

MORGAN COUNTY STARTING POINTS FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER 2023 Fall Newsletter

Starting Points staff have been working tirelessly this year to help build resilient families in Morgan County. It is through generous contributions of your time, talent and treasure that we are able to provide programs in nutrition support, parenting skills, life skills, and educational support programs in our schools.

This newsletter contains just a few highlights and activities about Starting Points making an impact over the last few months.

What's Happening?

In 2023 to date, the Starting Points Meal Time Community Kitchen has served 10,883 hot nutritious meals and provided 150 emergency food boxes. In 2022, 12,606 meals were served through the kitchen. No one is ever turned away. This year, the annual Empty Bowls event raised over \$13,000 to continue the mission. Starting Points would like to give a huge thank you to our 2023 event sponsors: Blue Flame, CNB Bank, Kesecker Realty, Jay Lawyer Auctions and our dedicated team of volunteers including the Future Farmers of America (FFA) from Berkeley Springs High School. We would also like to thank our 2023 Dine Out for Hunger sponsors: Canary Grill, Charlotte's Café and the County Inn. From the artists creating bowls to our local soup donors, our community partnerships ensure that no person goes hungry in Morgan County.

The Meal Time Community Kitchen is always in need of community volunteers to help prepare and serve meals Monday, Tuesday and Friday. If you or a group would like to volunteer your time, please contact Sharon Abdelaal at sabdelaal@starting-points.org or 304-258-5600.

What's New?

Starting Points "Empower U" is a Morgan County middle school program which seeks to empower young girls in 6th to 8th grade. The program seeks to enhance the safety and well-being of girls and encourage them through uplifting activities. The goals are to help middle school girls develop good decision making skills while learning about healthy relationships, internet awareness, self-defense, financial literacy and positive body-image. Local women community leaders and parents serve as guest speakers and role models that meet monthly. Activities include Tea Parties, crafting, and Tye-Dye parties to share where leaders share experiences and wisdom with the girls in a relaxed environment. We can already see the significant impact this program is making, when a girl revealed: "I did not know that I could say 'no' before." Funded in part by the Tom and Virginia Seely Foundation.



Because of the success of the “Empower U” program, Starting Points has launched a similar program for young boys in middle school, “Mountain Movers,” led by Devin Abe working out of our new Paw Paw office. Funded by TEAM for WV Children.

We are also excited to have Jeff Rossignol on board, especially with his connections to our community in Paw Paw and his work as a pastor and marketing consultant. Jeff will be working part-time out of the Paw Paw office to start the “Forging Fathers” programs which aims to strengthen parenting skills for dads in Morgan County.

Would you be willing to share your time and talent to serve as guest speaker and role model for our youth? Please contact Audrey Morris at amorris@starting-points.org or 304-258-5600 to find out about volunteer opportunities that enrich the lives of our youth.

Holiday Helpers!

Would you like to make the holidays happier for a local Morgan County family? Each year Starting Points matches families in need with community partners to ensure that families have clothing and children’s toys for the holiday. If you or your organization would like to sponsor a family, please contact Audrey Morris at amorris@starting-points.org.

The logo for Giving Tuesday, featuring the word "GIVINGTUESDAY" in a blue, sans-serif font. The letter "I" is replaced by a red icon of three hands clasped together.

Giving Tuesday – November 28

Starting Points will be participating in Giving Tuesday this year – and we welcome your donations to keep our programs strong and vibrant. Your donations are the reason we make an impact in our community. A recent testimonial from one of our clients:

“Starting Points isn’t only a resource, it’s a lifesaver! Starting Points has been there for my husband and me when we were afraid and alone. We looked everywhere for the resources they offered absolutely free. Not only monetarily, but guilt and shame-free. They are supportive, loving, and caring when we had no one else. They are non-judgmental, kind, and invested. They help fix problems families today are facing. Sometimes people are just people and they need other people. The support of Sharon and Rose has changed our lives. They have cared for, nurtured, and supported us. They have given us hope and help in our darkest times. When we have had no one else they have shown up in the most important moments with smiles, encouragement, and love. Going above and beyond has never been necessary but it’s always given. This is the face every community should have and see everywhere. We will never be able to give enough thanks and appreciation for the love and support that is given and shared through these programs. Thank you for seeing us and not our situation and problems!

You change lives every day... Thank You for Being You!!”

Make a difference and give today, please visit:
<https://www.starting-points.org/donate>