



New Milford Social Services



"To Listen, To Advocate, To Empower"

October 2016

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New Milford Social Services

Greetings from Peg Molina:

Musings about roadblocks

We all have them: things in life that stand in our way. Last night we had a friend over, offering her dinner in exchange for help in understanding how to use our very smart phones. I miss having "operating instructions" ~ remember them? The booklet you'd get with something new that tells you how it works? Well, smart phones don't seem to need them. I guess you're just supposed to know how to figure everything about them out, as if by magic. Hmm. Thankfully our friend calmly guided us through a few procedures and today I feel a bit less inclined to heave my phone out the window (along with the computer, camera, TV remote and a few other choice items!) One thing I know: technology will advance and I better get on board or be left in the dust. For me, technology can be a roadblock. But how much of it is really a mental block? I have an attitude about it that sets me up for trouble before I get out of the starting gate. What are your roadblocks? They could have to do with health, relationships, how you feel about yourself and your capabilities . . . any number of things. Now think about how much a mental block might be contributing to how you feel. Are you open to change? or have you decided you can't, they won't, you'll never understand xyz or be able to xyz . . . Don't give up on yourself! If you can peel away the mental block, the road may open up before you. Philosopher William James said, "the greatest discovery of my generation is that **a human being can alter his life by altering his attitude.**" It's so true, and pretty darn cool! If we allow ourselves to do a mental 180, we can change our world. Let's try!



BRING ON THE HOLIDAYS!



This newsletter includes a sign-up for 2016 holiday programs. Please read the following guidelines carefully before completing your holiday registration form:

1. **Registration deadline for all programs is THURSDAY NOV. 10TH!**
2. Residents who have met with a social worker providing income documentation during calendar year 2016 may complete the form 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.
3. NMSS programs are for New Milford residents and children in New Milford schools only. Seniors (age 60 and up) may register for holiday programs through the New Milford Senior Center, not through Social Services.
4. For **Thanksgiving baskets**, household size must reflect the number of people **living with you**. "Pick up" means our traditional Thanksgiving turkey and bag full of food. If you would prefer the option of going to a hall for a prepared holiday meal or having a *(continued on page 2)*

Issue 10.2016



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.



Financial Tip of the Month:

A Quick Spending

Check-Up: You will need a highlighter and your monthly bank and/or credit card statements. (as many as apply for you) "Needs" are the things we have to have in order to live: our housing, food, clothing, heat, transportation, health care, child care. "Wants" are everything else! Look over all of your expenditures and highlight everything that is a "want" vs. a "need". You need to be honest with yourself here. If you feel that you **need** coffee in the morning, that's OK, but if you stop at Dunkin Donuts or Starbucks for that coffee, that's a "want".

...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, October 17th** @ 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 Wednesday, October 12th 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 October; call us! This is the quickest way to apply for SNAP.



Thanksgiving Day delivery of a prepared meal, please check “delivery”.

Thanksgiving PICK-UP will be Mon. 11/21 at KC Conference Center, 10AM – 5PM.

5. **The Santa Fund is for babies through high school age kids.** Parents may fill out gift requests and clothing sizes for their custodial children, keeping in mind that donors are asked to purchase something in the \$25 - \$50 range. (no game systems, smart phones, expensive games etc.) Think creatively of non-electronic gifts your child might like! Please, no gift card requests for children under age 12. Use additional sheets as needed.

The first 230 households registered by Nov. 10th will participate in the Santa Fund.

(Distribution day is 12/20, 9AM – 5PM.) Anyone who registers after this number is reached will be invited to visit our “Gift Room” to choose a gift for their child. Grandparents and other adults with special children in their lives will also be able to shop later on that same day. Gift room registration will close on Friday, Dec. 9th. Gift Room will take place on Dec. 21st.

6. **Sibling Shopping** is a fun event in which kids pick out gifts for their brothers or sisters. All gifts are wrapped on the spot and Santa is on hand for family photos. Register for your choice of time and we’ll do our best to accommodate.

7. **If you are an adult who is permanently disabled, without children in your household,** you may register to receive a gift card for yourself. These will be given out on Thurs., Dec. 22nd.

8. **The registration form must be filled out in its entirety for all programs before submitting to our office.**

Pre-registration is required for all programs!



COMMUNITY RESOURCES:



Family and Children



VILLAGE CENTER FOR THE ARTS: has scholarships for kids to join the after school program, Club Mud, for kids in need of help with school assigned art projects, and for Family Art, 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



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:

Homework club has started up again with the new school year. NMHS mentors will work with your child on math, reading, studying, organizing, and more! Both work and play on Saturday mornings. The program is open to area 3rd-7th graders. FREE. For more information, please call the Youth Agency at 860-210-2030 or email Jason at Jason@youthagency.org.

