Happy New Year!! It’s a fresh year and time for a new beginning! Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) focuses on helping participants connect to, and advance in the workforce. Activities towards this goal may include school, job training or job search.

No matter how big or small a goal is, the first few steps are usually the most important and are sometimes the hardest. Without them, we may always remain just where we are, wondering what the future may hold. Sometimes progress requires a few steps backward to move forward again; we may make mistakes or revert to old habits. Remember to think of these setbacks as temporary and not a reason to give up. Instead, use the lessons learned as a tool to move forward. Life rewards those willing to take steps forward, because by persevering, a better life will be within our reach.

Your FSS Team, Rachel, Susan, Amanda and Julia, are here to support you on your path to success! We ask that each of you empower yourselves to take those first steps and continue to take steps towards your FSS goals. We look forward to spending a new and even better 2020 with you!!!

The FSS Team ~ Rachel, Susan, Julia and Amanda

―“Success is not a big step in the future, success is a small step taken right now.”―

~ Picture Quotes.com

We Value Your Ideas!

FSS Participants: Do you have an idea for FSS News? Maybe you have a poem, a story, a helpful resource, a motivational article, a success, picture, etc. Your knowledge, thoughts, creativity, and ideas can help others and add interest to FSS News!

Community organization partners and/or Program Coordinating Committee Members: Do you want to get the word out about your programs and services? (Please see our call for PCC membership on page 6).

Please contact Julia at 631-471-1215 x 120 or jorlik@cdcli.org.

Resident Services Department

Family Self-Sufficiency Team

Resident Services Director
Rachel Seiler

FSS Case Managers
Susan Forman, Julia Orlik, and Amanda Ruoppoli
Your Bill of Rights

• To be treated with respect
• To express my own opinion
• To show feelings
• To have friends and outside interests
• To privacy and time alone
• To say NO
• To refuse to go out with someone and not feel guilty
• To ask for physical closeness
• To start a relationship slowly
• To be myself
• To change/end a relationship
• To tell my partner that violence will not be tolerated
• To not be dominated
• To spend time with male and female friends against my partner’s wishes

Refuse To Be Abused

If you need to reach out for support for yourself and your children or for legal advocacy in criminal and family court please contact:

L.I. Against Domestic Violence
Hotline: 631-666-8833

Bilingual staff available

Resources

“Instead of doing nothing because I’m overwhelmed, today I will do something, even if it’s small, because it will be one step closer to my goal.” ~behappy.me

PSEG Financial Assistance For assistance with bill concerns, please contact the PSEG Advocate at 516-454-4331; visit psegliny.com/myaccount/customersupport.

Suffolk Care Collaborative The Suffolk Care Collaborative is an alliance of healthcare partners in Suffolk County. Learn more about their community involvement at https://suffolkcare.org/community. Their website provides links to community resources, educational information to stay healthy, a community calendar for upcoming health & wellness events, support groups, and more. Subscribe to their e newsletter.


National Leased Housing Association NLHA Scholarship program for those residing in households that have Section 8. Click http://hudnlha.com/education-fund/. The deadline is April 11, 2020.

Tax Payer Advocate Service This program provides free assistance to individuals with income tax concerns. Before seeking assistance from this program, you must first try to solve the issue through the IRS. Help may be provided to expedite a tax refund in emergency situations such as a needed car repair, utility shut off, or medicine for children. In addition, education is provided in order to prevent any future tax dilemmas. Call toll-free at 1-877-777-4778.

“What is very difficult at first, if we keep on trying, gradually becomes easier.” ~Helen Keller
Congratulations to CDCLI’s 25 Family Self-Sufficiency Program graduates from 2019, who earned a combined $212,001 in escrow funds disbursed to them by the State of New York Division of Housing & Community Renewal based on their increases in earned income while participating in FSS - a vivid testament to their economic success!

Ivelisse Batista, 2019 FSS Graduate
“I thank my FSS Case Manager for the positive feedback and benefits of the FSS Program. In my opinion I recommend this program because it helps you feel good about yourself and makes you think positive. Have faith in yourself. God is good!”

Delveter Casper, 2019 FSS Graduate
“I’d like to say that I am so grateful and blessed to have been a part of the FSS Program and graduated. A big thank you to my FSS Case Manager. She has given me encouragement throughout the program. She always gave me educational and supportive information when needed. I’m happy to have joined this program and seeing some of my goals achieved. I highly recommend this program to others.”

Roxanne Drayton, 2019 FSS Graduate
“The FSS Program was very helpful. My FSS Case Manager was very compassionate and understanding throughout my journey. I don’t think I would have succeeded without the FSS program and am very proud of myself for having completed it. I would refer anyone who needs to get on their feet to FSS.”

