



# New Milford Social Services

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



**MAR 2020**

**Issue 3-2020**

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### Greetings from Social Services:

#### **STAND UP AND BE COUNTED!**

This is the year of the 2020 CENSUS and all of us will be requested to complete this form. It will arrive in the mail in a few weeks and the expectation will be to fill it out (in writing, online, or by phone) as soon as possible. **But why fill it out?** Why concern ourselves with this form that asks so many questions? And, what will we gain or lose from the Census report? **The CENSUS is actually really important for our community.** The data collected from the CENSUS will help New Milford and CT in so many ways. It will affect how much federal dollars we can get for our schools, our roads, emergency services, building decisions. It will affect funding for many programs administered by the State like Medicaid, Head Start, SNAP, WIC, community health services- many programs that affect families and children and older adults - even some programs we offer at New Milford Social Services. **But is it safe to fill out? YES!** The data collected by the U.S. CENSUS is highly protected and they Do Not share with other Government agencies. And, there are ways to protect yourself even further. The U.S. CENSUS WILL NOT ask if anyone in your home is a U.S. citizen and it WILL NOT ask for Social Security numbers, or bank account information, nor ask you for money. The U.S. Census questionnaire comes around once every ten years so the data collected will be relied on for a whole decade effecting a lot of the funding and programs communities need to improve the lives of their residents, like you and me! Please, keep an eye out for the Census questionnaire. If you need help filling it out, please ask! You might even get a knock on your door in April or May from a U.S. Census Bureau employee, ready, able, and willing to help you complete it. It is an obligation for all of us under the U.S. Constitution but most importantly filling it out is an obligation for ourselves and our neighbors so our Town can continue to thrive and meet the needs of every adult and child that lives here. WE ALL COUNT! Don't sit down on this, STAND UP and BE COUNTED. Let's help ourselves and our neighbors.

~Ivana



*"There comes a time when you have to stand up and be counted" ~ Gale Sayers*



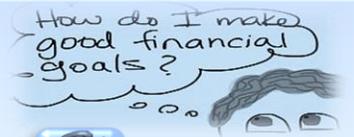
#### **DO YOU KNOW? . . . that Operation**

**Fuel** has increased its income eligibility guidelines. Operation Fuel provides **one-time emergency assistance for deliverable fuel or electric bills or water 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 \$86,949.00 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.**

*The mission of New Milford Social Services is to help residents meet basic needs of food, housing, clothing, maintenance of health & well-being, and to help provide various seasonal goods & programs for residents experiencing financial hardship.*



*We support our community through empowerment, advocacy, connection to resources & opportunities to increase the welfare of our residents in need.*



#### **Financial Tip of the Month:**

#### **"How to best use your tax refund and other found money":**

Receiving a tax refund this year, or a settlement, rent rebate, or family gift? The TWO best things you can do with this money are **(1) Pay down debt:** credit cards with highest interest rates first, personal debt, anything that lowers your credit rating. Pay it down! **(2) Build your emergency fund:** build up a stash of funds that would cover your fixed expenses for three months like for rent, car related costs, utilities, and food, and KEEP IT, hands off! Do these two things before considering any new purchases and you will be making the BEST investment with your money and your future! [original publication in NMSS newsletter 3.2019]

#### ***Looking to start a savings account or build a savings habit?!***

The United Way of Western CT has the **ALICE Saves program.** Link your bank account through SaverLife and start saving \$20 a month and for the first six months you'll earn a \$60 cash reward. Sign up online at <https://www.uwwesternct.org/alicesaves> or call NMSS and we can help you login!



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New Milford, CT 06776  
(P) 860-355-6079  
(F) 860-355-6019

Email: [socialservices@newmilford.org](mailto:socialservices@newmilford.org)  
Website: [www.newmilford.org](http://www.newmilford.org)

New Milford Social Services

# PROGRAM UPDATES:



**ENERGY ASSISTANCE:** We are taking applications for the winter season 2019-2020. If you heat with oil, propane, kerosene, wood or electric please call the office to make an appointment.

**The last day to apply for fuel (oil, propane, kerosene, wood) is March 17<sup>th</sup> BUT, if approved, your authorization time has been extended to April 1<sup>st</sup> for a delivery!**

**The last day to apply for electric heat is May 1<sup>st</sup>.** If you are a renter with heat-included, you may be eligible to apply for a one-time small grant and that deadline is May 1<sup>st</sup>.

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 should have received a letter stating what your monthly budget payment was 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, 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
\$36,171	\$47,300	\$58,430	\$69,559	\$80,688	\$91,818

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 even if you do not heat with electric and even if it is not in your name.

**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!

## "When You're Parent...Again"



An information and support group for **GRANDPARENTS & OTHER RELATIVES**

### RAISING CHILDREN:

Next meeting will be on Thursday, *March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020* at JPCC @ 5:30pm until 7:00pm. Dinner and childcare are included. Come for informal conversation and resources for those in this unique situation. *New families are always welcomed.* Please RSVP to social worker, Sarah Geary at Social Services, 860-355-6079 x3.