#BANISHBULLYING—this workshop is for students in grades 5 – 12, parents are welcome to stay. Oct. 11th, 4 – 5:00 PM at the Maxx. All about bullying and what can be done to prevent it! Info: lindsey@youthagency.org or call.

Hip Hop Class! for kids in grades 3 – 8, Monday Oct. 24th from 4 – 5:30 PM at the Maxx. Learn all the moves, have a blast! \$15 fee.



AT THE LIBRARY: High Schoolers and adults, check out the “Two Towns Tabletop Club”, a board game night held on Wednesdays from 6 – 8PM. 1st & 2nd Wednesdays are in New Milford, 3rd and 4th Wednesdays are in Bridgewater. Choose from Masquerade, Tiny Epic Kingdoms, Ticket To Ride, Descent, The Game Of Throne Board Game and more! A light dinner will be provided!



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

If you went to Walmart to save on some boxed goods, but also bought some craft supplies, a toy for your child, another purse . . . you get my drift; mark a figure that you think falls into the “want” category and highlight that. Same holds true for grocery store trips where many extras fall into the cart, eating out or fast food, Amazon purchases, and so on. When you're all done, take a look. Are you surprised by the level of “want” purchases? We can often find what we call “missing money” this way; money that just seems to disappear in the course of living! We do not suggest you give up all of your pleasures; that is not the intent of this exercise. But, if the bills aren't getting paid, or you never seem to have enough when the car needs a brake job, this exercise may provide some insight into what needs to change to help you manage more effectively. Good luck! *...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.*

Counseling Resources



GREENWOODS COUNSELING

REFERRALS: If you would like to enter into counseling for a problem, life transition or other issue in your life, Greenwoods 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, Greenwoods can help cover the fees. If you have insurance, Greenwoods 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.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING UPDATE!:



Two affordable housing projects are in the works in New Milford!

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 very promptly, as there is a lot of interest in this property.

Brookside Commons will begin construction soon on Thomas Lane, just off Elm St. Extension near Center Cemetery. This 12 unit combined supportive and affordable housing complex will have one and two bedroom units, available in about 18 months. More info will follow on this as construction gets underway. It's a wonderful thing to see these much needed housing opportunities coming to New Milford!



FOOD BANK HOURS:



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

Every THURSDAY from 9am-4pm.

[This is a residency-income eligible registered program]

Please bring in your own reusable bags!!



NEW MILFORD FOOD BANK RECIPES OF THE MONTH:

There are just some belly warming recipes worth enjoying every year!

Fall Oatmeal Pumpkin Pancakes

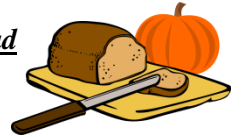
(Servings: 3)

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| ¾ cup rolled oats | ½ teaspoon baking powder |
| 1 cup low-fat buttermilk | ½ teaspoon baking soda |
| 1 large egg | ½ teaspoon pumpkin pie spice |
| 1/3 cup canned pumpkin | ½ cup diced apple |
| ½ cup whole wheat flour | cooking spray |

Directions: Stir together oatmeal, buttermilk, egg, and pumpkin in a medium bowl until oatmeal is well coated. In another bowl, combine flour, baking powder, baking soda and pumpkin pie spice. Mix dry ingredients into wet, stirring until combined. Add apples and stir to distribute. Lightly coat a skillet with cooking spray and heat over medium heat. When skillet is hot use ¼ cup of batter for each pancake. Cook until pancake is golden brown and holds together well, about 3 minutes. Flip and cook until cooked through, about 2 minutes more. *(These pancakes freeze and reheat well. To reheat, simply toast pancake in the toaster. Try substituting applesauce, cinnamon and blueberries for the pumpkin, pie spice and diced apple.)*



Healthy Makeover: Pumpkin Bread



- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 cup packed light brown sugar | |
| ¾ cups whole wheat flour | |
| 2 large egg whites | 1 ½ tsp baking powder |
| 1 cup pure pumpkin | 1 tsp ground cinnamon |
| ¼ cup canola oil | ½ tsp ground nutmeg |
| 1/3 cup low-fat plain yogurt | ½ tsp baking soda |
| 1 tsp vanilla extract | ½ tsp salt |
| 1 cup all-purpose flour | |

Preheat oven to 350F. Spray 8 ½ x 4 ½ metal loaf pan with nonstick cooking spray with flour. In a large bowl, with a wire whisk, combine brown sugar & egg whites. Add pumpkin, oil, yogurt, & vanilla extract; stir to combine. In a medium bowl, combine all-purpose flour, whole wheat flour, baking powder, cinnamon, nutmeg, baking soda, & salt. Add flour mixture to pumpkin mixture; stir until just combined. Do not over mix. Pour batter into prepared pan. Bake 45-50 min. or until toothpick inserted in center of loaf comes out clean. Cool in pan 10 min. Invert pumpkin bread onto wire rack; cool completely. *(From www.delish.com/recipefinder)*

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