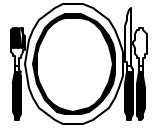


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# CABHN FEVER



## Summer Food Program Workshops

Thousands of Connecticut children and families who rely on the free and reduced price school meals program are frequently left with few options in the summer months to replace the nutritious meals that are provided. The Connecticut Association for Human Services (CAHS) will be offering several regional half-day workshops to make people aware of two important anti-hunger programs that will help to alleviate the usual summer time burden at Connecticut's food pantries and on household food budgets.

These free workshops will present detailed information about the Food Stamp Program and the Summer Food Service Program. CAHS will provide plenty of ideas for new ways to reach

clients in need and will make sure that you leave the workshop with materials and resource guides that will help you to refer clients, friends, or family members as summer approaches.

For information, contact Tracy Helin at (860) 951-2212, ext 236, or email [thelin@cahs.org](mailto:thelin@cahs.org).

### CAHS Workshop Dates & Locations:

**May 20** 1-4PM, Danbury Public Library  
170 Main Street, Danbury

**June 3** 9AM-12PM, Housatonic Comm. College, 900 Lafayette Blvd., Bridgeport

**June 10** 9AM-12PM, Naugatuck Valley Comm. College, 750 Chase Pkwy, Waterbury

**June 17** 9AM-12PM, Gateway Comm. College, 60 Sargent Dr. New Haven



## Summer Camps

**Camp CONNRI** - Registration for Camp CONNRI has started for Greater Hartford area children ages 7-11 years and adult 50+ years who might enjoy a week at camp. This experience offers an affordable vacation for children and adults and an opportunity to enjoy an exciting retreat filled with recreational activities. Camp CONNRI is located in Ashford, CT, and offers swimming, hiking, boating, arts & crafts, and much more.

There are six summer sessions from 6/30 through 8/13. Registration for Camp CONNRI will be taken by appointment only Monday-Friday from 9:00a.m.-noon and 1:00p.m.-4:00p.m. Registration is held at the Salvation Army of Greater Hartford, 217 Washington Street in Hartford. Information needed to register includes: birth certificate, social security card, medical insurance and income verification. Registration fees are based on income. For more information, call Ruth Rosado at (860) 543-8413 ext. 100.

**Camp Courant is the largest free day camp in the nation.** Your child can attend if he is between the ages of 5 and 12 and lives in Hartford, or if she was a prior Fleet Junior Leadership Program participant. The camp will be open 7/1 through 8/11, 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., M-F. Free bus transportation will be provided.

Registration forms will be distributed to children in the Hartford Public Schools, or they can be picked up at The Hartford Courant Broad Street or Flower Street security desks and at your local branch of the Hartford Public Library. They will also be downloadable in PDF format from [www.campcourant.org](http://www.campcourant.org) in May. For info, email Carrie Kistner at [ckistner@campcourant.org](mailto:ckistner@campcourant.org) or call (860) 241-3750



## Are You Eligible for a Pardon from Your Criminal Record?

Getting a job can be tough if you have a criminal record. Employers have the right to ask about your convictions, no matter how long ago you were convicted. But you can apply for a pardon if at least 5 years have passed since you completed your most recent sentence (including any period of probation). A pardon can be absolute (total) or conditional (partial). If you are granted an absolute pardon for any conviction, that charge will be erased from your record. If an employer asks you whether you have ever been arrested, charged, or convicted, you can answer "NO" if your record has been erased.

Applying for a pardon requires some time and effort. You must get a copy of your criminal record from the state police, get a certified copy of the record from the court, write a personal statement, get three character

references, and complete a long application. In Connecticut, applications are accepted and hearings are held throughout the state at least once every three months. Of 61 petitions that made it to hearings, 52 pardons were granted by the Parole Board for its February 2005 session.

To request an application for a pardon, contact: Board of Pardons and Paroles, 55 West Main St., Waterbury, CT 06702; or call (203) 805-6605. (An application is also on the Dept. of Corrections website ([www.ct.gov/doc](http://www.ct.gov/doc)), then click on link to Board of Pardons and Paroles.) If your criminal record has kept you from getting a job, housing, or other benefit, and you are eligible for a pardon but need help with the pardons process, call Statewide Legal Services at 1-800-453-3320.



## Report Details Issues Facing SAGA Medical Participants

LARCC has issued a report providing detailed information on the 29,000 Connecticut residents who rely on SAGA Medical for their basic health care needs. SAGA Medical serves as a life-line for individuals who are not eligible for health care through Medicaid or any other federal or state program. Despite SAGA Medical being a last resort for these individuals, services covered have been seriously cut and funding to health clinics and hospitals for the care of this population has been capped at 2003 levels.

