

New Milford Social Services

"To Listen, To Advocate, To Empower"



February 2019

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Greetings from Social Services:

February can be rough! Winter is in full swing and January did not disappoint with extreme cold temperatures, ice and snow events- and most likely, winter has more to show us. Last month I wrote about finding and holding on to resolve and moving forward. It can be a true challenge to try to step forward during a time of year where it can be more tempting to do what the bears are doing and hibernate; keeping our heads down low as the wind blows in our face and huddling away from the cold. We not only can do this with our bodies but in our minds. Closing down, putting our goals on hold, avoiding change. It's just hard! But, it is not impossible! Maybe just looking at things a bit differently can keep us going until the weather lifts a bit and the air is not so thick and cold. When we speak of setting goals, part of the process is to take time out to gain perspective of how one is doing, checking progress, or making a change. If you're feeling "stuck to the frozen ground" and unmotivated, take the time to look up while you stand a moment in place. Look around and see the small yet positive things around you. It can be seeing how beautiful the sun glistens off the icicles stuck to branches or forming off buildings. Or, it can be recognizing a good deed otherwise gone unnoticed. Even in the harshest of times, one's eye can be open to see a glimmer of gratitude for the smallest of wonders. Take the time to show your appreciation or offer a kind gesture, like smiling to a stranger as you pass them even if the wind is whipping in your face. That quick smile can indicate to another that "hey, it'll be alright, this too will pass" Gratitude is also being more thankful for what you have done than worrying more about what you haven't done. If you had a January goal to lose weight, instead of realizing that you haven't lost any yet, notice and appreciate that you haven't gained any either. That is an accomplishment worth noting! Gratitude can be very powerful and reenergizing. Occasions to express and accept gratitude abound. These moments are all around us. Don't miss these opportunities even in the harshest times; those are the times we need them the most.

~Ivana

"Gratitude is the healthiest of all human emotions. The more you express gratitude for what you have, the more likely you will have even more to express gratitude for."

~ Zig Ziglar

Issue 2-2019



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:

Inspire to Save! This might be one of the better times of year to think about your savings. If you are currently saving for an emergency or a desired goal, evaluate how you are doing and make any changes you can to make sure you are getting closer to accomplishing it. If you haven't started to save, why not try? Right now! Many families are expecting a tax refund this month. As you decide how to spend it consider two things for the top of your list. Number one, use some of it to pay down your debt and number two, begin to save for emergencies or a meaningful goal. Starting to save does not have to be a daunting task. Even the smallest amount will work. Think about \$10-\$20 from each paycheck. If that even sounds like too much, try \$20 a month. The important part is not how much to start with but just TO START. There are many ways to start to save. Some may find a jar at home, others an envelope to hide in a drawer. But don't be tempted to dip in to it for a quick spending splurge. *(continued on page 2...)*



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.

2 Pickett District Rd.
New Milford, CT 06776
(P) 860-355-6079
(F) 860-355-6019

Email: socialservices@newmilford.org

Website: www.newmilford.org

New Milford Social Services

PROGRAM UPDATES:



ENERGY ASSISTANCE: Social Services is taking applications for all forms of heat. Fuel deliveries can be covered if approved before March 15th. 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! *LAST DAY to apply for FUEL with this program is March 15th!*

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 30th 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 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, February 14th** 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
Plan now for the next session- coming soon!



Financial Tip continued from page 1...

One of the best ways is setting up an automated deposit from your paycheck or an auto transfer from a checking account to savings account. Putting money directly into a separate account, one that is not connected to a debit card or checkbook will help with the impulse to spend it quickly. There is also help to get started or increase your spending. The United Way can be a partner in getting started with their **SaverLife** program. This is a great opportunity to start and receive rewards and prizes for saving. Every month that you save \$20, **SaverLife** will match your savings with \$10- up to \$60 in 6 months! What a great way to start to save money and earn money as you begin! You will also receive weekly tips from a financial coach. Signing up takes an email and a bank account. Start by going to www.saverlife.org/alicesavesct. Also, did you know there is even a national savings week? It is called America Save Weeks, Feb 25-Mar 2, 2019. One can go to their website at www.americasaves.org and sign up to pledge to save. Set up a goal and receive helpful tips to keep up your motivation. We also can help. We have materials to help with debt reduction, spending tips, and setting goals. Support is there to help take the first step. Don't short change yourself- you can do this!
- [previous financial tips can be found on our page at www.newmilford.org]

"Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow". ~Melody Beattie



~ In Case you Missed This in our January Newsletter! ~

FREE TAX FILING SITES: 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 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!**

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 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 to get started!

