



# New Milford Social Services



*"To Listen, To Advocate, To Empower"*

**Jan 2019**

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New Milford Social Services

**Greetings from Social Services:**

When you read this, the holidays will be over and you may be feeling a bit tired. All that hustling and bustling of the season has past but hopefully you were able to spend some comforting time with family and friends. Now it's the start of a new year and a time when many of us take stock in what we've done or left undone in the past year, and a time to think about what we can do different or better this year. I find it kind of cruel that our minds are set to think about these matters on the tails of celebration that drain our energies. Fatigue can be a great obstacle in truly trying to plan ahead! It's easy for me to say I want to do something better for myself and my family this year but to take the time to create those steps of change takes perseverance and resilience, and that takes energy! Perseverance is trying to do something despite its level of difficulty. It's trying to have the staying power to accomplish a goal that is important to you. Resilience is maintaining that determination to get it done; but it's more than that. A person with resilience can fail but works toward recovery. A person with resilience can get discouraged and even depressed but works towards strengthening positive emotional responses to keep moving forward. Perseverance and resilience are skills that can become habit with practice and support. Some can build these habits on their own but many of us invite others in and surround ourselves with a team of supporters (family, friends, teachers, doctors, counselors and social workers). Whatever it takes; building up your resilience and perseverance is life changing! As you take the time at the beginning of this year to reflect and maybe think up a resolution or two, think about resolving to be more resilient in times that challenge you; whether it be at a time of illness, family, job troubles, or financial difficulties. Think about resolving to persevere, to keep moving forward, even if you have to change direction. Don't rush this! The holidays just ended - take a few more days to recharge but don't let a chance to set a plan in motion slip away. One step forward is better than standing still.

~Ivana

***"If you can't fly, then run, if you can't run, then walk, if you can't walk, then crawl, but whatever you do, you have to keep moving forward. – Martin Luther King Jr.***



**DO YOU KNOW? . . .** that Operation Fuel has increased its income eligibility guidelines?

Operation Fuel provides one-time emergency assistance for deliverable fuel or electric bills. This state-wide program has made it possible for people with higher incomes to receive help. For example, a household of four with before tax (gross) income up to \$84,412 is eligible for up to \$500 in assistance. This could be in the form of oil or other deliverable fuel, or go toward the electric bill.

As a partner agency we help all NM households under age 60 to apply. The process is quick and easy! Call Monika for an appointment, and please spread the word to local family and friends! Funds are limited.

**Issue 1-2019**



*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:**

**“WORTH REPEATING!-Tax Time is Approaching!”**

**Tips for Planning out your Tax Return and Refund**

(from the CFPB): You only file your personal tax return once a year. Depending on your situation, filing can be easy or complicated. Many people prepare and file their own returns, but the majority of consumers still seek help from a professional tax preparer. If you think you will need help preparing and filing your tax return in 2018, now is a great time to start making a plan. It's also a great time to starting thinking about how you will use your refund if you're among the 75 percent of tax filers who will receive one.

**Before you file, find out what resources are available to you.**

You can generally get free tax preparation assistance by IRS certified volunteers at a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance

*(continued on page 2...)*

# PROGRAM UPDATES:



**ENERGY ASSISTANCE:** Social Services is taking applications for all forms of heat. Fuel deliveries can be covered if approved before March 15<sup>th</sup>. Many households make their fuel last well into the fall by getting a final fill in mid-March. Call CAAWC to see if you are eligible for additional deliveries and if you are not, call us!

All **electric heated households**, who completed the Matching Payment program last year, will automatically be re-enrolled onto Eversource's MPP. **Remember that you still need to re-apply every year for Energy Assistance through our office!** You will receive a letter from Eversource stating what your new 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 30<sup>th</sup> in order to get a "match". If Eversource raises your budget, if possible pay the new amount. 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
\$35,116	\$45,920	\$56,725	\$67,530	\$78,335	\$89,140

Visit our department on the [www.newmilford.org](http://www.newmilford.org) website, or call Monika at the office for the list of documents needed to apply. All applicants need to bring a current electric bill. For deliverable fuels, we still require an electric account number and a copy of the electric bill.

**Please have ALL paperwork at the time of your appointment.** This includes pay stubs even if your employer has gone "paperless". Ask your employer for assistance. Likewise Direct Express cards and bank statements can be found online for downloading and printing. Remember CAAWC requires both your name and your bank's name on the bank statement. You cannot be approved without all required documents!



## 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, January 10th** at the John Pettibone Community Center @ 5:30pm until 7:00pm. 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 x3.



## Community Culinary School

*"Changing People's Lives through Food"*

12 week hands on **culinary training**  
Adults 18 and over, looking for a career opportunity or a life change.

Scholarships available.

Call Dawn H. at 203-512-5791

**Next session begins in January 7th**

SPACE AVAILABLE for  
New STUDENTS



**Financial Tip continued: 1:** (VITA) location if you meet any of these conditions:

- a. Your income is \$54,000 or less
- b. You are 60 years old or older
- c. You have a disability or
- d. Speak limited English

If your income is \$64,000 or less, you can use a major tax preparation software product, offered through the [IRS Free File Alliance](#), to prepare and file your return for free.

If your income is more than \$64,000, you can still [download free tax filing forms](#) through the IRS.

If you're a military member or military dependent, you can get [free tax help](#) from the Military VITA program.

**Preparing to Save:** To help you follow through on a plan, identify a financial goal and make a plan to save your tax refund.

Whether your goal is to set aside some money for unexpected expenses or you have a longer-term goal like saving for education or another major expense, here are three ways that planning to save can be helpful:

It may help you focus on a financial priority that is important to you but that you may not have the money to pay for out of your regular income.

Once you identify a goal, it may help you to manage your other expenses and perhaps avoid overspending on things that are not priorities.

If you don't already have a savings account or another way to save, it will give you time to set it up so that when you file your return you can automatically direct the amount you want to save to that account.

Saving at tax time can be easy and automatic. Your tax refund provides you additional income that is over and above what you receive in your paycheck, so it may provide a one-time opportunity to set some money aside.

**While you are filing your tax return:** Through the tax filing process, the IRS helps you to direct money to up to three separate accounts and you never have to touch the funds. You can tell the IRS to send the amount you want to save to a separate account and to send the remainder of your refund to your regular checking account or other type of transaction account, such as a prepaid card.

**Be aware of fund delays:** Due to [changes in the tax code in 2017](#), the IRS is required to hold any refund that includes the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) or the Additional Child Tax Credit (ACTC) until at least February 15. The IRS normally strives to issue direct deposit refunds for electronically filed returns within 21 days of filing. If you plan on filing as soon as tax season opens, usually in mid-January, you may have to wait a little longer to receive your refund if it includes either one of these tax credits.

For more info on this and **many** topics visit the Consumer Finance Protection Bureau: <https://www.consumerfinance.gov>

## **My Free Taxes** FREE ONLINE TAX FILING (from United Way bulletin)

Would you rather file your tax return online? For the past nine years, United Way has partnered with H&R Block to provide free tax filing online. If you earned \$66,000 or less in 2017, visit [www.myfreetaxes.com](http://www.myfreetaxes.com) to complete your state and federal tax return in less than an hour, absolutely free! This step by step, online tax filing program uses the same tax filing software as H&R Block and allows individuals to conveniently file from a computer, tablet or smartphone. If you have questions, an IRS-certified specialist is available to provide assistance (in English or Spanish) via chat, email or by calling [1-855-698-9435](tel:1-855-698-9435). Visit [www.myfreetaxes.com](http://www.myfreetaxes.com) to get started! **For LOCAL VITA Sites to do your taxes in person – see page 3**



# COMMUNITY RESOURCES:



## Family and Children



### NEW MILFORD YOUTH AGENCY NEWS



\* **FREE, Homework Club**, Saturdays 9am-11am at the Youth Agency. 3<sup>rd</sup> -8<sup>th</sup> grade students will receive help with homework, math, reading, studying, organization, and much more.



