



United Way • Town of Westport • Westport Public Schools • The PTA Council • Positive Directions

The nation's economy is affecting many of us in a variety of ways. From cutbacks to layoffs and unemployment, we all know of families that could use some extra support. At this uncertain time, it is difficult to know where to turn in order to get advice, or how to access services which you may eligible to receive.

There is help available. Westport's Department of Human Services (341-1050,) in conjunction with Positive Youth Development (PYD), has put together a list of resources to assist Westport families. The listings below can help you with your immediate needs associated with loss or decrease of income. Most of these resources are available at no charge.

Where do I start?

Town of Westport, Department of Human Services

203-341-1050 www.westportct.gov

The Human Services staff is here to help and this is the best place to start should you need information on resources available to you and your family. The department provides confidential information and referrals, short-term counseling, financial assistance, health insurance resources, family support, emergency food, fuel/heating assistance, rent relief, housing, job assistance, back to school & special clothing assistance, summer school & campership assistance. The Department assists residents in applying for state & federal program applications.

Community Resources for Children and Families: A comprehensive listing of local services published by Westport's Human Services Department can be accessed 24 hours a day at <http://www.westportct.gov/agencies/healthandwelfare/> then click on publications.

Westport Public Schools

Barbara Fischetti, Coordinator of Pupil Services Pre-K-Grade 8, 341-1237

Elaine Schwartz, Director of Guidance Staples High School, 341-1434

The schools have a broad array of services to help children and families realize their potential. Each elementary building has a school psychologist and the middle and high schools also have counselors. School social workers are also available for any family. Oftentimes, the school staff know your children very well and may recognize some signs of family distress. You can assist your child and the schools by sharing information which you feel might be important for your child's teachers and counselors to know. All information that you share is confidential and may help the school better address your children's individual needs.

United Way 211 www.211infoline.org or dial 211 or 1-800-203-1234

A Public Private Partnership - The State of Connecticut and United Way

Wherever you live in Connecticut, get the resources in your community: AA meetings, Alzheimer's Resources, Child Care, Community Groups, Counseling, Crisis Intervention, Domestic Violence Programs, Drug/Alcohol Programs, Employment, Energy or Financial Assistance, Food/Nutrition Services, Health Care, Legal Assistance, Senior and Youth Services, Support Groups, Transportation, Volunteers, Voting Information and hundreds of other human services.

Health and Insurance Resources

The Department of Human Services can assist you in accessing these resources.

HUSKY Health Insurance

877-CT-HUSKY

www.huskyhealth.com

HUSKY stands for Healthcare for Uninsured Kids and Youth. It provides free or low-cost health insurance for those up to age 19 who are U.S. citizens or legal non-citizens living in Connecticut. Eligibility for HUSKY coverage is based on family size and income. Emancipated minors and 18 year olds can apply for themselves.

The CHARTER OAK HEALTH PLAN

1-877-77-CTOAK (1-877-772-8625)

www.charteroakhealthplan.com

Connecticut's new affordable health insurance plan for adults 19 through 64 years of age. There are no income or asset limits to qualify and pre-existing conditions are not a factor in determining eligibility. Premiums will be subsidized for people whose income is below 300% of the Federal Poverty Level.

Westport Weston Health District

Phone: (203) 227-9571 | Health Information Line: (203) 222-3875 |

www.wwhd.org

The Westport Weston Health District (WWHD) is a governmental agency which provides local public health services to the residents of Westport and Weston. WWHD provides a wide range of services to help keep the communities of Westport and Weston healthy including free blood pressure screenings, senior center clinics, walk-in wellness clinics, community cholesterol screenings and a confidential HIV/AIDS Testing and Counseling Clinic. Many services are offered free or at a reduced charge.

Housing issues and Energy Assistance:

Westport's Department of Human Services can assist you in accessing programs which can help with housing issues and energy assistance.

United Way Westport Warm-Up Fund, Operation Fuel and other assistance

Energy assistance is available thanks to the gifts of residents and organizations such as the United Way and the Westport Young Woman's League. Westport residents having trouble heating their homes are urged to call the Department of Human Services at 341-1050.

Interfaith Housing Association (IHA)

226-3426

www.ihawestport.com

The Interfaith Housing Association (IHA) has a caring professional staff and the help of volunteers. IHA provides shelter, transitional housing, permanent housing, community kitchen, employment and mentoring services for men, single women and families – for people who have lost their homes for a variety of reasons. The organization also helps people in crisis in order to prevent them from becoming homeless.

Emergency Food Resources

Food is available to Westport families on an emergency basis. Please contact your local Church or Synagogue to ask if they have a food pantry or call Westport's Department of Human Services who can help you to access our local food banks through the Westport Women's Club or Interfaith Housing.

Interfaith Housing Association has a food pantry. Anyone can bring or receive food through IHA, at the Gillespie Center, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Someone is always there. Those in need of emergency food resources only need to provide a photo id in order to receive groceries. A person may only receive groceries twice a month. IHA is located at 45 Jessup Road, directly behind Restoration Hardware. The entrance does not face Jessup Road. It faces the parking lot adjacent to the building. 226-3426

Westport Woman's Club and the Westport Department of Human Services

The Westport Woman's Club is the collection site for groceries for the Westport Department of Human Services. For someone to receive food from WWC they need to call the Department of Human Services at 341-1050. DHS will anonymously request food for the amount of members in the household and their ages. Food can then be picked up at Town Hall.

Counseling Assistance:

It is important that you take care of your mental health and that of your family. Although it can be difficult to take the first step in asking for support, it is a wonderful way to assess your own personal strengths and get the help you need. Seeking help through counseling does not imply weakness. Individuals who seek counseling are usually seeking more effective and rewarding lives by addressing personal problems, career questions, skill development issues, or value questions. You can access counseling services in a variety of ways. If you have children, it is best to start with your child's school. You can also call the Department of Human Services, contact your church or synagogue and/or seek counseling through an agency.

Westport Public Schools

341-1000

www.westport.k12.ct.us

The schools have a broad array of services within each school to help children and families realize their potential. Each elementary building has a school psychologist. The middle and high schools also have school counselors and there are school social workers available for all families. Get to know your child's school counselor or psychologist and don't forget to speak with a teacher if you feel your child needs extra support. All information you share is confidential and may help the school to address your children's individual needs.

Student Outreach Counselor-

Department of Human Services

110 Myrtle Avenue, Westport, CT 06880

Office is located at Staples High School

203-341-1285

mrcounselorguy@yahoo.com

The Student Outreach Counselor, Chris Lemone, is a Licensed Professional Counselor who provides confidential support for students and their families. Anonymous inquiries are welcome, and emphasis is always placed on confidentiality.

Positive Directions, the Center for Prevention & Recovery

420 Post Road West, Westport, CT 06880

203-227-7644

www.positivedirections.org

Positive Directions provides comprehensive counseling services for adults, adolescents and children including addictions, depression, anxiety and other emotional issues. In addition to counseling, they provide free telephone advisory services, compulsive gambling counseling, intervention services, groups, parenting programs, and employee assistance programs. Office hours are 9 to 5 Monday through Friday. Evening sessions are available by appointment. Sliding scale fees are available. In addition, Positive Directions collaborates with the school system to provide

The Family Assistance Program, funded by the United Way which provides **three free counseling sessions** for children and families referred by the Westport School system. Sliding scale available after 3 free sessions.

Employment Resources

From applying for unemployment to evaluating your finances, help is available to help plan your job search, discover new interests, create resumes and access networking opportunities.

Library Job Seekers Program

Westport Public Library - Arnold Bernhard Plaza

20 Jessup Road, Westport, CT 06880

203-291-4840

www.westportlibrary.org

Call for details on this program which assists in strategies to search for jobs online and create resumes that work. Professionals provide free monthly workshops at the Library.

Connecticut Works Career Centers

2 Lafayette Square, Bridgeport, CT 06604

203-455-2700

www.ctdol.state.ct.us

Connecticut Works is a unique collaboration of state, regional, and local organizations addressing the workforce development needs of the state -- both of residents who are seeking jobs as well as of businesses who are looking to hire. Offices are located in 14 One-Stop Centers throughout the state and serve job seekers, students, businesses, and individuals who are underemployed, as well as those who want to change jobs or continue to move in their careers. At these facilities, assessment, testing, workshops and career guidance are available to everyone.

Recreational Activities

Although times may be tough, it is important to take time to enjoy leisure activities. There are inexpensive recreational activities close by, some offer sliding scale fees based on a person's ability to pay. Some local youth programs offer significant scholarship assistance to residents. You can check with the organization or call the Department of Human Services for more specific information.

Westport Parks and Recreation

341-5090
www.westportct.gov/agencies/parksandrecreation

Levitt Pavilion

221-2153
www.levittpavilion.com

Westport Public Library

291-4840
www.westportlibrary.org

Westport Arts Center

222-7070
www.westportartscenter.org

Westport Weston Historical Society

222-1242
www.westporthistory.org/

Westport Playhouse

227-4177
www.westportplayhouse.org

Earthplace

227-7253
www.earthplace.org

Westport Community Theater

226-1983
www.westportcommunitytheatre.com

Westport Weston YMCA

226-8981
www.westportymca.org

Westport Continuing Education

341-1209
www.westportcontinuinged.com

Helpful 24 hour hotlines:

Child Protection CARELINE (24 Hour DCF).. http://www.ct.gov/dcf	800-842-2288
Domestic Violence Crisis Center... www.dvccct.org	888-774-2900
Kids in Crisis Outreach Service..... www.kidsincrisis.org	203-327-KIDS
Norwalk Hospital..... www.norwalkhospital.org	203-852-2000
Child Guidance of Mid-Fairfield County..... www.mfcgc.org	203-299-1315
Department of Social Services Information Center..... www.ct.gov/dss	800-385-4052