



Social Service Currents

A quarterly newsletter for Prince George Department of Social Services

March 2013

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DID YOU KNOW:

SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) helps low-income families buy the food they need for good health.

SNAP benefits are provided on an electronic card that is used like an ATM or bank card to buy food at most grocery stores.

To get **SNAP** benefits, your income and other resources have to be under certain limits.

There are several ways that you can file an application for **SNAP** benefits.

1. Pick up an application at Social Services or
2. Call the Social Services and have an application mailed to you, or
3. Print the form from your State's Web site at www.fns.usda.gov/snap/outreach/map.htm, or

4. Apply online at www.commonhelp.virginia.gov

You may return the application to Social Services by fax, mail, online through the CommonHelp web site or drop the application at the agency.

You may need to provide verification of some information on your application such as, but not limited to:

- Pay stubs, Utility bills,
- Rent or mortgage payments,
- Child Care bills, and
- Child support payments.

Contact a Benefits Program Specialist for more info at: 733-2650

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Social Services:

Reaching Out to the Community in Our First Newsletter

WELCOME TO THE FIRST EDITION OF OUR E-NEWSLETTER. They say it takes a village to raise a child. This must be true. We rely on our community partners to help every child and family that walks through our door. But sometimes we get so busy doing the work, we forget to let everyone know what is happening. We want to take a moment to appreciate those who help us accomplish great things. We want to let you know what we have planned for the coming months. We want to share tips and hints that will make working with us easier. We want to provide information that will make services and benefits more accessible to everyone who needs them.



The purpose of our newsletter will be to keep you informed on the happenings at Prince George Social Services. Please let us know how we did and any suggestions on topics you want to see. Thanks for reading our first issue. Let us know what you think and feel free to email this to anyone you think would enjoy it.

Shel Bolyard-Douglas, Director

WHAT'S HAPPENING

SAY YES TO THE DRESS:

PGHS PROM DRESS PROJECT 2013

DONATE A PROM DRESS, SHOES, PURSE OR JEWELRY . Every young woman should get a chance to go to the Prom. Social Services, James River Junior Woman's Club and CCHASM are teaming up to collect gently used prom dresses, shoes, and accessories to help that happen. Donations can be dropped off at Social Services Monday thru Friday 8:30- 5 PM or at the Patriot Family YMCA Child Care center on Tuesday or Thursday 8 AM -10 AM & 6 PM- 8 PM (3801 Ruffin Road). For more information call 733-2650 x 109

SAY YES TO THE DRESS SHOPPING DAY

MARCH 23rd Noon- 3 PM MG Smith & Company

5803 Courthouse Rd, Prince George.

\$5 donation to shop. Open to all PGHS young women. Must bring your student ID

THE TRAINING NOTES: Child Care Provider Training March 9th

On March 9th the Prince George Department of Social Services will offer training to child care providers. The training topics include "Ages and Stages" developmental training which will assist providers in recognizing appropriate developmental milestones for young children. The second training topic is "Positive Climates" and addresses how caregivers interact with young children utilizing basic concepts such as respect and cooperating with others. This training will be held at the Prince George Public Library. You may contact Michelle Ferguson at 733-2650 ext. 115 for additional information. Training is scheduled to begin at 9:30 am. Advanced registration is required.



**February is Benefit Programs Specialist
Appreciation Month.**

Currently Prince George has 5 Benefit Programs Specialist and 1 Supervisor who serve the residents of Prince George County. Tom Steinhauer, Director of VDSS Benefits Programs stated that Benefit Programs Workers are the first line defense between hunger and poverty for low income Virginians. They are skilled and responsible for determining eligibility for one or more public assistance programs. They must have a firm grasp on very complex program rules. They have direct

contact with individuals and families and must use critical interviewing skills to accurately assess the applicant's circumstances. They must use a balance of compassion and judgment to obtain factual information from the applicant. They are faced with several challenges- increasing caseloads, communication with a diverse population, assisting families who are extremely stressed, complex policy, and staffing shortfalls. Despite the challenges and demands they get the job done.

THANK YOU TO OUR AMAZING BENEFITS STAFF

Kim, Tyris, Tina, Joyce, Anita and Donna

HAVE YOU HEARD?

Prince George Department of Social Services does Outreach.

We are available to meet with your business, civic, social or religious organization and bring to you useful information regarding the programs and services offered by your local department of Social Services.

If you have any questions or want to set up a session you can contact Ms. Donna Glass at 733-2650, or by email at donna.glass@dss.virginia.gov.

LET US KEEP YOU INFORMED



Just Press 6

We have exciting news on how to contact staff directly at Social Services!! You no longer have to wait through the voice mail message and then wait for a receptionist to answer to direct your call. You can be directly connected to staff by simply pressing **6** to access the company dial by name directory.

All you need is the first three letters of the staff's last name you are contacting and you will quickly be directed to the intended staff. This additional feature was added to expedite easy access to staff.

Remember, dial 733-2650 and then **press 6**.

ADMIN CORNER

Apply for social services benefits from the comfort of your home!

It is much easier to apply for benefits with the Department of Social Services than it has ever been.

From the comfort of a resident's home, a citizen can log in to <https://commonhelp.virginia.gov> and apply for services. A good place to start is selecting "Am I Eligible", which will assist residents in knowing all benefits that they may be eligible to receive.

If access to a computer is a problem, no worries, Social Services has two computers that may be used by the public to apply for benefits. In addition, residents can apply at any public library through public access computers. The Prince George Library is open Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday from 12-noon – 7 p.m., Wednesday,

10-5 p.m. as well as Friday and Saturday, 12:00 noon to 6 p.m.

This is the way of the future so we are encouraging all residents to take a look. The on-line application will give residents quick and easy access to determination regarding their benefits.

We care what you think!!

Months ago we added a comment card box to the front lobby. We encourage all visitors to take a few moments to complete a comment card about their experience with Social Services and staff. Any comments regarding improvement in customer services are always welcome. Information you provide is kept confidential.

**Prince George
Department of
Social Services**

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We're on the web!
www.princegeorgeva.org