

Your Guide to the CAMDEN life CENTER



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CAMDEN life CENTER

What is the Camden Life Center?

Camden Life Center is a rural service hub dedicated to building connection, belonging, and hope in our community.

We bring together behavioral health, recovery support, youth programs, and community resources under one roof to help individuals and families thrive.

From our Recovery Café gatherings to youth leadership opportunities and community events, we're here to nurture wellness and strengthen rural life.

Camden Life Center is a program of Life Center Collaborative, Inc., the first of a growing network of community-based service hubs working to create integrated, trauma-informed, and compassionate spaces across rural New York.

Our vision is to expand the Life Center model into other underserved communities—ensuring that everyone, no matter where they live, has access to support, connection, and hope.

Mission

Fostering healthy, thriving families through thoughtful partnerships that prioritize locally defined needs, focusing on the strength of connectivity and community.

Vision

Empowering rural communities for a brighter tomorrow.

Values

- Create a welcoming environment
- Empower Individuals
- Promote healing
- Focus locally
- Connect
- Be bold

Client Care Coordination Process

At the Camden Life Center, our Client Care Coordination team helps individuals and families connect with the right services and supports to meet their unique needs.

Step 1: Initial Contact

You can call, walk in or complete a web inquiry for a screening with our Client Care Coordinator or designated staff member.

Step 2: Screening

During the screening, we gather:

- Contact and insurance information
- Presenting needs and concerns

Step 3: Determining Level of Care

Based on the screening, we will work with you to determine the most appropriate level of support:

- Out-of-Area Referral: Connect to local resources outside our service area.
- Simple Referral: Connect to needed services or appointments, followed by brief check-ins to ensure support.
- More Complex Needs: Full intake and ongoing care coordination, including goal setting, service planning, and regular follow-up until your goals are met.

Ongoing Support

- When you have complex needs, it often involves coordination across multiple areas of need—such as food security, housing, employment, mental health, or education. Our team provides continued case management, advocacy, and follow-up to help you navigate barriers and move toward greater stability and independence.

Our goal is to ensure every individual receives personalized, compassionate care and ongoing support to move forward with confidence and stability.

Partner Services

Coordination



Come to the Table Counseling (CtT) provides behavioral counseling in Camden, NY. We are a holistic perspective; treating the mind, body, and spirit to help restore a sense of balance in life.



Helio Health offers a wide range of treatment, counseling and support programs for individuals suffering from alcohol, drug, gambling, eating, and other mental health disorders.



Provides support including pregnancy tests and support, parenting classes, material assistance, support for dads, pregnancy loss recovery, referrals, and more.



To increase awareness of the causes and conditions of poverty, forge a future of hope and equity, and strengthen families and communities.

nationalgrid

Consumer Advocates meet 1:1 to discuss options to manage your energy bill, assist in payment plans, and connect energy affordability programs.

S Syracuse University

Syracuse University partners with the Camden Life Center to conduct research and collect data through a needs analysis, focusing on residents living in rural communities.



WIC offers nutritious foods to pregnant breastfeeding or postpartum women, infants and children up to age five.



Coordinated Entry connects vulnerable households in Madison and Oneida Counties to housing and support services through a streamlined, effective system.



Let's Eat



“Let’s Eat” is a community-centered culinary program at the Camden Life Center that bridges the gap between nutrition education and food access. Designed to support and empower individuals and families, “Let’s Eat” offers hands-on support in food access and understanding how food impacts physical and mental health. At its heart, “Let’s Eat” is about connection—connecting people to food, to knowledge, and to one another through the healing power of nourishment.

The Culinary Director at Camden Life Center leads our “Let’s Eat” program—an initiative dedicated to promoting community wellness and food equity. Through engaging nutrition education, accessible and affordable meal ideas, and hands-on cooking demonstrations, the program empowers participants to build kitchen confidence and healthy habits.

Each class is rooted in mental health—supportive nutrition and guided by the values of compassion, inclusivity, and empowerment. From sourcing ingredients to shaping curriculum, the Culinary Director ensures that “Let’s Eat” remains a trusted and transformative resource for individuals and families in our community.

This impactful work is made possible in part by generous support from the Cabrini Health Foundation, allowing us to expand access to healthy food education and address food insecurity in a meaningful, community-centered way. With their support, “Let’s Eat” continues to grow and reach more people across the region.





CAMDEN SHARING SHELF & FRIDGE

Stocked by Camden. No Questions, Just Kindness

At Camden Life Center, we believe no one should have to choose between paying bills and putting food on the table. Our Emergency Food Pantry provides short-term support to individuals and families facing food insecurity—because everyone deserves access to nutritious food.

How It Works

- Walk-in emergency food assistance, no appointment needed
- Short-term support for immediate needs
- Connection to long-term resources like SNAP, WIC, and the Camden Area Food Pantry for ongoing monthly assistance

How You Can Help

- Donate Non-Perishables – Items like canned goods, pasta, rice, peanut butter, and shelf-stable proteins are always needed
- Give Financially – Your donation helps us stock shelves and serve more families

At Camden Life Center, we're committed to ensuring no one goes hungry. Our Sharing Shelf & Fridge is open 24/7, providing free, non-perishable food—no questions asked. From April–October, our Community Fridge also offers fresh, perishable items.