Helen Williams, 2019 FSS Graduate
“I would like to thank CDCLI and the FSS Program for introducing me to a dream I wouldn’t think possible, owning my first home! My journey was rough; at times I felt like giving up but with the support of my family and the FSS Program, I am one step closer to my dream. I truly appreciate everyone’s support and I am forever grateful.”

“Challenges are what make life interesting and overcoming them is what makes life meaningful.”
~Joshua J. Marine
Due to the generous contributions of CDCLI staff, the FSS Thanksgiving raffle had 21 winners!! We are thankful to have been able to raffle bags with staple Thanksgiving dinner items, trimmings, and a $10 supermarket gift card to 15 families, $50 gift cards to two families and $25 Kohl’s gift cards to four families!!

❤️ Congratulations to our lucky raffle winners!!

I’m thankful for...

“I’m thankful for housing for my family during these difficult times, to God and to the CDCLI Section 8 Program.”
~Gertrude Barron

“I’m thankful for my health and family. I am thankful for the support and knowledge I have gained this year.”
~Leslie Clay

“I’m thankful for life; everyday on this beautiful earth is a blessing to me and I am so thankful and grateful!”
~Ketura Barham

“I’m thankful for my family and the many opportunities and programs that CDCLI has to offer.”
~Tyneshia Giles

“I’m thankful for being able to participate in the FSS Program. Also for being blessed with a Thanksgiving basket.”
~Shelita Dozier

“I’m thankful that I am enrolled in the nursing program at BOCES. I’m thankful for my family and my support system. I’m thankful everyday I wake up with a roof over my head and food on my table. I am thankful for the FSS Program.”
~Nicole Dixon

“I’m thankful for my children and their health as well as mine. I’m so very thankful for God always blessing me and my children. Without him, I would have nothing.”
~Sequana Kelly

“I’m thankful for my family, friends, and a second chance at life.”
~Grady D. Glasgow Jr.

“We Invest in Your Dreams℠

www.cdcli.org
We are thankful for our FSS Participants!

“I’m thankful for waking up everyday with healthy children and I am thankful for all the people in my life that are positive and loving and wish nothing but happiness for us.”
~Christie Love

“I’m thankful for my life, my family, for CDCLI making it possible to be on the Section 8 program for many years, and FSS. Thank you very much for your services.”
~Jennie Morelus

“I am thankful for my FSS Case Manager and for the Section 8 program. I have a lovely apartment in a nice neighborhood. There is no way I would be able to afford it otherwise.”
~Chris Richards

“I’m thankful for my family, life, my health, the people in my life and the help and support we receive.”
~Syeeta Robinson

“Everyone who helped us on this holiday. May God bless them all.”
~Anna and Richard Saar

“I am very happy that I won the gift card. I appreciate all the help that CDCLI has given me. CDCLI has become a great blessing in my life and I am forever grateful. Thanks.”
~Lawrence Smith

“I am thankful to have family that loves and supports me, a program that helps and cares about me and my goals to be financially self-sufficient, and also a great Case Manager that helps me with advice and resources. I am so grateful.”
~Catrina Stevens

“I’m thankful first for FSS for helping me with information on things I need; for being so helpful to me. Also, I’m thankful for my health, my family and my job for putting up with me. Thankful for life itself.”
~Tawanna Thomas

“Being in a better place to care for my family, for my health, and the health of my children, looking forward to a prosperous new year.”
~Nicole Tinsley

“Thank you CDCLI for everything. What a great organization.”
~Helen Williams

“We are thankful for our FSS Participants!”

www.cdcli.org
You may qualify to have your taxes done for FREE, if you earn less than $56,000 a year, through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program. They offer electronic filing and your refund can be directly deposited in your account so you can receive it quickly. To learn more about VITA, please visit the IRS website https://www.irs.gov. To locate VITA sites, use the VITA locator tool on the IRS website https://irs.treasury.gov/freetaxprep/ or for Bethpage Federal Credit Union’s list of sites, please click https://www.bethpagefcu.com/~media/Images/bethpage/Page-Content/vita/VITA_Locations_2020.

Another free/low cost option is IRS Free File. Free File tax-preparation and filing software provides step by step guidance through the do-it-yourself process. There are versions for those who earned less than $64,000 and those who earned more than that. To learn more please visit IRS.gov.

Do not use any form of rapid refund. This is actually a loan and you pay dearly for the service. If you file early, your refund will arrive before you know it through fast electronic filing.

