

20 MAIN STREET, CAMDEN NY | 315-820-2638



A collaborative endeavor to serve the Camden community providing the services you need, in one location

Reflecting on 2024: A Year of Growth and Impact at the Camden Life Center

As 2024 comes to a close, we at the Camden Life Center are filled with gratitude and pride for all that we've accomplished together this year. Thanks to the unwavering support of our volunteers, staff, and community partners, we have made a meaningful difference in countless lives. Here are some highlights from an incredible year of service and growth:

2024: An Amazing Year

As we continue to expand therapy services in partnership with Come to the Table Counseling and Helio Health, the growing need for our services in Camden has become increasingly evident.

CLC by the numbers in 2024

- 480 individuals served through our walk-in services.
- 3,600 individuals served through the CNY Mobile Food Bank.
- 551 total orders through our Food Sense program.
- 12 partner agencies hosted on-site.
- Nearly 2,000 volunteer hours contributed, valued at approximately \$60,000.
- 5,780 hours of master's level internship contributions from Utica University, Syracuse University, and Keuka College, with a total of 7 interns on site. These contributions, worth an estimated \$231,200, have significantly amplified our impact.
- Come to the Table Counseling therapists and interns completed 3,750 behavioral health appointments.
- 200 appointments completed by Helio Health for Camden residents.

Additional Accomplishments

- CLC hosted our Inaugural Gala at Burlap and Lace Barn, where we sold out with 200 total guests, raising awareness and celebrating the Camden Life Center—what a beautiful night we had!
- Completed research with Syracuse University on July 31, 2024, and received our final Needs Assessment Report in September 2024.
- Hosted HEAP outreach in; collaboration with Oneida County, Camden Rotary, and Toys for Tots, serving a total of 74 individuals.

Continued on next page ➔

**SAVE
THE
DATE!**

- 12/31-1/1 - Office Closed
- 1/13 - Recovery Cafe Camden LAUNCH!

[HTTP://CAMDENLIFECENTER.COM/](http://CAMDENLIFECENTER.COM/)

Community Events & Education

We offered a wide range of educational programs to support and uplift our community:

- Gamify It! Parent Meet-up Classes
- Adulting 101 for Teens
- Camden Storytelling Events
- One-Day Marriage Retreat with Wendy Pidkaminy, LCSW-R
- Book Club for National Reading Month
- Chalk the Walk to spread Mental Health Awareness
- Hands-Only CPR Training with the Red Cross
- MVCAA Weatherization Presentation
- Walk-in Mental Health Clinic
- Suicide Prevention Rocks Training with Come to the Table Counseling
- Financial Literacy Course with MVCAA
- Wellness Day partnership with Camden Elementary PTO's Color Run.
- Vienna Farmer's Market
- Participation in Camden Homecoming, Halloween Costume Exchange, Spooktacular, and Holiday Stroll.

Monthly Achievements:

Jan/Feb

- Received \$9,000 from the MetLife Foundation to create an emergency food pantry.
- Welcomed a new Partner Agency: Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency.

March/April

- Established a Youth Advisory Council.
- Opened the MetLife Emergency Food Pantry.
- CLC won the "Station of the Year" award from the 50 Forward of the Mohawk Valley AmeriCorps Seniors program.

May/June

- Launched Chair Yoga classes with Tracey Lazore, CttT Therapist.
- Hosted the 4th Annual Wellness Day with over 25 participating agencies.
- Sydney Dean, CLC staff member, earned a Bachelor's degree in Community and Behavioral Health.

July/Aug.

- Received \$98,135 in Reaching Rural funds to expand support to local town courts.
- Welcomed the YWCA as a new partner.

Sept/Oct.

- Secured a \$50,000 Recovery Café Network capacity-building grant.
- Received \$10,000 from the Community Foundation to support youth programming.
- Raised over \$1,000 through MV Gives.
- Expanded emergency food pantry services by installing a Community Fridge with support from the Change Club.

Nov./Dec.

