It boosts the neurotransmitter dopamine. *So does gratitude*. Know what Prozac does? It boosts the neurotransmitter serotonin. *So does gratitude*. So what do you do? Make one call or send one email each morning to tell someone you appreciate them. Write down three things each day that you're grateful for—no need for it to be something big; the little things count just as much! As it becomes routine, you are actively feeding your brain with the "food" that shifts your mind and spirit into a better place.

Secondly, human touch makes us happier! Of course, it's not good to touch indiscriminately, but a pat on the back to a co-worker, holding hands and offering hugs to friends and family can actually reduce pain and increase our well-being. So this holiday season, less texting and more hugging! Maybe you'll find more to be grateful for in the process. Happy holidays!

Peg

Please note: this is a TWO month newsletter!



HOLIDAY NEWS AND REMINDERS



Registration deadline for all programs is THURSDAY NOV. 10TH! Pre-registration required!

Residents who have met with a social worker providing income documentation during calendar year 2016 may complete the registration form (in our office or on Town website) and mail, fax or hand-deliver it to us. If you participated in the Back to School program, your income is verified for holiday programs.

All others need to provide income verification (last month's income from all sources plus most recent bank statement) before registering. New people, please show us proof of residence in New Milford: a lease/mortgage or utility bill.

Pick up for Thanksgiving goods is Monday, November 21st from 12PM to 5PM at Kimberly Clark Conference Center. For **Thanksgiving baskets**, household size must reflect the number of people living with you.

Sibling Shopping: please come at the time you have been scheduled on December 9th or 10th. We will give out reminder cards with date and time during Thanksgiving distribution. Not sure? Call the office after Dec. 1st. (continued on pg.2)

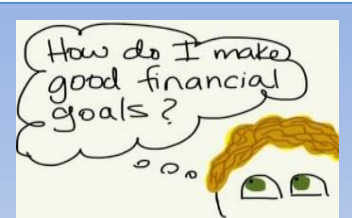


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New Milford Social Services



Financial Tip of the Month:

How to talk with your kids when money is tight? A challenging question and the answers depend on the age of your child. As parents we want to be honest with our kids. We need them to understand that they can't always get everything they want, and that's not just about the money. It's also about setting limits and teaching to delay instant gratification, earning rewards, feeling proud to save and spend wisely, and taking care of the family's important expenses first, like paying for home costs, food, maybe even childcare.

All kids want to feel secure. Knowing that mom and dad are okay is important, but even with the littlest of kids, you can say something (without scaring or worrying them) to start to plant ...*Continued Page 3.*



PROGRAM UPDATES:



ENERGY ASSISTANCE: Social Services is taking applications for the upcoming winter season now, prioritizing people with deliverable fuels or those with electric heat on a NewStart budget plan. If you heat with oil, propane or kerosene please call the office to make an appointment.

The first day of fuel delivery is November 9th and we regret that we do not have a program that can assist you with fuel deliveries prior to that time.

All **electric heated households** who completed the Matching Payment program last year will be automatically re-enrolled onto Eversource's MPP. **Remember that you still need to re-apply for Energy Assistance through our office every year!** You will receive a letter from Eversource stating what your monthly budget payment is in November. All payments need to be in by the end of each month, and *all* six payments must be received by April 30th in order to get a "match". If Eversource raises your budget, pay the new amount if you can. If you cannot, pay the old amount and be sure to discuss this with us at the time of your application. Income guidelines are listed below:

If your household income is below the following amounts, you may qualify for energy assistance:

<u>Family size:</u>					
1	2	3	4	5	6
33,880.	44,305.	54,730.	65,155	75,580.	86,004.

Visit our department on the www.newmilford.org website, or come to the office for the list of documents needed to apply. All applicants are asked to bring a current electric bill.

Please have ALL paperwork at the time of your appointment. This includes pay stubs even if your employer has gone "paperless". They can help you to get these. Likewise with Direct Express cards and bank statements: you can print full statements online as they must have both your name and your bank's name. You cannot be approved without all needed documents!

Clean, Tune and Test: Upon request, funds will be provided to eligible households to cover the cost of a clean, tune and test of their household's deliverable fuel heating system. Renters must receive written landlord permission and funds will not be taken from the fuel benefit. This is a great way to increase the efficiency of your fuel use!

NEW EVERSOURCE POLICY: Eversource has started to provide monthly reports of bill payments to Experian, a credit bureau. This means that **how you handle this bill will impact your credit score, good or bad.** People on budget plans, paid on time will be reported as "paid as agreed". If the bill becomes 93 days in arrears, the account will be reported as delinquent and could damage your credit score.

