



THE COMPASSIONATE CONNECTIONS
CENTER SPRING 2024 ISSUE

SPRINGING FORWARD



One thing that should be known about the Compassionate Connections Center is that when we say things are “slow,” we’re lying through our teeth. In the just over 3 years that we’ve been open, the--mostly controlled--chaos has only been growing and growing. We’ve continued to add on programs, partnerships, and pantry items with no end in sight. And the biggest change we’ve had since our opening in 2021 is just right around the corner: a brand new building!

This issue of the CCC newsletter is dedicated to all of the new changes--those we’ve already had and those that are on the horizon. We are a restless bunch, and each new opportunity brings a fresh feeling of excitement to our days. We hope that all of our supporters are ready to jump on this swiftly moving train with us because we’re just getting started.

SPRING 2024

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Compassionate Connections Inc.
@ThecompassionateconnectCenter

HELP FOR THE HOMELESS HYGIENE DRIVE

Year 3: Bigger and Better



Once you've done something three times, it becomes a tradition, and we couldn't be happier that the Help for the Homeless Drive has become one of ours.

Help for the Homeless is a hygiene drive created by the *Family Network* that is dedicated to stocking the shelves of crisis centers and programs across the state of Wisconsin. And for three years, the CCC has been one of those centers. The drive depends on the community, looking for businesses and community members who are willing to host a drive at their location featuring every hygiene product you could possibly think of!

At the Compassionate Connections Center, we are fortunate to have a community that is so ready to help. Boxes all across town were filled to the brim with shampoo, toothbrushes, tampons, everything. In our Help For the Homeless 2024 drive, we were able to collect \$10,950 worth of products across 27 collection sites. And when we say bigger and better, we mean it, because that's \$4,000 more than the previous year. Every single item went to immediate use, sometimes in ways that feel almost too perfect.

Fleet Farm very generously donated multiple boxes of deodorant. What else would happen but the schools contacting us next week in desperate need of deodorant for their middle schoolers? Without the help of Fleet Farm and many others, our deodorant stock would have been entirely depleted. Instead, we were able to provide them with all the stock they needed, and still have enough for our pantry.

We would like to thank all of our community participants: American Family Insurance, Bank First, Brewed. A Coffee Shop, Christ Congregational Church, Clintonville Area Chamber of Commerce, Clintonville Police Department, Family Dentistry, Elizabeth Ruskosky, First State Bank, Fleet Farm, Fox Communities Credit Union, Gail and Mike Klemman, Griebenow Eyecare, Riverside Furnace, St. Mary's Catholic Church, St. Rose Catholic Church, State Farm Insurance, Sun Valley Manor, The Hideout Bar LLC, No Boundaries, United Methodist Church, Walgreens, Walker Forge Inc, Woodland Badgers, Clintonville Public Library, and Pat Schley.



We would also like to thank our army of volunteers who came together to sort through boxes and count every item donated to us. This event is not something we can do on our own by any stretch of the imagination. If you're wondering how these donations impact your community, take it from one of our frequent pantry clients. She and her family have experienced setback after setback, and it is with donations like these that they can set their lives on track again: "Let me tell you, this all matters. The amazing staff has shown our family what it means to be a part of a community that cares."

THE MONTHLIES PROJECT:

Fighting Period Poverty in the Clintonville School District

Since our opening, one of our major missions has been working to eliminate period poverty (the lack of access to menstrual products) through our personal hygiene pantry, where clients can come in once a month and pick up whatever products they may need. But while we've been successful in helping those who come into our center, we've known since the beginning that the real issue is not going to just walk through our doors. Period poverty overwhelmingly affects teenage girls, but with one of our newer partners, *The Monthlies Project*, we were finally able to reach our most vulnerable clientele.

The Monthlies Project is a community initiative providing menstrual health products to school-aged students and educating them on the topic of period poverty. At the start of the new year, the CCC has joined its community of partners, and we couldn't be happier with the way that we've been able to work together thus far. Through this partnership, we've not only been able to keep our personal hygiene pantry stocked but also become a conduit between the Monthlies Project and the Clintonville Schools through our Period Pouches program this spring.



The new program entails stuffing small, fashionable bags with a supply of products including tampons, pads, panty liners, and cleansing wipes, with additional products available upon request. These pouches can be picked up from the school nurse, and refilled each month! And what is most exciting is how these pouches *blend in*. It could be anything--a pencil pouch, a wallet, even a snack bag--something that these teenage girls don't have to be embarrassed to have in their backpack. The Monthlies Project has also provided us with Thinx period underwear and black leggings that we can provide to be given out upon request at the schools.

As of this spring, we have been able to give 100 pouches to the Clintonville School District and 50 to the Marion School District, with hopes to increase this count at the start of the new school year. We have always been passionate about finding new ways to reduce the threat of period poverty in the Clintonville Community. With our new partnerships--both with the Monthlies Projects and the schools--we have come even closer to reaching that goal. We hope to continue our partnership with the Monthlies Project for many years to come.