### VILLAGE CENTER FOR THE ARTS

**FREE Family Art for New Milford Families!** Come to any workshops offered by VCA Studio. Families can come Tuesday-Friday, 12-6pm; Saturday, 3-6pm; Sunday 3-5pm to create any kind of art in their open studio. Paint ceramics as a family, with a specific budget- Tuesday-Friday, 12-6pm; Saturday, 3-6pm; Sunday 3-5pm. Kids may register for any class that has room. **PRE-REGISTRATION** is required and meet with the staff privately and confidentially with VCA staff to complete the tuition assistance form.

**FREE Open Studio for New Milford kids ages 10-17** if qualify by 1) School teacher recommendation; 2) Students who see the value in art but can find parental support if there is no financial commitment; 3) if a child's family cannot afford to send their child to VCA.



### WOMEN, INFANT AND CHILDREN PROGRAM (WIC)

This is a special supplemental nutrition program that provides supplemental foods, health care referrals, nutrition education, and breastfeeding support for pregnant women or families with children less than 5 year of age. WIC is in New Milford the 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of every month at St. Francis Xavier Church, 26 Chestnut Land Rd (Rt.109) from 9am-4pm. Please feel free to walk in or call us at 203-456-1410. If you have Husky A insurance you are automatically eligible for WIC. If you do not have Husky A, you may still be eligible and can call for income guidelines. *This institution is an equal opportunity provider.*

## JOB SEARCHING?

\* **AMERICAN JOB CENTER** - need help with a job search or training? Want to brush up on your resume? Looking for information about what career paths are in demand? American Job Centers will be on site *at New Milford High School* the last Wednesday of the month from 4:00pm – 6:30pm starting again in September.

\* **JOB NOW** – set of tools to support your job search with live interactive support from a Job coach to help you build your resume, prepare for an interview and get support on your job search. Available *at New Milford Public Library*.

\* **GOODWILL CAREER CENTER**- waiting to help you prepare to find and land the job you want. Services are tailored and FREE. Job coaches available to help with accessing local & online job openings, strengthening your resume, practicing interview skills, improving computer skills, and much more. Call 203-775-6861; @ 165 Federal Rd Brookfield.

\*Are you receiving SNAP? **SNAP Employment and Training program** is a work program that offers many training opportunities at NO COST TO YOU. There are courses through in Danbury through Naugatuck Valley Community College, 203-575-8029, as well as in New Milford through the Community Culinary School, 203-512-5791. For more info, contact the schools or go to [www.ct.gov/dss](http://www.ct.gov/dss).



**FREE TAX FILING SITES:** As we've discussed in the Financial Tip, you can file taxes for free. Get a timely appointment and you'll have your return just as fast! VITA sites in our area: The *NM Public Library* has had Danbury VITA staff every Friday, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. and three sites in Danbury offer day and evening appointments: *Community Action Agency of Western CT*, 203-744-4700; *Western CT State University*, 203-797-4511; and *Danbury VITA*: schedule online @ [www.danbury-vita.org](http://www.danbury-vita.org) or call 203-826-9517 (also scheduling NMPL appts). With electronic filing and depositing, you will not wait longer for a return through one of these agencies, and ALL of the money is yours!



### **Help for Veterans on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of every month (except July):**

Meet with the Service Officer at New Milford VFW at 11 Avery Road, New Milford. In case of inclement weather, please call to verify meeting is still on. State Service Officer is Peter DiMarie, 203-805-6340. Town Service Officer is Jim Delancy, 203-770-3665.

## 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 a list of 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 appointment!

### THE WOMEN'S CENTER OF GREATER DANBURY:

offers free, confidential counseling and a number of support groups including "Thrive" 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. 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.

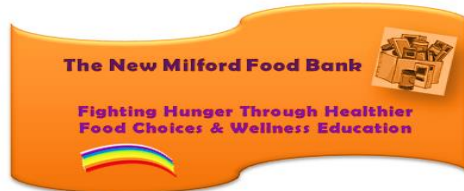
**INTERFACE** is a private not-for-profit practice located in New Milford; experienced staff with many sub-specialties for adults and children. Call 860-354-5116.