- Secured a \$1,840 grant to begin offering trauma-informed yoga.
- Achieved Zoning Board approval for building signage.
- Announced plans for the Camden Farmer's Market, coming in 2025.
- Received NYS Parenting Education Partnership grant to learn more about the needs of parents in our community.

Looking Ahead

While we celebrate these accomplishments, we are already planning to create even more impact in 2025. We'll continue to strengthen our programs, expand our reach, and build on the incredible foundation laid this year.

Thank you to everyone who has been part of our journey in 2024. Whether you volunteered, donated, or simply cheered us on, you've helped make the Camden Life Center a beacon of hope and support in our community. Here's to a bright future filled with continued growth and service!

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Spotlight of the Month

Connection & Belonging Month

At Camden Life Center, we believe that every individual deserves to feel valued, supported, and connected. This January, we are excited to celebrate Connection and Belonging Month, a time dedicated to fostering connection, building relationships, and creating a sense of belonging within our community.

The theme of Connection and Belonging aligns perfectly with our mission to provide a supportive space where everyone feels they have a place. Whether it's through our outreach programs, volunteer initiatives, or the warm, welcoming atmosphere of our center, we are committed to ensuring that no one in our community feels alone or overlooked.

Introducing the Recovery Café

A cornerstone of our efforts this month is the much-anticipated launch of the Recovery Café, a new initiative designed to strengthen connections and provide a haven of hope. The café will be a judgment-free zone where individuals can come together to share their journeys, offer support, and build meaningful relationships.

The Recovery Café embodies the values of inclusion and community, offering a place where individuals in recovery, as well as their families and friends, can feel seen, heard, and valued. This initiative is a vital step toward creating a stronger, more connected community, where no one has to face life's challenges alone.

Why Connection Matters

Research shows that a sense of belonging can improve mental health, boost resilience, and even enhance overall well-being. Connection helps people feel anchored in their community and supported in their personal growth. For those navigating difficult life transitions, the presence of a supportive network can be life-changing.

At Camden Life Center, we witness the power of connection every day. From the friendships formed among staff, at our programs or the collaborative efforts of our incredible volunteers, our center thrives because of the bonds we create with one another.

Join Us This Month!

We invite everyone to participate in Connection and Belonging Month by:

- Stop in and visit the Recovery Café: Experience the welcoming atmosphere and connect with others in meaningful ways.
- Volunteering with Us: Join our team of dedicated individuals making a difference in the lives of others.
- Sharing Your Story: Inspire others by sharing your journey of connection and belonging within our community.

As we start the new year, let's come together to celebrate the unique value each person brings to our community. Through shared experiences, meaningful conversations, and a commitment to community, we can create a stronger, more unified Camden Life Center family.

Together, we can ensure that everyone who walks through our doors knows they are not only welcome but that they belong.

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Walk-in Clinic

Did you know that the Camden Life Center has a FREE Mental Health Walk -In Clinic?

What: Are you struggling and just need someone to talk to? Not sure what resources may be available to help? Stop in and meet with our team

When: Monday's and Friday's 9am-2pm.

Where: Camden Life Center

Trauma Informed Yoga

Join us for the launch of our Trauma-Informed Yoga Class in January! Led by our compassionate & experienced instructor, Colleen, this class is designed to provide a safe & supportive space where everyone can explore the benefits of yoga.

Colleen is an RYT-500 certified instructor with additional training in mindfulness, meditation, and trauma-informed yoga. With over 20 years of practice, she has a deep passion for sharing how yoga can create balance, healing, and resilience. Colleen's open-hearted approach welcomes all participants to come as they are and discover how yoga can enhance their mental and emotional well-being.

Yoga supports mental wellness by reducing stress, promoting relaxation, and fostering a deeper connection between mind and body. Whether you're new to yoga or looking to deepen your practice, this class is for you.

Class Dates:

- Tuesday, January 7 at 4:00 PM
- Tuesday, January 14 at 5:30 PM
- Tuesday, January 21 at 4:00 PM
- Tuesday, January 28 at 5:30 PM

We invite you to take the first step on your wellness journey. Come experience how yoga can empower you to heal, grow, and thrive!