Julia Orlik, FSS Case Manager

Program Coordinating Committee

The Partnership for Family Self-Sufficiency Program Coordinating Committee (PCC) meets 5 x a year (January, March, May, September and November) at CDCLI. We welcome FSS participants to become a member of the PCC. The meetings provide the opportunity to network and learn about service updates and new programs that could help you achieve your FSS goals. Organizations such as PSEGLI, Department of Labor, and Catholic Charities attend the meetings. As a PCC member there would be no pressure to speak at the meetings but we would welcome your thoughts and input.

If you would like to attend a meeting, or to learn more, please contact Julia at jorlik@cdcli.org or 631-471-1215 x 120. We hope you’ll considering joining the PCC!

The FSS Team
~Rachel, Susan, Amanda and Julia

Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)
There is one regular and one emergency heating benefit, that does not have to be re-paid. SNAP (formerly food stamps) recipients call 631-853-8820. All others call 631-853-8825. Visit http://otda.ny.gov/programs/heap/. Determine eligibility/apply at mybenefits.ny.gov.

Project Warmth An emergency heating benefit may be available to those who have used their HEAP benefits or are over-income for HEAP. For intake locations, call 2-1-1 (or 1-888-774-7633).
**Steps to Lower Energy Costs**

**Count on Small Things** - When possible use smaller appliances like your microwave or toaster oven instead of your oven.

**Remove Dryer Lint** – It can save you money and keep your home safe.

**Air Conditioners** – Put covers on air conditioners that are outdoors. Clean or change filters regularly.

**Check Refrigerator** – Dirty coils and loose seals make the refrigerator work harder and use energy.

**Turn It Off** - Try a power strip to turn off multiple pieces of equipment like your TV.

**Faucets** – Leaky faucets not only waste water but also wastes money so have them repaired.

**Improve Air Flow** - Organize furniture and rugs away from registers and heating vents.

Donna Craig, *Weatherization Coordinator*

**Step Towards Financial Strength!**

Sign up for CDCLI’s *Financial Fitness Health & Wealth* classes (offered in Nassau or Suffolk) by clicking here or online *Money Management* classes through CDCLI at http://ehomeamerica.org/cdcli

**After Financial Fitness Health & Wealth or E Home Money Management, you’ll have the opportunity to meet with the financial educator to map out a plan to empower you to work towards your financial goals!**

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**Small Steps to Big Savings**

It’s a fresh year with a fresh start. Make 2020 a prosperous one. The new year is a great time to set up an emergency fund. An emergency fund will provide you with security for “when” not just “if” an emergency occurs.

You may be thinking...unexpected bills always come up and it’s hard to save; here is a simple trick. Have your family put all coin change from the day into a jar. At the end of each month, deposit it into your checking account. If you save about $20+ to $35+ each month, it doesn't sound like much until you add it up over a year. About $250 extra this way each year to use on those small unexpected items like field trips or movies could come in handy. Simple, but it works.

Another simple way to save is to have money directly deposited to your savings account. Automating savings makes it easy and effective to save because it puts extra cash out of sight and mind. Even if it is a small amount, you might be surprised at how quickly it adds up and this in turn may motivate you to save more. You can set up direct deposit to put most of your paycheck into checking and a portion into your savings account or use direct deposit at tax time to build your savings.

Happy Saving!! ~Julia Orlik, FSS Case Manager

**Source:** https://americasaves.org/for-savers/save-automatically/saving-with-direct-deposit
The Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program is a FREE voluntary program for CDCLI Housing Choice Voucher participants that provides:

- One-on-one case management
- Links to community resources such as childcare, education, job training, financial education and coaching, etc.
- Potential to earn an escrow savings. This is a cash savings account put aside by NY State based on increases in your household earned income.
- Potential for voucher homeownership
- On-line quarterly newsletter with valuable resources & articles

Here are some 2019 FSS Graduate testimonials:

“I am very happy to be able to say that since joining this program I have been able to gain control of my finances. Being a single mother on Long Island is hard but if you strive for improvement and to empower those around you, anything is possible.” ~Heather Brown

“This program is very helpful in getting participants on their feet. The Case Managers are very nice and informative and take pleasure in your success! I would recommend this program to anyone who is looking to better their circumstances.” ~Crystal Jones

Invest in yourself and your family!

To find out more about the FSS Program please contact Susan at 631-471-1215 x 213 or sforman@cdcli.org, or return this tear off with your recertification packet today!

Name: _____________________________________________________________

Address: ________________________________________________________________________

Phone Number(s):  _____________________________________________________________

Best Time to Call: ________________________________________________________________

Email: ________________________________________________________________