## It's still Tax Time!

Do you know that it is possible to get your tax return done for **FREE for eligible households** through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program (VITA)? **Danbury VITA will be in New Milford on Fridays at JPCC, in our program room #36** until April 3<sup>rd</sup> from 9am- 1pm. They do take walk-ins but recommend an appointment which you can schedule through their website: [www.danbury-vita.org](http://www.danbury-vita.org) or by calling 203-826-9517. They also take day and evening appointments at their Danbury office. There are two other agencies that have VITA appointments: Community Action Agency of Western CT at 203-744-4700 or at Western CT State University at 203-797-4511. You can also do them online at [www.myfreetaxes.com](http://www.myfreetaxes.com). *With electronic filing and depositing, you will not wait longer for your return through one of these agencies, and ALL the money is yours!*



"The upcoming Parent University will provide parents, guardians and community members an opportunity to access skills and resources available throughout the community. Through the combined efforts of New Milford Public Schools and the Town of New Milford, community members are invited to a two-and-a-half-hour event on **Thursday, April 30<sup>th</sup>** with a keynote speaker, breakout sessions and debriefing. NMPS Assistant Alisha DiCorpo and New Milford Youth Agency Youth Intervention Manager Stacy Kabasakalian, co-chairs of the event, are excited to bring school and town agencies, as well as non-profits, together to support and educate our community on important matters affecting families today."

"There will be informative sessions that parents can choose based on their interests for a deeper discussion and facilitators will empower parents and guardians to better understand each area of interest. At the end of the evening parents and guardians will come together to debrief and raffle prizes will be drawn. As the event gets close, more details will follow."

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## FREE DENTAL CLINIC!



CT MOM DANBURY  
**March 20-21, 2020**  
 Western CT State University  
 O'Neill Center  
 West Side Campus  
 43 Lake Avenue Extension  
 Danbury, CT 06811

Clinic Opens at 8:00am  
 Patients will not be allowed on University Campus until 4:00am  
 Line will begin forming at 5:00am.

**The New Milford Police Department is supporting a program for autistic and hearing-impaired drivers.** "They are encouraging the public to participate in a program meant to improve communication between officers & drivers who are hearing impaired or on the autism spectrum. Drivers on the autism spectrum can receive blue envelopes for their license, registration & insurance card. The envelopes include tips on how the driver and officer can best respond to one another during a traffic stop, according to a post on the department's Facebook page. Hearing impaired drivers can receive green envelopes. The police department recommended drivers keep the envelopes in their glove box or visor, so they can easily find it & give it to officers. The envelopes are available at the DMV and NM Police Station." [published by Julia Perkins, *Newstimes*. 1-24-2020]



## JOB TRAINING PROGRAM

offering a **NEW SESSION** beginning **April 20, 2020**.  
 -12 weeks of culinary arts training  
 -ServSafe Certification  
 -Uniforms, Books & Materials  
 -Certificate of Completion  
 -Internships: **96% Job Placement Rate**. **FREE Tuition to those who qualify** with funding available through WIOA and SNAP Employment Training Provider. For more information and application process call 203-512-5791;  
[www.communityculinaryschool.org](http://www.communityculinaryschool.org). Applications are also available at NMSS.

# 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.

**\*FREE HOOPS!** Basketball at JPCC for grades 9-12, 3pm-5pm, every Wednesday beginning October 2<sup>nd</sup>. One-time registration at myyouthagency.com. Drop in when you can! Contact Stacey for more info at 860-210-2030 or [skabasakalian@newmilford.org](mailto:skabasakalian@newmilford.org).

**\*TACO TUESDAY night for special needs students, families & friends. Tuesday, March 10<sup>th</sup>, 5:30pm-7:30pm @ the Maxx. FREE TACOS AND FUN!**

Registration for all programs can be done by calling the Youth Agency at 860-210-2030 or by visiting [myyouthagency.com](http://myyouthagency.com).

**\*Peace, Love, & Stand Up to Hate.** Promoting inclusion, diversity, friendship, team building, and kindness for High School LGBT+ youth. Safe space for communication; fun activities and workshops; celebration of differences; self-care practice; showing progress is possible. Meetings held 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesdays of the month **beginning March 10<sup>th</sup>** from 2:45-4:30pm @ the Maxx. Students will need bus passes to go directly from NMHS to the Maxx. For additional information, contact Sarah Wells, LMSW at [swells@newmilford.org](mailto:swells@newmilford.org) or 860-210-2030.

**New Milford Parks and Rec** has many programs for children Kindergarten and older with possible **scholarships available** through NMSS. Please contact us for more information on financial assistance.



**Students looking for a summer job with the Youth Agency 860-210-2030 or Parks and Rec 860-355-6050 should call for opportunities.**



### 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 February.** This service is provided by New Milford Adult Education. Register at <https://newmilford.coursestorm.com/> and search American Job Center. It is FREE! They have many programs to enrich your learning and increase your employment skills including completing a High School Equivalency. For more information: 860-350-6647 x1170

**\*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).

**\* JOBNOW – At the NEW MILFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY:**

Online 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. **NEW SECTION: For Adult Learners**, you can use this service to help with High School Equivalency, Citizenship Tests, Microsoft Office Products and other academic skills.