Eversource hopes this will encourage timely payment of utility bills. We know that some financially stressed households have to choose which bills they can afford to pay. If you find yourself in this situation please contact our office so that we can help you get onto a payment plan with Eversource. We also want to document all such cases as they will be evaluating this new practice after one year.



GRANDPARENTS AND OTHER RELATIVES RAISING

CHILDREN: The next meeting of New Milford's "When You're a Parent . . . Again" info and support group will be on **Monday, November 14th & December 12th** @ 5:30p.m. to 7p.m. at The Maxx. Dinner and child care are included. Come for informal conversation and resources for those in this unique situation. RSVP to Amy Bondeson at Social Services, 860-355-6079 x4 or Leo Ghio at the Senior Center (860)-355-6075.



SNAP OUTREACH THIS MONTH:

CT Institute for Families SNAP (formerly Food Stamps) Outreach Worker, Sara Arroyo, will be here on Wednesdays, November 9th and December 14th from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. to help people apply for SNAP online. To make an appointment with Sara (who is bi-lingual) and learn what to bring, please call our office. There are currently openings for November; call us! This is a quick and easy way to apply for SNAP.



(HOLIDAY NEWS

cont'd) Parents, please be realistic when making your request of the Santa Fund. If your child has his/her heart set on an item from Santa, you might be wise to start saving a bit each week now or let a grandparent in on the request. Santa Fund is an all-volunteer effort and we try to ensure fairness by having a volunteer coordinator match all donors anonymously with kids. (No volunteers or donors are given family's names) We cannot guarantee what will be received, but all children will have a gift, book and something to wear plus some extras! **Distribution is Tuesday, Dec. 20th, 10 AM – 5PM at Social Services.**

The "Gift Room will be open for all pre-registered participants on Wed., Dec. 21st from 12-2PM.

If you are an adult who is permanently disabled, gift cards will be given out on Thurs., Dec. 22nd.



Wishing everyone a safe and peaceful holiday season!

ACCESS HEALTH CT: Is holding open enrollment, November 1 through January 31. If you need to re-enroll in a plan, you should apply before December 15 to maintain coverage! You can apply for health insurance any time during the year if your circumstances change (i.e. loss of job, loss of insurance) or if your income is within HUSKY levels. To apply, visit www.AccessHealthCT.com, or call 1-855-805-4325 to apply or learn more. It can be very hard to get through on the phone line. You can apply on-line at the website.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES:



Family and Children



VILLAGE CENTER FOR THE ARTS: has scholarships available for kids of all ages in need of help with school assigned art projects! Youth can go to VCA, get some guidance and complete their project, using materials supplied by VCA. Parents are involved for young children, or may leave their older child there and pick them up once the masterpiece is complete. (sounds like a dream come true!) In addition, Family Art is a wonderful multi-visit opportunity for the family to have some electronics-free quality time together creating art work. Call our office for a referral, then contact Jayson at jayson@villagecenterarts.com or call 860-354-4318.



CT CHILDREN'S LAW LINE: The [CT Children's Law Line](#) helps callers understand the legal processes involving children, including custody, visitation, guardianship, abuse, and neglect. The Law Line can also refer callers to other agencies for help. You can call this free service as many times as you need. Click [here](#) for more information. **Where:** 1-888-LAW-DOOR (529-3667)



NEW MILFORD YOUTH AGENCY NEWS:

SNIS Family Lunch Group: Every Friday: Children attending Sarah Nobel Intermediate School experiencing family disruption of any form meet during lunch to express themselves and learn coping skills in a safe space. Free. Sign up with school counselor.



FINANCIAL HELP FOR COLLEGE BOUND STUDENTS:

Did you know that students who qualify for free or reduced lunch can have SAT/ACT fees as well as some college application fees waived? Contact your guidance counselor for the details! www.collegereadiness.collegeboard.org

Counseling Resources



GREENWOODS COUNSELING

REFERRALS: If you would like to enter into counseling for a problem, life transition or other issue in your life, Greenwood is a great place to start. They offer a free clinical assessment (which can take place in New Milford) and then you will be provided with three local therapists qualified to help you. If you lack insurance, Greenwood can help cover the fees. If you have insurance, Greenwood will find a therapist who accepts yours. Start by calling them at 860-567-4437; you'll be given a timely appt!

THE WOMEN'S CENTER OF GREATER DANBURY:

offers free, confidential counseling and a number of support groups including "Women Thriving" to help women focus on sustaining positive changes after leaving unhealthy relationships. Weekly groups are offered in their Danbury office. For more info call 203-731-5200.

NEW MILFORD HOSPITAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH:

Located at 23 Poplar St., NMHBH provides mental health services for adults, including psychiatric assessment, med. management, individual and group therapy. Groups offered focus on women's support, anxiety and depression, pain management and DBT (dialectical behavioral therapy). Those interested need to have an assessment prior to joining a group. Call 860-210-5350 for more information or for an appointment.

