THE CONNECT CENTER

SEPTEMBER 2025 NEWSLETTER

GREETINGS FROM THE DIRECTOR

How can fall be right around the corner? Summer has a way of flying by and here we are sending kids back to school and starting to see some color already on trees. The Connect Center certainly had a busy summer as we planned and hosted a Garden Tea fundraiser. We raised over ten thousand dollars, which will be used to help clients with basic needs and emergency assistance. We are so grateful to all the guests that attended, for Joel Carlson for preparing the delicious luncheon, for Monique Vernon's scones that were so moist and scrumptious, and for the volunteer servers and helpers. We are also very thankful to our sponsors, all those that gave silent auction items and for those who couldn't come but still gave us a donation. We debuted a heartfelt video that Amanda Lathrop from Leed Sheep Productions made for us that showcases Connect Center clients. The video is now on our website. Please check it out! As we move into the fall, please check the list of items that we are in need of for our clients.









VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Join our team of dedicated volunteers and make a difference in the lives of those we serve.
Opportunities include:

- After School Program helpers in Stillwater
- Community Ambassadors: post flyers, talk with businesses about our program
- Donation Room and Office Organizers
- Mentors for TCC clients
- Help clients create resumes
- Help plan events

REQUESTED DONATIONS

- Full Size Shampoo, Conditioner & Body Soap
- Feminine Products
- Handwarmers
- Hats and Gloves for Adults & Children
- Gas Cards
- Grocery Cards
- Snacks - Easy items for clients living in their vehicles

BACK TO SCHOOL



Preparing children for the upcoming school year involves more than just gathering supplies; it's about setting them up for success academically, emotionally, and socially. Here are some comprehensive tips to help get them ready:

1. **Establish a Routine**: Start reintroducing a school-time schedule a week or two before school starts. Set regular bedtimes and wake-up times to help kids adjust to their new schedule. Gradually reduce screen time, especially before bed, to help them wind down and get adequate sleep.
2. **Discuss Expectations and Goals**: Have a conversation with your children about what they can expect in the new school year and any goals they might have. This helps them mentally prepare and feel more in control.
3. **Set Up a Study Area**: Create a quiet, well-organized space for homework and studying. Ensure it's free from distractions.
4. **Review Academic Material**: Spend some time reviewing material from the previous year or introducing topics they will encounter. This helps them get back into the learning mindset.
5. **Plan Healthy Meals and Snacks:** Start planning balanced meals and snacks that can be prepared ahead of time. A nutritious diet can boost energy and concentration.
6. **Set a Positive Tone:** Talk about school positively. Express excitement about the new things they will learn and the fun activities they will experience.
7. **Address Concerns and Anxieties:** If your child is anxious about returning to school, listen to their concerns and reassure them. Discuss strategies for managing stress and making the school experience positive.
8. **Save on Supplies**: Reuse last year's supplies if they're still in good condition and consider repurposing them. Look for local organizations, churches or community groups that offer free school supplies.
9. **Build Independence**: Encourage your child to take responsibility for their belongings and assignments. Teach them problem-solving skills and encourage them to try resolving issues independently before seeking help.
10. **Celebrate the Start of School**: Plan a fun activity or small celebration to mark the start of the new school year, helping them associate positive feelings with school.

By preparing in these various ways, you can help your child feel confident, organized, and ready to tackle the new school year with enthusiasm.

SAVE THE DATE

FOURTH FRIDAY FOOD & FRIENDSHIP
September 26th from 5:30pm-7:00pm
St. Paul Lutheran Church
509 5th St. S.
Stillwater, MN 55082

Fourth Friday Food and Friendship Community Meals offer opportunities for community members to enjoy delicious meals and participate in fun activities together. Having healthy social connections is crucial to the well-being of people of all ages

PIT STOP -SOUTH WASHINGTON COUNTY
October 9th from 9:00am - 1:00pm
Cottage Grove Armory
8180 Belden Blvd,
Cottage Grove, MN 55016

Organizations will provide resources such as: warm meals, haircuts, food & gas cards, personal care items & clothing, baby items, school supplies and other Washington County resources & services.

CLIENT HIGHLIGHT

A mother fleeing domestic violence was staying with seven people in a two-bedroom apartment before The Connect Center helped her secure housing of her own. The Connect Center covered her July and August rent with help from the St. Paul & Minnesota Foundation, provided essentials from community donations, and connected her to partners for school supplies and furniture. Next, she will apply for childcare assistance so she can return to work full time.

651-231-7807
Main Office: 609 5th Street South, Stillwater, MN 55082
www.theconnectcenter.org