****This event is brought to you by a generous grant through the Community Foundation****

Quote of the Month

"True connection is found in the moments we dare to show up as we are, and belonging blossoms when we make space for others to do the same."

Chair Yoga

This class adapts yoga positions and poses through the use of a chair which allows for safety, stability, and support. This is an excellent way to increase flexibility, build strength, and develop balance and a sense of well-being. All abilities are encouraged and welcome to attend.

Date: Thursday, January 9th and 23rd.

Time: 12pm (noon)

Location: Camden Life Center's Conference Room

What do I need? Nothing! Just wear comfy clothes (and maybe bring a friend!)

Do I need to sign up? Nope! Just stop in and try it out!

Being a Peer Support in our Community

Hi Camden - I'm Josh Perusse, and I'm honored to serve as a Peer Support Advocate here at the Camden Life Center. I wanted to take a moment to share what this role means to me and how it impacts our community. Being a Peer Support Advocate means showing up with compassion, understanding, and a willingness to walk alongside those who may feel alone or overwhelmed. In our rural and underserved community, it's about much more than emotional support—it's helping people access services, solve challenges like transportation, and most importantly, reminding them that they belong.

This work is incredibly rewarding. Every small victory—whether it's connecting someone with resources or simply being a trusted listening ear—has a lasting ripple effect. It's a chance to see resilience in action, to be a voice of hope, and to strengthen the bonds that make our community stronger.

If you've ever thought about how you can make a difference in the lives of others, consider becoming a Peer Support Advocate. You don't need to have all the answers—just a desire to help and the heart to listen. Curious to learn more? Reach out to me at the Camden Life Center for information. You might discover that this role is exactly where you're meant to be.

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RECOVERY CAFÉ CAMDEN

Introducing Recovery Café Camden: A Community of Connection and Belonging

At its heart, **Recovery Café Camden** is about creating a safe, welcoming space where everyone can find connection, healing, and support. Rooted in the belief that we all belong to one another, Recovery Cafes offer a unique approach to building community, particularly for those navigating challenges such as trauma, grief, loneliness, addiction, mental health concerns, or other life hardships.

But this isn't just a space for those in recovery—it's for anyone seeking a sense of connection and a community to grow with. Whether you're on a personal recovery journey or simply looking to deepen relationships, Recovery Café Camden provides a supportive environment for belonging and becoming.

What Makes Recovery Café Special?

Recovery Cafes are guided by trauma-informed principles and honor multiple pathways of recovery. They recognize that healing and growth require consistent support, authentic relationships, and a place where you can be your true self. By fostering healthy relationships and offering compassionate accountability, our Cafe empowers members to rediscover joy, build resilience, and create lives filled with purpose and service.

Stay connected with us on **Facebook and Instagram**, where we'll share updates, inspiration, and details about how you can get involved.

Membership: At the Heart of the Café

Membership is central to the Recovery Café model. While Recovery Café Camden isn't a drop-in center, becoming a member is free and open to anyone committed to building a healthier, more connected life.

Membership involves three simple commitments:

1. Be drug- and alcohol-free within the Café space.
2. Participate in a weekly Recovery Circle.
3. Contribute to the Café community in a way that feels meaningful to you.



These commitments ensure a foundation of mutual respect, support, and accountability for all members. And when life gets challenging, the Recovery Café community is there to offer understanding and encouragement.

Two Weekly Gatherings Starting in January!

We're thrilled to announce that Recovery Café Camden will begin hosting **two weekly** Recovery Circles starting in January!

Each gathering starts with a shared meal and conversation, followed by smaller, member-led circles where members can share weekly highs and lows, celebrate victories, and find support through challenges.

- Monday Morning Circle: January 13, 10:30 AM–12:30 PM
- Thursday Evening Circle: January 16, 5:00 PM–7:00 PM

Both circles will be held at the **Camden Life Center**.