COMMUNITY RESOURCES:



Family and Children



NEW MILFORD YOUTH AGENCY NEWS



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

* **Enrichment Programs: SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE** for families who qualify, thanks to the United Way of Western CT. Upcoming events include pizza making and maple syruping! For more information, contact Vincent@youthagency.org.



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)



EXCEL PROGRAM: The EXCEL program is an inclusive preschool that provides services for children with special needs and their typical peers together within one setting. Applications are being accepted until March 1st for children interested in a "community friend" slot. Go to the New Milford Public Schools website, <http://www.newmilfordps.org> or contact the Board of Ed, Office of Student Affairs at 860-354-2654 for more details and an application.



HEAD START: is accepting applicants for the 2019-20 school year now. Families interested in this pre-school program for their 3 or 4 year olds should contact Natalie Gonzalez at 860-304-4648.



JOB SEARCHING?



* **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.

* **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. This service is provided by New Milford Adult Education. 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.



Help for Veterans on the 4th 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.

Danbury VET CENTER offers many community-based counseling services, including professional readjustment counseling to eligible Veterans, active duty service members and their families, including National Guard and Reserve components. Readjustment counseling is offered to make a successful transition from military to civilian life or after a traumatic event experienced in the military. Individual, group, marriage and family counseling are offered in addition to referral and connection to other VA or community resources. Located at 457 North Main St, Danbury; 203-790-4000.

"As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them." ~ John F. Kennedy

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—HUKY only). You can always call one of our social workers to discuss these options.



FOOD BANK:

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



Feb 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		

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:

HEART HEALTH MONTH! You can sneak in healthy heart ingredients in anything you eat!

Beef and Vegetable Soup

6 Servings

Ingredients

- 1 lb **ground beef**, extra lean
- 1 lb **frozen mixed vegetables**
- 1 can (15oz) **diced tomatoes**, low sodium
- 1 small **onion**, diced
- ½ cup **dry pasta**
- 1 cup **water**
- 1 tsp **onion powder**
- 1 tsp **garlic powder**
- ¼ tsp **salt**
- ¼ tsp **pepper**

Instructions

1. Place ground beef in a non-stick saucepan over medium-high heat. Break up meat into crumbles using a spatula or wooden spoon while cooking. Add onions. Cook until all meat is brown (about 10 minutes).
2. Pour meat and onions onto a paper-towel covered plate to absorb excess fat. Rinse the pan to remove excess fat.
3. Place cooked and drained meat and onions back in the saucepan. Add frozen vegetables, canned tomatoes and water, and cook until vegetables are thawed and the soup is hot.
4. Add additional water if desired, add any desired seasoning.



Nutrition Information

Serving Size: 1½ cups

Calories: 260
Total Fat: 6g
Saturated Fat: 2.5g
Protein: 26g
Sodium: 230mg
Carbohydrates: 22g
Added Sugar: 0g
Fiber: 2g

Dark Chocolate Black Bean Brownies

12 Servings

Ingredients

- 1 can (15 oz) **black beans**, drained and rinsed
- ½ cup **sugar**
- ½ tsp **baking powder**
- ¼ cup **dark cocoa powder**
- 3 **eggs**
- 3 Tbs **canola oil**
- 1 tsp **vanilla**
- 1 tsp **instant coffee granules**
- ½ cup **dark chocolate chips**

Optional: 1/4 cup chopped walnuts

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Place parchment paper in the bottom of an 8x8 inch baking pan. Lightly spray the parchment with cooking spray. If you do not have parchment paper, spraying the bottom of the pan is just fine.
2. In a food processor or blender, blend all the ingredients except walnuts and chocolate chips until smooth.
3. Pour batter into baking pan. Top with nuts and chocolate chips.
4. Bake 30-35 minutes. Cool and cut into squares.



Nutrition Information

Serving Size: 1 brownie

Calories: 150
Total Fat: 7g
Saturated Fat: 2g
Protein: 5g
Sodium: 95mg
Carbohydrates: 20g
Added Sugar: 8g
Fiber: 3g

Our office will be CLOSED: Monday, February 18, 2019 in honor of President's Day



MOBILE FOOD PANTRY:

* *Weds. Feb 6th and Weds. Mar 6th; 5:30pm-6:30pm at parking lot of Faith Church [Weather Permitting]*

PERMIT NO. 10
NEW MILFORD CT 06776
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PRESORT STANDARD



NEW MILFORD SOCIAL SERVICES
2 PICKETT DISTRICT RD
NEW MILFORD CT, 06776
860-355-6079
CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED