

New Milford Social Services

"To Listen, To Advocate, To Empower"



October 2017

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 New Milford Social Services

Greetings from Peg Molina: Taking Action!

I've been thinking a lot lately about how challenging it can be to deal when tasks, projects or even life in general feels overwhelming. I think that everyone can relate to this experience, although its level varies by degrees in different people's lives. Without casting **any** judgement about this, though, I think that some people have a way through and deal with overwhelming tasks and situations better than others.

So what works for them?

First of all, remember the old joke, "How do you eat an elephant? . . . One bite at a time!" It's so true! If you have a completely messy house, for instance, thinking about your complete mess is overwhelming and pretty soon it's a lot easier to sit down and watch a show or play around on social media than tackle any of it. BUT—sooner or later you need to do something! So, if it's tackling the smallest room first or even cleaning off one counter (not just moving things from here to there, but really cleaning it!) you dig in and start. *Breaking a big task into manageable smaller ones really helps.*

Second, just like Santa, make a list. I love lists because the absolute best thing is crossing things off when they are done! *Minor accomplishments along the way keep us motivated toward the bigger ones.*

Next: give yourself a timeframe. Re-organizing and sorting all the clothes in the house for pitching or donation is not a one day job (not in my world anyway!) But giving a deadline of the end of October, or by a key upcoming event is feasible. *Setting a realistic timeframe for accomplishment is a motivator. (Greetings continued on page 2)*

Peg



BRING ON THE HOLIDAYS!



This newsletter includes a sign-up for 2017 holiday programs. Please read the following guidelines carefully before completing your holiday registration form:

1. **Registration deadline for all programs is THURSDAY NOV. 3TH!**
2. Residents who have met with a social worker providing income documentation during calendar year 2017 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)*

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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:

Cleaning up financial challenges in our lives can feel very overwhelming too. While many of the same concepts apply as those above, there are a few special considerations worth noting when facing financial "repair" jobs.

1. Communication with creditors is of utmost importance. Call and explain your hardship. It won't get you off the hook, but the vendor has likely worked with others in difficult straits and could offer payment options. At the very least, you have provided written (best) or verbal documentation that goes into your file and shows your sense of responsibility about the situation. *...Continued*

Page 3.



PROGRAM UPDATES:



ENERGY ASSISTANCE: We have started taking applications for the winter season 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 15th and 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 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:

Family size:

1	2	3	4	5	6
\$34,366	\$44,940	\$55,514	\$66,089	\$76,663	\$87,237

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!

Greetings from Peg Molina: Taking Action!

(Greetings continued) Finally, try to stay focused: That's really hard these days, isn't it?! So many wonderful distractions! So here's an idea for improving focus: decide on your *most important task* and give yourself 15 minutes, as early in the day as you can, to focus on this task. Turn off your phone, your computer, close the door—do what it takes to create an atmosphere where you can focus, and then do your task! Very slowly, after several sessions like this, add another 15 minute session after a 10 minute break. *Short, focused activity periods will help you accomplish your goal.*

A few other tips: work on projects with a fun friend or family member ("misery loves company" in a positive way!); singing or listening to music (as long as it's not distracting) is fine way to enhance the task; give yourself a little reward at certain intervals – hold out until you've really made your sub-goal and you'll deserve it!! (we're all kids at heart!) oh, and GOOD LUCK!!

Peg



GRANDPARENTS & OTHER RELATIVES RAISING CHILDREN:

The next meeting of New Milford's "When You're a Parent . . . Again" info and support group will be on **Thursday, October 12th** @ 5:30p.m. to 7:00p.m. at the Richmond Center. Dinner and child care are included. Come for informal conversation and resources for those in this unique situation. RSVP to Sarah Geary at Social Services, 860-355-6079 x4.



SNAP OUTREACH THIS MONTH:

CT Institute for Families SNAP (formerly Food Stamps) Outreach Worker, Sara Arroyo, will be here on Wednesday, October 11th 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. Nov. 20th 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. 3rd will participate in the Santa Fund. **(Distribution day is 12/19, 10AM – 5PM.)** Later registrants will be invited to visit our "Gift Room" to choose a gift for their child. Parents (custodial or non-custodial) 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. 8th. Gift Room will take place on Dec. 20th.

6. **Sibling Shopping** is a fun event in which kids age 2 and up 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. 21st.

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!

Please note: we do not know exactly when Social Services is moving to **John Pettibone Community Center** or what the impact will be on our holiday programs. We WILL definitely have these programs and will advise you of any changes as soon as we can.





COMMUNITY RESOURCES:




Family and Children



 **VILLAGE CENTER FOR THE ARTS:** has scholarships for several programs: 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. **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.

Family Dinner Unplugged: calling all families to come to this free event at the Maxx on Oct. 19, 5:30 – 7pm. Enjoy dinner, some fun and games! Register at myyouthagency.com or call 860-210-2030.