In addition there are other private practitioners who accept HUSKY and Medicare, like our former SW **Amy Bondeson** (860-799-1631—HUSKY only). You can always call one of our social workers to discuss these options.



# FOOD BANK:

Every THURSDAY  
from 9am-4pm.



Jan 2019						
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		

Please bring your own reusable bags!!

**SPECIAL NOTE:**

**FOOD BANK CLOSES WHEN NEW MILFORD SCHOOLS  
CLOSE DUE TO SEVERE WEATHER**

"This institution is an equal opportunity provider"



## NEW MILFORD FOOD BANK RECIPES OF THE MONTH:

The New Year can bring a need of a fresh outlook and a desire to make plans to improve one's life, one's health. Some tap into "lucky" traditions to help them on their way to move forward with positive change. The first few things that are eaten in the New Year are believed to bring on those changes and wishes for better health, prosperity, abundance of the positive. Black-eye peas, lentils, & other beans resemble coins; noodles for long life and other grains (rice, quinoa) for abundance, greens (collard, kale) and pork also for prosperity. The list goes on. Here are two recipes that include such "lucky" foods. Change them to your liking and "make your own luck"!

### Lucky Confetti Soup (6 servings)

- 2 teaspoons **canola oil**
- ¾ cup **onions**, peeled, diced
- ¾ cup **celery**, diced
- ¾ cup **carrots**, peeled, diced
- ½ teaspoon **salt**
- ½ teaspoon ground **black pepper**
- ¼ teaspoon whole **fennel seed**
- ¼ teaspoon crushed **red pepper** (optional)
- 1½ cups canned low-sodium **black-eyed peas**, drained, rinsed
- 3½ cups **water**
- 1 cup **extra-lean turkey ham**, diced ¼"
- ½ cup fresh **kale**, coarsely chopped
- 1½ tablespoons fresh **parsley**, chopped

**Directions:** In a large pot, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add onions and celery. Cook for 2-3 minutes or until tender. Add carrots, salt, pepper, fennel seed, and optional crushed red pepper. Cook for an additional 2-3 minutes. Add black-eyed peas and water. Cook uncovered for 25 minutes over medium heat. Add turkey ham and kale. Cook covered for an additional 10 minutes over medium heat until kale is tender.

Add parsley right before serving. Serve hot.  
[Source: Recipe for Healthy Kids Cookbook for Homes]



### Chicken and Vegetable Soup with Kale (3 servings)

- 2 teaspoons **vegetable oil**
- ½ cup **onion** (chopped)
- ½ cup **carrot** (chopped)
- 1 teaspoon **thyme** (ground)
- 2 garlic **clove** (minced)
- 2 cups **water** (or chicken broth)
- ¾ cups **tomatoes** (diced)
- 1 cup **chicken, cooked, skinned and cubed**
- ½ cup **brown rice**, cooked (or white rice)
- 1 cup **kale** (chopped, about one large leaf)

**Directions:** Heat oil in a medium sauce pan. Add onion and carrot. Sauté until vegetables are tender, about 5-8 minutes. Add thyme and garlic. Sauté for one more minute. Add water or broth, tomatoes, cooked rice, chicken and kale. Simmer for 5-10 minutes.

Cost Per recipe: \$3.33/per serving: \$1.1  
Source: Washington State University Photo source: cookingmatters.org

**Our office will be CLOSED in observance of:**

**Tuesday, Jan. 1, 2019 for New Year's Day**

**Monday, Jan. 21, 2019 for Martin Luther King's Jr Day**

## MOBILE FOOD PANTRY:

\* Weds. Jan 2<sup>nd</sup> & Weds. Feb 6<sup>th</sup>; 5:30pm-6:30pm at parking lot of Faith Church [Weather Permitting]

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

860-355-6079

NEW MILFORD SOCIAL SERVICES  
2 PICKETT DISTRICT RD  
NEW MILFORD CT. 06776



PERMIT NO. 10  
PRESORT STANDARD  
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