FAMILY & CHILDREN'S AID:

NM office offers many services for parents & children: groups, counseling, home visits & more; free or insurance-based. For info or an appointment call 860-354-8556.

INTERFACE is a private practice located in the annex of the First Congregational Church. In addition there are other private practitioners who accept HUSKY and Medicare. Call one of our social workers to discuss these options.



Financial Tip of the Month...continued...

the seed that money has value and is needed to secure our homes and take care of our families. By doing this you are also teaching them to wait for something that they want and that they can earn those rewards and become successful in accomplishing their goals. The next time you are in the supermarket with your little one and they say "can I have that?", you can say "I'm sorry but I only brought enough money to buy the important things we need for our home, maybe you can earn that treat for next time." Or when they see a friend with a brand new expensive toy- you can suggest they add it to a birthday or holiday list or earn a bit of allowance to help pay for it. As kids get older, they may be ready to hear that the family's budget is tight. Set aside time with your older kids to have a discussion. Share with them that even you have desires for some things but it's just not the right time to spend, and by making these kinds of choices you have taught yourself to honestly ask "how important is this to me, how much do I need it vs. is it an impulsive purchase or want?" Encourage them to do the same, and if they are very motivated, together, you can figure out how they can get it. It could be by doing extra work around the house or for a neighbor; or if old enough, getting a part time job. Creating a savings plan for those things that are important helps them to set priorities and realize the value of money. Working towards a goal can make their reward that much sweeter! For more on talking to kids about money, try these websites: www.consumerfinance.gov, www.kidshealth.org, or www.teenshealth.org. ...*If you missed any of our previous tips, link in to social services/financial fitness found on our town's website at www.newmilford.org.*

AFFORDABLE HOUSING UPDATE!:



Barton Commons is a 38 unit apartment complex nearing completion next to CVS on East Street. Hallkeen Property Management will be leasing up this project featuring studio, one and two bedroom units at varying income levels. For more info and to receive an application contact Adam Goldberg at 203-546-7342. Adam advises that interested candidates return the application and \$100 fee (bank check or money order) very promptly, as there is a lot of interest in this property.

FOOD BANK HOURS:



Every THURSDAY from 9am-4pm.

[This is a residency-income eligible registered program]

Please bring in your own reusable bags!!

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

Food Bank will be closed on Thanksgiving Day: 11/24/16

DECEMBER 2016

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31



NEW MILFORD FOOD BANK RECIPES

OF THE MONTH:

Wishing you a happy and healthy holiday season!

Cream of Turkey and Wild Rice Soup

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil | 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper |
| 2 cups sliced mushrooms, (about 4 ounces) | 4 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth |
| 3/4 cup chopped celery | 1 cup quick-cooking or instant wild rice, (see Ingredient Note) |
| 3/4 cup chopped carrots | 3 cups shredded cooked chicken, or turkey (12 ounces; see Tip) |
| 1/4 cup chopped shallots | 1/2 cup reduced-fat sour cream |
| 1/4 cup all-purpose flour | 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley |
| 1/4 teaspoon salt | |

Directions: 1.Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add mushrooms, celery, carrots and shallots and cook, stirring, until softened, about 5 minutes. Add flour, salt and pepper and cook, stirring, for 2 minutes more.

2. Add broth and bring to a boil, scraping up any browned bits. Add rice and reduce heat to a simmer. Cover and cook until the rice is tender, 5 to 7 minutes. Stir in turkey (or chicken), sour cream and parsley and cook until heated through, about 2 minutes more.

***Ingredient note:** Quick-cooking or instant wild rice has been parboiled to reduce the cooking time. Conventional wild rice takes 40 to 50 minutes to cook. Be sure to check the cooking directions when selecting your rice—some brands labeled “quick” take about 30 minutes to cook. If you can't find the quick-cooking variety, just add cooked conventional wild rice along with the turkey at the end of Step 2.

***Tip:** To poach chicken breasts, place boneless, skinless chicken breasts in a medium skillet or saucepan. Add lightly salted water to cover and bring to a boil. Cover, reduce heat to low and simmer gently until chicken is cooked through and no longer pink in the middle, 10 to 12 minutes. [ALL RIGHTS RESERVED © 2016 Printed FromEatingWell.com] **Serve with a salad or add your favorite greens to the soup like kale or spinach.**

Our office will be CLOSED in observance of the following holidays:

- Friday, November 11, 2016 for Veteran’s Day
- Thursday & Friday, November, 24 & 25, 2016 for Thanksgiving
- Monday, December 26, 2016 for Christmas
- Monday, January 2, 2016 for New Year’s Day

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