Recovery Café Camden is more than a program; it's a movement toward deeper connection and mutual care. Whether you're looking for a place to grow or to support others on their journey, we hope you'll join us in building a stronger, more connected community.

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Camden Life Center Partners**Come to the Table Counseling (CttT)**

CttT offers behavioral health treatment for teens and adults both in person and TeleHealth. Self-pay and insurance options available. Call 315-533-2570 or visit www.cometothetablecounseling.com

Center for Family Life and Recovery

Center for Family Life and Recovery supports individuals struggling with addiction, mental health & behavioral issues through a variety of services. Call 315-820-2638 or go to our website www.whenthehelptheshope.com

Helio Health in Camden NY

Helio Health offers a wide range of treatment, counseling, and support programs for mental health and addiction. www.helio.health Office Hours Mon, Tues & Fri 8:00am-3:00pm

Willow Network

Willow Network offers free services including pregnancy testing, ultrasounds, parenting classes, pregnancy loss support, as well as baby items. Contact Willow Network, Camden at (315) 245-2364 or check our Willow Network's website: www.willownetwork.org.

Office Hours Tuesdays 10:00am-4:30pm

National Grid Consumer Advocate:

National Grid will be on site Tuesday, January 21st from 10am-4pm. Are you finding yourself overdue on your energy bill? Does it seem that everything that you are doing isn't moving the balance? Stop in to review and regroup what needs to be done to get your energy bill straightened out.

Resource Navigation for Older Adults:

Bonnie, comes to the Camden Life Center on Wednesdays from 9-12pm to help navigate the confusing system of Medicare and senior and aging services. This month held on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month (1/8, and 1/22).

Tri-County WIC @ the CLC:

WIC helps pregnant women, new mothers, and children under the age of five learn about health and provides assistance in obtaining nutrient-dense foods. Income requirements may surprise you and many people qualify & don't know it. Even working families may qualify. Stop in to the CLC for assistance with applying. WIC will be on-site the first Thursday of the month from 9:30-3:00pm. WIC will be in Camden on Thursday, January 2nd.

Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency (MVCAA):

MVCAA brings a wide range of services to our community including Section 8, HEAP, and all the other programs that MVCAA offers. Mark your calendar for Thursday, January 9th or Tuesday, January 21st from 9am-4pm.

YWCA Mohawk Valley:

The YWCA brings domestic and sexual violence support services to the CLC. YWCA staff will be on-site Tuesday, January 14th from 9:30am-3:30pm.

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CLC Store

Are you interested in purchasing some Camden Life Center gear?

Check out our new online store where you can purchase swag to support and promote the CLC!

<https://store.masteryourimage.com/CLCPUB/shop/home>

Donations Needed

Demand for extra help with grocery basics continue to climb in our community. Consider donating the following items to help:

- Breakfast items: cereal, shelf-stable milk, pancake mix, syrup, or oatmeal.
- Lunch items like peanut butter, jelly, tuna fish, canned chicken, and mayonnaise. Dinner items like Hormel Complete dinners, Chef Boyardee, box mac and cheese, canned fruits and vegetables. Snack items such as granola bars, breakfast bars, and poptarts.
- Hygiene items like deodorant, body wash, and shampoo.

Donations can be brought in during business hours or anytime in our outdoor pantry

Food Resources

Food \$en\$e is a monthly food buying co-op for anyone who wants to stretch their grocery dollars.

Monthly Package- \$20.50
Monthly specials can be purchased in addition to the box.

Location: 20 Main Street, Camden

Order - Mon, January 6th 9-11am

Pick up- Fri, January 24th 1:30-3pm

In person sign ups accept Cash or EBT (SNAP) payments. Want to order online? Visit:

<https://foodsense.foodbankcny.org/>

Need more info?

Contact our office at (315) 820-2638.

The Mobile Food Pantry of CNY Food Bank comes to Camden on **Friday, January 30th at 3pm.**

There are no income guidelines for families to receive food. While supplies last.