KEEP CALM AND COOK ON!

Healthy Cooking for the Whole Family



Being able to cook healthy, fresh meals is something that many believe to be a luxury. Most think it is easier, quicker, and cheaper to eat out or make minute meals. We at the CCC know this not to be true, which is why we're partnering with FoodWise to host Keep Calm and Cook On!

Keep Calm and Cook On is an initiative created in partnership with the Compassionate Connections Center and FoodWise, a University of Wisconsin-Madison extension dedicated to educating participants on nutrition. The program includes a parent-child cooking class held once a month throughout the summer, each focusing on a different, seasonal, Wisconsin-grown fruit or vegetable.



The class has a two-fold mission. First, to show how a family can utilize fresh, canned, and frozen produce that you may already have in your pantry but just don't know how to use. The second is to show how kids can be involved in the kitchen.

To begin the class, kids are invited to do a fun activity while their parents or guardians learn about the nutritional and functional application of the dish that they are going to be preparing. Each dish aims to show how preparing meals for the family doesn't have to be a stressful endeavor. Once the parents are prepped, the kids are invited back



to help make the dishes. All ingredients and cooking supplies are provided, and each recipe is easy enough for all ages to participate in.

This summer, we are holding four classes:

- **May 15th: Yes, to Fruits and Veggies; Asparagus Mushroom Melts**
- **June 12th: Making Recipes Work for You; Super Salads**
- **July 17th: No More Mealtime Madness; Tuna Salad with Cucumbers**
- **August 21st: Shopping at the Farmers Market; Quesadillas**

WE'RE MOVING!

A look at our new space and all we're hoping to do with it

While each new opportunity has brought a fresh feeling of excitement to the staff at the CCC, there was also the understanding that we had outgrown our current space and then some. We went from wondering how we could use all of this space to keeping things in our cars because there was zero extra room where we could squeeze one more box of shampoo. So, towards the end of last year, we began the process of obtaining a new location that could fit our growing organization.



We could not be happier with what we found. Our new building is located at **143 South Main Street**. The centralized location is a step towards making the community and all of its visitors even more aware of us, as well as being much easier to find for those in need of our services.

But more than the advantageous location, we are thrilled about the size! The new building dwarfs our current space, and because we are full owners, we can build, tear down, and redesign it as needed. Everyone and everything will have a set space and room to expand as needed. Our hygiene pantry stock will no longer be shoved into a back room the size of a walk-in closet and partially taken up by a cement dog kennel. The new location has a *massive* basement with rows and rows of shelves. So many that we'll be able to keep our supply of hygiene products *and* all of the food for the Nutrition Mission and *still* have room to spare.



That is the most exciting part: now, every single one of our programs can be under our roof. We've worked hard to create a space that is welcoming for all who come in.

BACK-TO-SCHOOL CLOTHING RESOURCE

A sneak peek of one of our largest events, revamped

If we've come to know anything in the 4 summers we've been open, it's that the season is going to be filled with clothes, clothes, and more clothes. This summer will be no different in that regard, but the look of our Back-to-School Clothing Resource is being entirely revamped for the 2024 edition. With the opening of our new building, one thing that we'll *finally* have is the space to host the resource in our own space.

The resource will be held on July 16th at our new building on Main Street and we will be partnering with the Community Clothes Closet out of Menasha, Wisconsin. For the past almost two years, we have created a relationship with the Community Clothes Closet. Having very similar missions, we have been able to bring smaller-scale clothing resources to the community throughout the school year and not solely right before the school year begins.

Pre-registration is LIVE NOW and will be open until June 28th. All Clintonville Area School District Students are welcome to sign up their kids ages pre-k to seniors. Make sure to follow us on Facebook to stay up to date on the details!

TRAVELING CLOSET
Back to School

Clintonville School District Students 4K-12th
LIMITED SPOTS | REGISTER TODAY!

JULY 16TH CLINTONVILLE



Hey Brainiacs! Mark your calendars, **Trivia Night 2024 will be held on October 17th at Mathews Supper Club**. With its closeness to Halloween, we're looking to make this year's trivia extra spooktacular. Start thinking of your favorite ideas, because we would *love* to see everyone's best costumes. Of course, there will also be the return of raffle prizes, 50-50, and a full bar for drinks - just with a *hint* of Halloween. Look for more information about sign-ups and raffle prizes on our Facebook page as we get closer to the date. But for now, mark it in your calendars, October 17th is for the Brainiacs.

DONATION ITEM OF THE MONTH

January: Chapstick and Lotion

February: Shaving Cream and Disposable Razors

March: Toilet Paper and Kleenex

April: Baby Wipes and Deodorant

May: Shampoo and Conditioner

June: Body wash and Hand Soap

July: Feminine Hygiene Products

August: Q-Tips and Band-aids

September: Toothbrush and Toothpaste

October: Laundry Detergent and Dish Soap

November: Diapers and Pull-ups

December: Hats and Mittens