### Major findings include:

- In 2004, at least 70% of SAGA recipients received behavioral health services and more than half of the recipients are believed to have co-occurring mental health and substance abuse diagnoses.
- The very low income limit of the program makes it difficult for participants to maintain eligibility if they are employed – creating a loss of access to healthcare and to medication affecting their mental health status. To be eligible for SAGA Medical, participants' incomes must be between \$5,714 and \$6,898 a year, depending on the region of the state in which they reside.
- The elimination of coverage for nonemergency medical transportation has played a major role in missed appointments and the ability to access health care providers in general. This is especially true in areas of the state with few participating providers and no access to public transportation.

The report was funded by Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut. To view the full report go to [www.larcc.org](http://www.larcc.org) .❖

## The Social State of Connecticut 2004

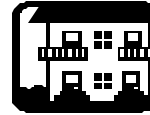
The Commission on Children released its 11th annual report, "The Social State of Connecticut 2004," which provides a "social health index" to track and measure the quality of life in Connecticut. The Commission on Children, with the financial support of the William S. Graustein Memorial Fund, published the 2004 edition of the Connecticut Index of Social Health based on data from 2002. Below are a few highlights of the report.

- High School dropout rates improved to the best on record since 1970.
- Violent crime rate declined and hate crimes have decreased. This includes murder, robbery and aggravated assault.
- Child abuse is the second worst on record.

- Income inequality has worsened by 49 percent since 1970.
- The state's non-elderly population without health insurance increased to 12.4 percent.
- The proportion of personal income spent on health was 14.2 percent, establishing a new worst rate on record.
- Unemployment, health and housing costs worsened for second year in a row.
- As the gap between the rich and poor shrank modestly this year, the poverty rate continues to rise indicating that inequality remains a serious challenge for the state.

The study is 84 pages and can be downloaded from the Commission on Children's website [www.cga.ct.gov/coc](http://www.cga.ct.gov/coc).❖

## Housing Voucher Funding Cuts Threaten Families



Because of changes in the way Section 8 housing vouchers are funded, local housing authorities are making changes in their Sec. 8 programs that are hurting families. The President's new federal budget proposal may result in even more problems.

Under its new system, HUD provides only a fixed (and declining) amount of money for vouchers. If rents rise or tenant incomes fall (e.g., if a tenant is laid off from work or loses TFA), the housing authority will not have enough money to pay its share of the voucher costs.

### What Are Housing Authorities Doing to Cut Costs?

- Terminating Section 8 participants for minor rule violations. Termination from Section 8 may prevent a family from qualifying for housing assistance in the future. Families facing termination should get legal help immediately.

- Refusing to approve a new apartment when a family wants to move.
- Refusing to give landlords renewing a Section 8 lease any rent increase, even for inflation.
- Restricting the ability of a tenant to move to a different town.

Some housing authorities in Connecticut have even said publicly that they may need to terminate some families that have not violated any rules, just to save money.

Some of these actions may be legal; some may not. Families who are facing these problems should get legal help to make sure their rights are protected.

**(See Voucher Cuts p. 3)**



## Appropriations Committee Passes State Spending Proposal for Next Two Years

The Appropriations Committee of the state legislature has passed its version of the spending side of the state budget. The proposal, which must still be considered by the full House and Senate and the Governor, contains some significant differences from the Governor's budget proposal which was announced in February.

Below is a summary of important items in the Appropriations Committee budget:

### Health Care

✓ **Restore** coverage for parents to families with incomes up to 150% of the federal poverty level (limit has been at 100% for parents for the past two years). Cost: '05-'06 - \$50 million; '06-'07 - \$70 million.

✓ **Cut** transitional medical assistance (TMA) for families transitioning off Medicaid from two years to one year. Cost: '05-'06 - \$0; '06-'07 - \$13.4 million.

✓ **Restore** presumptive eligibility for Medicaid and maintain self-declaration of income provisions. Cost: '05-'06 - \$5.5 million; '06-'07 - \$5.5 million.

✓ **Restore** 20 staff positions at DSS to assist in timely processing of Medicaid applications. Cost: '05-'06 - \$1 million; '06-'07 - \$1 million.

✓ **Restore** Medicaid coverage for independent providers of podiatry, physical therapy and chiropractic services. Cost: '05-'06 - \$2.5 million; '06-'07 - \$2.5 million.

✓ **Create** a comprehensive wrap-around system for ConnPACE participants and people eligible for both Medicaid/Medicare so that they do not lose access to prescription drugs when the Medicare Part D Prescription Drug program is implemented. Cost: '05-'06 - \$40 million; '06-'07 - \$70 million.

✓ **Impose co-pays** and premiums on lower-income children in HUSKY B and increases co-pays and premiums on other children in HUSKY B program. Cost: '05-'06 - \$2.2 million; '06-'07 - \$4.8 million.

