



Our Place Drop-In Center – Bellows Falls, VT

Our Place is a daytime drop-in center, community kitchen, and food shelf that serves the towns of Bellows Falls, Rockingham, Saxtons River, Grafton, Athens, Brookline, and Westminster, Vermont and Walpole, North Walpole and Alstead, New Hampshire. Our Place provides a safe place to rest, eat, shower, socialize, access reading materials, make local and long distance phone calls, and seek guidance and resources to meet basic needs in a respectful and non-judgmental atmosphere. Our Place Drop-In Center provides the following critical services to our community:

- **FOOD SHELF:** Our Place provides free groceries each month to an average of 350 adults and 200 children. Groceries are also delivered to 65 homebound families who are unable to access the food shelf at the center. Emergency food is available at all times.
- **MEALS:** Breakfast, hot lunch and an afternoon snack are provided Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. The self-serve breakfast feeds 15-20 each day, and a hot lunch is served to 35-45 people each day. About 25 people receive snacks each day.
- **DAILY FOOD:** In addition to the food shelf, clients have daily access to free donated breads, bakery goods, dairy, fresh vegetables, fresh fruit, and other food items.
- **NUTRITION EDUCATION:** Nutrition education is provided with posters and informal client/staff interaction. We create a new cookbook each month, which is included with the food shelf and distributed to clients. Each cookbook also contains several tips on smart grocery shopping and healthy eating, which are also posted around the building.
- **SOCIAL SERVICE NEEDS:** We frequently provide assistance in accessing other social service agencies and government programs (such as Food Stamps or Fuel Assistance).
- **HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION:** Funds are available for emergency one-night shelter, and transportation to longer-term shelters. We also provide a list of area landlords, tenant's rights information, referrals, and daytime shelter in the Center.
- **EMERGENCY NEEDS:** We refer clients to agencies for heating fuel, electrical and rental assistance, emergency housing, transportation, and medical or prescription assistance.
- **PERSONAL CARE NEEDS:** Personal care items, towels, linens, child- and adult-sized diapers are available at the center.
- **SHOWER:** A hot shower, towels, and personal hygiene items are available at Our Place.
- **VOLUNTEER/COMMUNITY SERVICE:** We provide opportunities to assist in center's daily operations. Volunteer sources include Vermont DET, the Council on Aging, Green Thumb, Vermont Associates, and the general public.
- **READING MATERIALS:** Daily and weekly newspapers, up-to-date magazines, and free books are always available.
- **ADVOCACY AND SUPPORT:** Staff is always available to assist with support accessing other agencies and support in developing daily living skills.