



Community Health Programs

PROJECT MILK

Project Milk is an emergency food program that has reached out to help families in Berkshire County for over 25 years. Created and managed by CHP WIC (Women, Infants and Children) staff, Project Milk grew from a need to help families who had run out of resources and options to access food. Project Milk funds are distributed only when other food program options have been exhausted – when families are clearly in crisis.

The stories connected with this program are often hard to believe but are always heartbreaking. Especially given that they are taking place all around us right here in South County. If one situation in particular identifies as the inspiration for Project Milk, it was the day, 25 years ago, when CHP staff counseled a young woman with no money for formula who was feeding her newborn child chicken broth, because that was the only food she had. Since then, countless young families have walked through CHP's doors with hungry children, and many times in such dire circumstances that they, as parents, have forgone food for days at a time. This is why we seek funding to continue this vital program.

CHP's Project Milk generally gives out 100-120 food packages per year, at a value of \$40.00 per package. The need is currently growing. Below is a typical food package; it can be tailored to a family that is vegetarian or does not eat certain foods.

4 lbs. chicken	Large loaf of wheat bread
3 lbs. ground meat	48-oz. package of elbow noodles
2 lbs. carrots	1 large jar of pasta sauce
2-lb. bag of frozen mixed vegetables	1 gallon of milk
5 lbs. potatoes	12-oz. frozen orange juice

The Project Milk package provides fresh, nutritious foods that will last a family of four approximately two to three days. CHP WIC staff arrange for packages to be picked up at the Great Barrington Price Chopper. On occasion, CHP staff will pick up the package for families without transportation.

In addition to providing emergency food, CHP staff connects families in need with local food banks and other resources that can help them meet their immediate needs. These services include local food banks, SNAP, budget counseling, fuel assistance, health insurance enrollments and so on.

Since its inception, Project Milk has been supported by private funds. The program receives no state or federal monies. A small, devoted group of donors has been loyal supporters of Project Milk over the years. Unfortunately, a number of these donors have passed away, leaving the program lacking in consistent support.

Thank you for your interest in supporting this important program.

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