



SOCIAL SERVICES NEWS

P.O. BOX 669 Newton, North Carolina 28658-0669 (828) 695-5600 www.catawbacountync.gov/dss

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: Nov. 21, 2013

CONTACT: Margaret Allen, Catawba County Social Services Public Information Officer,
mallen@catawbacountync.gov, 828-695-6583

DONATE TO HELP YOUR NEIGHBORS IN NEED THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

HICKORY -- Catawba County residents may help their neighbors by donating to a variety of special funds at Catawba County Social Services this holiday season. These funds pay for unmet needs that are not covered by government programs.

The Backpack Program is coordinated by Catawba County Social Services, in partnership with Eastern Cooperative Christian Ministry. This program provides supplemental food to school children in need on the weekends. Last year, 1,159 students at 31 sites received food through this program.

Senior Nutrition Services operates the Meals on Wheels, Seniors Morning Out, Frozen Meals and Nutritional Supplements programs. Meals on Wheels and Frozen Meals provide home delivered nutritious meals to seniors who are unable to shop or prepare food for themselves. The Seniors Morning Out program provides activities and lunch for seniors at five locations throughout the county. Nutritional Supplements are delivered to seniors who have a doctor's note indicating they are necessary. These Senior Nutrition programs are available to all county citizens, without regard to income. Participants are asked to contribute, but additional donations from community members are necessary. Last fiscal year, these programs served 1,469 county residents.

The Foster Children's Expense Fund pays for "extras" that make life memorable for children in foster care. These include school pictures, yearbooks, money for school field trips, band instruments, and equipment for team sports. There are 203 children in foster care at this time. There has been a 8 percent increase in the number of children entering foster care compared to the last fiscal year.

The Grace McLeod Fund helps senior and disabled citizens obtain needed items and services that are not covered by Medicaid or other government sources. These items can be as simple as a "grabber" tool to help someone in a wheelchair reach a high shelf, or an electric can opener for a person with severe arthritis. Social workers assess the need and availability of other funding before the item is purchased.

LINKS is a program that helps youth age 13-21 with independent living skills. The program now serves 84 young people who have aged out of foster care, been adopted, or reunified with their parents. Donations are used for things such as clothes, rent deposits, furniture, food, gas, luggage, etc.

The Teen Up program helps at-risk teen cope with the challenges of adolescence through fun and service-oriented activities. This after-school and summer program served 415 teens last year.

The Children's Book Station provides free books to children who accompany their parents to Social Services. Children are invited to select a book to read and take home. Donations of new or gently used books suitable for children are also welcomed.

The Gretchen Peed Scholarship Fund provides scholarships for children in foster care who wish to attend college.

Donations to any of these programs may be made online at <http://www.catawbacountync.gov/dss>. Just click on the red "Donate Now" button and complete the form. Tax-deductible donations may also be made by writing a check to Catawba County Social Services and writing the name of the fund in the memo line. Checks should be mailed to Catawba County Social Services, P.O. Box 669, Newton, NC 28658. Please include your name and address to receive a gift acknowledgement letter.

###