**Help for Veterans on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of every month (except July):** Meet with the Service Officer at the *Roger Sherman Town Hall, 10 Main St. New Milford from 9am-11:30 am.* In case of inclement weather, please call to verify meeting is still on. State Service Officer is Peter DiMaria, 203-805-6340. Town Service Officer is Jim Delancy, 203-770-3665.



### Applying for Scholarships?

Did you know one resource is the Connecticut Community Foundation. They have begun the application process. They offer College Scholarships as well as Special Scholarships. Their website is <https://conncf.org/apply-for-scholarships/>

Hurry! The deadline is March 15<sup>th</sup>!

### Transitions Resource Fair Slated for Families with Young Adults (14-21yrs of age) who have Disabilities

New Milford High School and Litchfield Hills Transition Center will hold a transition resource fair March 18<sup>th</sup> from 6-8pm. Several presentations for families will be given by the Dept. of Developmental Services, the Bureau of Rehabilitative Services, Social Security Disability Income, Friends of New Milford, Marrakech and the CT Parent Advocacy Center and about guardianship/conservatorship, special needs trusts and Ability Beyond's ATLAS program. The event is for families with young adults ages 14-21 who have disabilities. Event held at Sarah Noble Intermediate School. Snow date- March 19<sup>th</sup>. (printed in the Newstimes: 2-9-2020)

### We all can benefit from support- Counseling Resource:



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

For more info, call 203-731-5200 and their website [www.wcogd.org](http://www.wcogd.org).

#### NEW MILFORD HOSPITAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH:

NMHBH provides mental health services for adults. Call 860-210-5350 for more information or for an appointment.

#### GREENWOOD COUNSELING REFERRAL:

Free clinical assessment and list of 3 local therapists to help you. 860-567-4437.

**INTERFACE CENTER** 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

#### FAMILY & CHILDREN'S AID:

NM office offers many services for parents & children: free or insurance based. For info or an appointment call 860-354-8556.

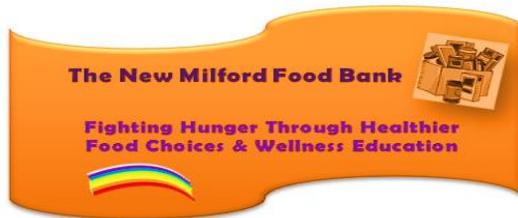
**FORTITUDE CENTER:** Offers mental health and addiction counseling to people of all ages. Call 860-700-5750; 30 Bridge St, New Milford.

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

For further resources as one of social workers.

**FOOD BANK:**

**THURSDAYS  
from 9am-4pm.**



Mar 2020						
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:**

*Thinking outside the norm!*

**Dark Chocolate Black Bean Brownies**

- 1 can black beans
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1/4 cocoa or dark cocoa powder
- 3 eggs
- 3 Tbsp. canola oil
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 tsp instant coffee granules
- 1/4 cup chopped walnuts – optional
- 1/3 cup dark chocolate chips



**Instructions:**

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F and place parchment paper in the bottom of an 8x8 inch baking pan. Lightly spray parchment paper with cooking spray.
2. In a food processor or blender, combine all ingredients except walnuts and chocolate chips.
3. Pour batter into baking pan. Top with nuts and chocolate chips.
4. Bake for 30-35 minutes. Let cool, then cut into squares.

**Revisiting SWAP**

**Supporting Wellness At Pantries**

The focus of **SWAP** is to support individuals to make nutritional decisions based on low saturated fats, low sodium and low sugar. The idea is to focus on these 3 specific areas to promote daily wellness through food intake. While shopping in the pantry, please ask your volunteer on how to improve the quality of a food choice and review posted information. In addition, please review the food labels posted on the shelves to see the green, yellow and red coding system.

***We will be having a Dietetic intern with us on March 26<sup>th</sup>.*** During this time, you will be provided with hands on guidance on how to improve the nutritional value of your food selections and meals. To best support individualized health needs, feel free to connect with the intern on specific questions you may have. The recipe to the left is an example on how to improve the nutritional value of a long time favorite by using alternate ingredients.

\*\*\*\*\*  
*Thank you to those who completed the food bank survey. Your feedback will help us to prepare for the future and to meet your needs the best we can.*

***There are no Holiday Closings for NMSS in March.  
Public Schools will be closed on Thursday, March 12<sup>th</sup> for school conferences.***

***MOBILE FOOD PANTRY: [sponsored by CT Food Bank]  
\* Weds. Mar 4<sup>th</sup> and Weds. April 1<sup>st</sup> - 5:15pm-6:30pm at parking lot of Faith Church [Weather Permitting]  
Call hotline to check schedule and possible cancellations: 203-741-9751***

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