

## **Gather and Grow: Day 1 Changing Needs in Human Services**

**Guest Speaker, Katie Rhodes from Catholic Charities of Chemung/Schuylers**

Overview/Takeaway points from Question and Answer session:

Catholic Charities are umbrella organizations and offer different services in the respective areas that they serve. Recommends that libraries reach out to the specific organization the serves their community.

Catholic Charities of Chemung/Schuylers offers programs/services such as:

Shelter and services for Domestic Violence

Community Kitchen – Meals for community residents

Food Pantry

Homeless Shelter

Pandemic made the organization pivot to provide services in new ways—more phone meetings; more mailing of forms etc; Community Meals were all ‘to-go’; no volunteers; constantly upgrading technology to continue to meet the needs; discovered remote unusual places to meet and counsel clients (parking lots, coffee shops etc) **Many of these changes will continue beyond the pandemic—different places to meet clients are often more convenient for the clients; more ‘to-go’ services or phone services.** Pandemic resulted in new partnerships within the community such as the Highway Department for drive thru events.

**Recommendation to libraries:** Katie mentioned that many Human Services agencies will be seeking alternative places to meet with clients. A chat comment postulated that perhaps libraries could reach out to agencies to be a location for meetings with clients.

The next biggest ‘thing’ is the end of the moratorium on evictions. CC is anticipating an increase in clients needing assistance and therefore looking to hire more case workers. There is money available for rental assistance but not too many are taking advantage of that at this time.

There is a program in the works in our state to assist with mortgage payments. This will probably be in place by the end of the year. Details are still unknown. BUT, if a patron needs assistance—they could reach out to the agency in their county that provides housing/mortgage assistance. That agency may be compiling a waiting list of people to notify when program details are solid.

Always remember Helpline 211 is a great resource.

Libraries are a great place to disseminate information: flyers, posters, reposting social media posts. Katie urges us all to, once again, reach out to foster this relationship with agencies that serve your counties.

Catholic Charities of Chemung/Schuylers will be tabling in the Steele Memorial Library in November to reach the community. Angela Gonzalez from Penn Yan told everyone that she offered space for a display to agencies for a month. It was a great way to share information available in the community.