Please note: To allow for other scheduled events and pantry set up, **DO NOT LINE UP** on the road or in the parking lot before 2pm. You will be asked to move

Location: 86 Mexico Street, Camden

Volunteer Opportunities!

1. Camden Life Center

Consider volunteering at the front desk, various events, working hands on with community service projects or donating your time and skill to the renovations. Current needs include:

- Front desk shifts (9-12pm; 12-3pm)
- Special events like the Spooktacular and the Holiday Stroll
- Providing mentorship for Youth
- Updating the Riverwalk Display
- Monthly postings around town
- Assisting with Food \$en\$e or Mobile Food Pantry
- Assisting with monthly drives like pet food drive, Thanksgiving food drive or Christmas blessings

2. 50 Forward & AmeriCorps Seniors

AmeriCorps Seniors allows adults 55+ to use their life experiences and skills to help solve community problems.

You can volunteer in a variety of capacities including the Front Desk at the Life Center. For more information on available opportunities:

Call - 315.820-2638

Email: camdenlifecenter@gmail.com

Visit: 50forwardmv.org/volunteer

Office Information:

All services at the Camden Life Center operate during traditional business hours - Monday-Thursday 8:30am-4pm, Friday 8:30am-12pm. For assistance outside this time, contact the following services:

Mental Health Emergency:

- MCAT - 315-732-6228
- Crisis Life - 988 (press 1 for the Veterans Crisis Line)

Emergency Substance Treatment Services:

- Outreach and Engagement team - (315) 401-4288

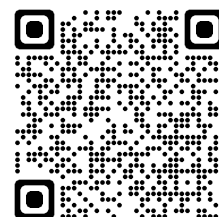
Never Use Alone:

- 800-484-3731 or <https://neverusealone.com>

Social Services After-Hours Emergency

- Oneida County - 315-736-0141

To help promote change in your community, consider a donation to the Camden Life Center:



CAMDEN life CENTER

Events for January 2025

THURS. 2 9:30AM-3:30PM WIC	MON. 6 9AM-11AM Food Sense Sign-ups	TUES. Trauma Informed Yoga 1/7 & 1/21 at 4pm 1/14 & 1/28 at 5:30pm
WEDS. 8 & 22 9AM-12PM Resource Navigation for Older Adults	THURS. 9 9AM-4PM MVCAA	THURS. 9 & 23 12PM Chair Yoga
TUES. 14 9AM-4PM YWCA	TUES. 21 National Grid 10am-4pm MVCAA 9am-4pm	FRI. 24 1:30PM-3PM Food Sense Sign-Ups and Pick-Ups
<p>Daily Services 8:30-4pm:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Come to the Table Counseling Case Management <p>Weekly Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mon, Tues, Fri.- Helio Health 8-3pm Tues.- Willow Network 10:30-4pm 		THURS. 30 3PM Mobile Food Pantry @86 Mexico St. Lineup after 2pm

Events page:



20 Main Street, Camden, NY 315-820-2638



Food \$en\$e

Order and Pick-Up Location: **CAMDEN LIFE CENTER, 20 MAIN STREET, CAMDEN**
 Online ordering now available: <https://foodsense.foodbankcny.org/>

January 2025

FOOD \$ENSE SHOPPERS: Please remember that sites cannot hold any packages after the scheduled pick-up time. If you have a conflict, give your receipt to someone who can claim the package for you. If you have any questions, please speak to the site volunteers when you sign up. **Packages remaining after pick up time will be donated.**

Accepted Payment: **Cash and EBT (SNAP)**

Order date: December 20th, 1:30-3:00pm and Monday, January 6th, 9:00-11:00am Pickup date: January 24th, 1:30-3:00pm

