

HOW

Helping Our Women

Newsletter May 2023



CONTACT US

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Visit our website:
helpingourwomen.org

Facebook: Helping Our Women
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HOW SERVICES

In addition to the rides and stipends we provide, **HOW has a food & personal care products pantry.**

Face masks & rapid COVID tests remain available for pick-up or delivery.

The Barnstable County COVID19 Community Level is MEDIUM, so **we are not currently requiring masks in the office.**

All our services are free, thanks to donors and grant funding. We do accept donations for rides.

Hello,

May is mental health awareness month! Mental health and behavioral healthcare is one of our biggest passions and we feel strongly about ending the stigma that comes with having a mental health diagnosis. If you struggle with your mental health, we at HOW see you, we hear you, we support you, and we will not judge or shame you. Asking for help is always the first step. Speak out, stay strong, and take care of your mental health this month and always. This newsletter has some tips to do just that! Also, be sure to read the attached letter from Ella, as well as the note about Eastham office hours ending until renovations are complete.

-Gwynne & Ella

Safe Housing and Mental Health

Your home doesn't need to be perfectly tidy, but some house basics are essential for your safety. Your living space shouldn't have the potential to cause health issues – exposure to things like mold, chemicals, and uncleaned animal mess puts you at risk of physical and mental health challenges. Safe, stable, and healthy home conditions set the foundation for achieving and maintaining good mental health.

It is Arthritis Awareness Month, too! You can prevent arthritis by practicing gentle stretching, maintaining a health weight, and eating healthy fats like fish, avocados and nuts.

ASKING
FOR HELP IS
OK

"Real Women, Real Talk" - Wellfleet Library

Join Linda Schwarz and Beryl Meyer for an inclusive group for the women of Wellfleet to talk about hopes, dreams, frustrations, and anything that's on your mind and matters to you as a Wellfleet woman. Monday, May 15, 2023 from 6:30 PM 7:30 PM at Wellfleet Public Library. Light refreshments and laughter included.

Have you talked to Mary or Ella yet about your stipend?

We still have a few people who haven't updated their bills! Call us to let us know what you'd like to do with the increased HOW monthly stipend! We've increased it from \$65 a month to \$100. It can go to a bill of your choice, a healthcare expense or even your rent!
Not getting the stipend? Call us to see if you're eligible!

QUESTIONS ABOUT RENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS OR SNAP (FOOD BENEFITS)?

Call Ella!

REMINDER

We will be answering phones until 4pm each day. Calls that come in after 4pm will go to voicemail, so we can focus on the requests and needs of the day.

YOUR TEAM AT HOW

Ella Anderson

Social Worker/Client Services Manager

Mary Berry

Office Manager

Gwynne Guzneau

Executive Director

Victor Kamil

Americorps VISTA Volunteer Resource Developer

Annette Medina

Pantry Manager

Lisa Phillips

Volunteer Coordinator

****Now Recruiting****

Americorps VISTA Community Food Project Coordinator



Mental Health and Boundary Tips with Heavy Conversations



Do you find yourself feeling burned out, exhausted, or stressed after certain conversations and interactions? It might be because the boundaries are blurred with that conversation or the topic is really heavy. Here are some tips for how to handle boundaries in those situations:

- Don't be afraid to say "I'm not available to discuss this right now, but I care about you and we can talk later," or "I am pretty limited in the support I can give you right now."
- After a difficult conversation, try taking a walk outside, or writing your feelings down on paper or in a journal.
- Call a friend, family member or your mental health provider for further support to process a difficult conversation.
- Remember - "No," or "Sorry, I can't," is a complete sentence when you don't feel able to engage in a heavy conversation.

Important Food Resource Updates

- **SKIP is now closed for summer and the Lower Cape Outreach food collaboration with HOW has ended for the season** due to the incoming hot weather and food safety concerns. Call Ella for more food resources to supplement your needs.
- Massachusetts is providing extra SNAP benefits in the beginning of April, May, and June. The state-funded extra benefits are up to 40% of the difference between one's normal monthly SNAP benefit amount and the maximum SNAP amount for their household size. Visit Mass.gov/ExtraCOVIDSNAP for more info.
- Enroll in the HOW mobile pantry for monthly food deliveries!

Due to popular demand, our Peer Support Group

at St. Mary of the Harbor will **STAY WEEKLY** instead of going to the first Tuesday of every month! We had initially planned on doing it monthly instead, but since so many people requested we keep it weekly, we will still be doing it every Tuesday from 11:00 to 12:30.

We hope to see you there for coffee, tea, and connection.

Help us recognize a volunteer!

Nominate your **Favorite HOW Volunteer for the HOWIES** Let us know if a HOW volunteer made a difference in your life.

Call Lisa at 508-487-4357 or email lisa@helpingourwomen.org

YOU ARE NOT ALONE IN THIS

UPDATE:

HOW staff office hours in Eastham office will be ending temporarily due to construction, which will go throughout the summer. Stay tuned!