✓ **Allocate \$1 million** to fund additional services needed by SAGA medical participants. (This is designed to restore some of the services cut over past years, including non-emergency transportation. It is unclear how this would be administered.)

✓ **Do not impose** Governor's co-pays on Medicaid fee-for-service participants (usually elderly or disabled people). Cost: '05-'06 - \$7.8 million; '06-'07 - \$8.3 million.

### Housing

✓ **Provide 150 rental certificates** for supportive housing units. Cost: '05-'06 - \$.7 million; '06-'07 - \$1.6 million.

### Income Support

✓ **Provide funding** so that federal cost-of-living increase will be passed through to State Supplement recipients. Cost: '05-'06 - \$1.5 million; '06-'07 - \$3.0 million.

### Immigrants

✓ **Continue state-funded benefits** for recent legal immigrants in the food stamp, state medicaid and TFA programs (Governor proposed cutting these). Cost: '05-'06 - \$7.3 million; '06-'07 - \$7.9 million (virtually all in state medicaid costs). ❖

### How Are Tax Dollars Spent?

Find out by going to this web site: [www.nationalpriorities.org/taxday2005/taxday05.html](http://www.nationalpriorities.org/taxday2005/taxday05.html) and click on Interactive Tax Chart. ❖

## TANF Update:

The federal TANF block grant program is currently operating under an extension which runs through June 30, 2005. Last month, it was thought that the full Senate would take up the reauthorization bill passed by the Senate Finance Committee, known as the "PRIDE Act", separate from the budget discussions. (See article in March, 2005, CABHN Fever.) However, it now appears that TANF will be considered within the budget bills, rather than in a stand-alone reauthorization bill. ❖

## Voucher Cuts (Cont.)

### What Can You Do?

☐ Learn more about the problem at [www.cbpp.org/pubs/housing.htm](http://www.cbpp.org/pubs/housing.htm) and [www.nlihc.org/](http://www.nlihc.org/).

☐ Refer families needing legal assistance to Statewide Legal Services at 860-344-0380 (Hartford and Middletown) or 800-453-3320 toll free.

☐ Encourage your local housing authority to involve its voucher holders, landlords and the public in trying to minimize harm. A public process may help the housing authority find ways to save money without hurting families.

☐ Urge your members of Congress to support full funding for the housing choice voucher program. ❖

**Call Your Legislator** 

House Dems	1-800-842-1902
House Reps	1-800-842-1423
Senate Dems	1-800-842-1420
Senate Reps	1-800-842-1421
Gov's Office	1-800-406-1527

## Youth & Democracy Forum

DemocracyWorks is hosting a **Youth and Democracy Forum** on **Saturday, April 30** from **1:00-3:00p.m.** in the North Lobby of the **State Capitol** in Hartford. It is the first event in the *DemocracyWorks Roundtables: Voices of Democracy Series*. Young people between the ages of 16-24 are invited to attend this "Civic Mall" featuring informational booths with opportunities to get involved in their communities and explore the power of their voices in the democratic process. Rashad Robinson, Communications Director of Right to Vote and longtime advocate for young people in civic participation, will speak regarding the need for increased civic engagement and honest discussion on issues that affect young people. Connecticut State Legislators have also been invited to speak.

For more information, please visit [www.democracyworksct.org](http://www.democracyworksct.org). To R.S.V.P. for the forum, please call (860) 727-1157. ❖



## Save the Dates!

**June 7, 2005** is National Hunger Awareness Day. To find out how you can get involved, go to [www.hungerday.org](http://www.hungerday.org).

**May 12, 2005**, 2-5 p.m., Spring Youth Job Fair will be held in the City Hall Annex in Bridgeport. The fair is for High School and College students in the Greater Bridgeport area. ❖

## United Illuminating Will Pay You \$50

Running an old second refrigerator or freezer can run up your bill and put an unnecessary strain on our power supplies. If you have a fridge or freezer that is at least 10 years old, give UI a call and they will come haul it away, recycle it in an environmentally friendly way and then pay you \$50. The check will be sent to you 4-6 weeks after the pickup. For more information or to schedule a pick-up, please call (800) 664-2722. ❖

## CABHN Meetings held 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of the month

9:30 - 11:30 am

### Upcoming Meetings: May 6th & June 3rd

Community Renewal Team  
(CRT)  
555 Windsor St., Hartford

May 6th Topics:

Child Care Programs

Update on State Budget Issues

Guest Speaker: Helene Figueroa,  
CAHS

**See you there!**

*The Connecticut Alliance for Basic Human Needs (CABHN) is a statewide network of individuals, community groups and organizations which supports and promotes advocacy on low-income issues. For more information, please call (860) 278-5688.*

Legal Assistance Resource Center of CT  
and  
CABHN (Connecticut Alliance for Basic Human Needs)  
80 Jefferson Street  
Hartford, CT 06106

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