More "Local" Resources!!!

AMERICAN JOB CENTER: New Milford Adult Ed will be hosting staff from this agency on the last Wednesday of each month from 4 – 6:30 pm. **Any NM resident is welcome** to meet with a job counselor for guidance on finding jobs, how to revise your resume and more. Contact Adult Ed at 860-350-6647 x1170.

THE COMMUNITY CULINARY SCHOOL: is hosting an **Open House** on Wed. 10/18 from 9-11 a.m. Learn more about this 12 week job training and placement program, observe students currently in the program and enjoy a few light refreshments prepared by students. Applications for the next session will be available. Email RSVP required: culinaryschool@sbcglobal.net

ACCESS HEALTH CT: *This program has not ended!!* Enrollment into qualified health plans for 2018 takes place from 11/ 1 – 12/22. Anthem and ConnectiCare will be offering plans. You can apply online at www.AccessHealthCT.com, or call 1-855-805-4325. We also expect that an enrollment center will **open in Danbury**, location TBA. Try www.Learn.AccessHealthCT.com/locations for info in coming weeks.



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

2. It's very important to take "the long view" here. OK, maybe your good credit has plummeted due to poor decisions or a divorce or hard times. You can start to change that today, even if it takes 5 or 10 years to accomplish. It's worth it, and some bigger goals like saving for a house or looking better to a future employer may take time as well. Every bill you pay on time NOW will positively impact your credit or get you out of the hole a bit more. Don't give up on yourself or feel it will never do any good. As time goes on, you'll be surprised how quickly the years roll by . . . your present situation need not be a permanent situation!

3. Find and use resources: come to us for help and information; look into tons of materials on every financial subject through the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (www.consumerfinance.gov); get a financial coach through the United Way of Western CT (www.uwwesternct.org). Help is here for the asking!

...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 a list of 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 appointment!

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. Experienced staff with many sub-specialties. Call 860-354-5116.

In addition there are other private practitioners who accept HUSKY and Medicare, like our former SW **Amy Bondeson** (860-799-1631—HUSKY).

You can always call one of our social workers to discuss these options.



FOOD BANK HOURS:



Every **THURSDAY** from **9am-4pm.**

[This is a residency-income eligible registered program]

Please bring in your own reusable bags!!

SPECIAL NOTE: FOOD BANK CLOSSES IN SEVERE WEATHER



NEW MILFORD FOOD BANK RECIPES OF THE MONTH:

Keep it simple... keep it healthy....yet delicious! Happy Fall !

OCTOBER 2017

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				

Lite Pumpkin Chocolate Chip Muffins [yields 24 muffins]

Ingredients:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 4 eggs | 2 tsp. baking soda |
| 1 ½ cup unsweetened applesauce | 2 tsp. baking powder |
| 1 can pumpkin (16oz) | 2 tsp. cinnamon |
| 1 ½ cup sugar | 1 tsp. salt |
| 3 cups flour | 12 oz. semisweet mini chocolate chips |

Directions: Mix first 5 ingredients together. In a separate bowl, mix dry ingredients then add to first 5 ingredient mixture. Blend the two mixtures together then fold in chocolate chips. Grease a muffin tin or line with paper muffin cups. Generously fill each cup. Bake at 400 degrees F. for 16-20 minutes. [www.geniuskitchen.com {by M. CaymanDesigns}]



Skillet Noodles with Beef and Spinach [yields 4 servings]

Ingredients:

- | | |
|--|---|
| ½ lb. lean ground beef | ¼ tsp. basil |
| ½ cup onion-chopped | 6 oz. spaghetti |
| 1 can (14.5 oz.) tomato sauce - low sodium | (about ½ a box) |
| 1 ½ cup water | 1 pkg. spinach (10 oz.) -frozen, chopped |
| ¼ tsp garlic powder | ½ cup cheese-part skim Mozzarella, shredded |
| ¼ tsp. oregano | |

Directions: Brown ground beef in a large skillet. Drain and rinse to remove fat. Add onion, tomato sauce, water, and spices. Cover and bring to a boil. Add noodles. Cover and simmer for 5 minutes. Defrost spinach in the microwave, then drain and squeeze any extra liquid out, repeat this if needed. Stir spinach into skillet mixture. Cover and simmer for 5 minutes. Stir mixture and sprinkle with shredded mozzarella. Cover and simmer for 10 minutes. Add water if mixture gets too dry. [snap4ct.org]



MOBILE FOOD PANTRY: WEDNESDAY, Oct 4th; 5:30pm-6:30pm at the parking lot of Faith Church

Our office will be CLOSED in observance of the following holiday:
 Monday, October 9th, Columbus Day



PRESORT STANDARD
 U.S. POSTAGE PAID
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 PERMIT NO. 10



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