Projected Package for January(Subject to change)- \$20.50

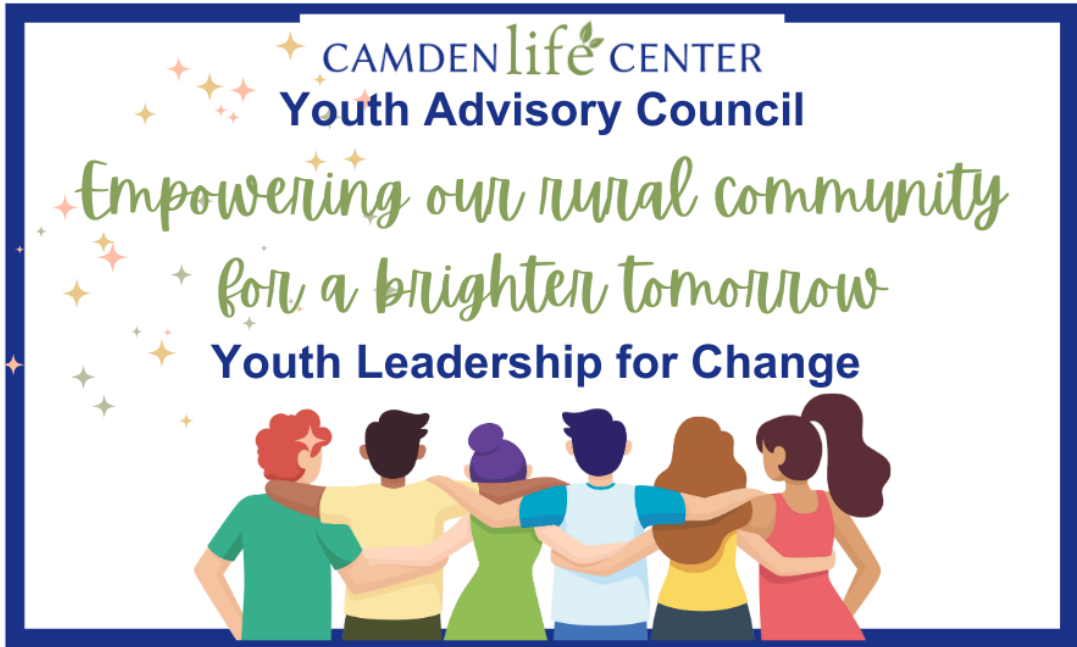
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|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| -Italian Sausage, 1 lb. | -Frozen Pizza, 10.8 oz. | -Mixed Vegetables, 16 oz. |
| -Chicken Breast Portions, 1 lb. | -Cheese Ravioli, 13 oz. | -Diced Tomatoes, 14.5 oz. |
| -Italian Meatballs, 1 lb. | -Pasta Sauce, 26 oz. | -2 produce items |
| -Ground Turkey, 1 lb. | -Cauliflower Soup, 14.5 oz. | |

January SPECIALS:

- **Stuffed Pork Chops, 2 lbs. for \$10.00:** The pork chops are stuffed with apples and cranberries.
- **Chicken Wings, 5 lbs. for \$9.00:** The chicken wings are ready for the air-fryer or grill and are individually quick frozen.
- **American Cheese, 5 lbs. for \$13.50:** The sliced American Cheese is not individually wrapped.
- **Breaded Shrimp, 3 lbs. for \$13.00:** The shrimp are butterflied, breaded, and contain a quantity of 21-25 per pound.
- **Beef & Broccoli, 22 oz. for \$6.00:** This beef and broccoli consist of beef strips, broccoli florets, and red bell peppers with white rice in a savory soy sauce.
- **Stuffed Shells, 48 oz. for \$7.50:** The stuffed shells are frozen and have 18 shells per special.

Questions contact:

The Camden Life Center: (315) 820-2638



Next Meeting:

Date: Tuesday, January 14

Time: 5:45-7:15

Open to ALL Camden High School Students



CAMDEN LIFE CENTER

Trauma Informed Yoga

January 7th and 21st at 5:30pm
January 14th and 28th at 4pm

Located at 20 Main Street Camden NY

Questions? Call 315-820-2638



Experience the benefits of our trauma-informed yoga sessions designed to support mental health and substance use recovery. Enjoy stress relief, emotional regulation, and physical healing with holistic support designed for our rural community.