How It Works

- Located behind our building
- Always open—take what you need, give what you can
- Stocked by community donations and replenished by our team

How You Can Help

- Donate Non-Perishables – Canned goods, pasta, rice, peanut butter, and more
- Stock the Pantry/Fridge – Add items anytime
- Give Financially – Help us keep shelves full and serve more neighbors

This judgment-free resource is built on kindness and community.

Whether you're seeking support or giving back, everyone is welcome.



Food Bank of Central NY

Services

Food Sense

Food \$en\$e is a monthly food-buying co-op designed to help individuals and families save on groceries. For just \$20.50 per package, you'll receive 12-15 staple grocery items at a discounted price—no qualifications, subscriptions, or requirements needed!

Each package includes:

- 4-5 meat items
- 4-5 pantry staples
- 2 fresh produce items

How to Order

Orders can be placed online or through the Camden Life Center!

Curious to learn more: <https://www.foodbankcny.org/our-programs/food-sense-program/>

Mobile Food Pantry

The Mobile Food Pantry (MFP) is a direct-to-community food distribution program designed to reach individuals and families in underserved areas. By removing barriers like transportation and food access obstacles, the MFP brings fresh, nutritious food directly to those who need it most.

The Camden Life Center also hosts the Mobile Food Pantry on a monthly basis.

Curious to learn more: <https://www.foodbankcny.org/our-programs/mobile-food-pantry/>



FOOD *\$en\$e*



Youth Development



Youth Advisory Council

The Youth Advisory Council is a group of young leaders who share ideas, shape programs, and make a difference in our community. Members gain valuable experience in leadership, teamwork, and community engagement while helping design and improve youth-focused initiatives at Camden Life Center.

It's an opportunity to be heard, get involved, and grow as a leader—all while creating positive change in Camden and beyond.

Interested in joining?

Contact us today to learn about the next meeting!

Youth Events

At Camden Life Center, we are committed to creating exciting, engaging opportunities for high school-aged students. From leadership workshops and life skills training to recreational events, social gatherings, and community service projects, our youth programs are designed to help young people connect, grow, and thrive.

Led by our Youth Program Director, these initiatives provide safe, welcoming spaces where teens can develop leadership skills, build confidence, and prepare for bright, successful futures. Every event is created with youth in mind—because their voices and involvement matter.

This important work is made possible through the generous support of the Cabrini Health Foundation, which allows us to expand youth-focused programs and invest in the next generation of leaders in our rural community.

Want to know what's coming up next?

Contact us today to learn about our upcoming youth events!

Peer Support Services

At Camden Life Center, our Peer Advocates provide compassionate, one-on-one support to individuals navigating recovery and mental health challenges.

Certified Recovery Peer Advocates (CRPAs) and Mental Health Peer Advocates use their lived experiences to guide, encourage, and empower others on their journey toward wellness. Through shared understanding, they help reduce stigma and promote personal growth.

Peer Advocates assist with setting goals, developing coping skills, connecting to resources, and offering emotional support during difficult times. By bridging the gap between professional services and lived experience, our Peer Advocates create a space where everyone feels heard, supported, and understood.

Empower @ Home

Camden Life Center, in partnership with the University of Michigan, offers Empower@Home — a free online program designed for individuals 50 and over to lift your spirits, support your well-being, and enhance your quality of life.

This program provides practical tools for staying positive, building connection, and improving emotional health — all from the comfort of your own home.

Program Highlights:

- No travel required
- No computer experience needed
- Free tablet and internet provided
- Personalized support from a trained coach
- Earn up to \$110 for participating



Whether you want to feel more uplifted, connected, or confident in your daily life, Empower@Home can help.

To learn more: Contact the Camden Life Center at 315-820-2638 or visit empower-at-home.com.

Recovery Cafe Camden

Recovery Café Camden is a safe, welcoming space for connection, healing, and support. Open to anyone seeking community—whether navigating trauma, addiction, mental health challenges, or simply looking to build meaningful relationships—our Café offers a place to belong and grow.

What Makes Us Special?

Rooted in trauma-informed care, we honor multiple recovery pathways and focus on authentic relationships, compassionate accountability, and personal growth.

Membership

Becoming a member is free and open to anyone committed to a healthier, more connected life.

Members commit to:

- Maintaining a drug- and alcohol-free space
- Participating in a weekly Recovery Circle
- Contributing to the Café in a meaningful way



We offer two weekly gatherings. Each gathering includes a shared meal, conversation, and small group circle for support and encouragement. Follow us on Facebook & Instagram for updates and ways to get involved!

School of Recovery

As part of our Recovery Café Camden, the School for Recovery offers classes and activities that support personal growth, healing, and connection. These opportunities are designed to help individuals build skills that strengthen recovery and everyday life.

Through the School for Recovery, participants can explore topics such as:

- Building healthy relationships and communication.
- Managing emotions and behaviors.
- Setting and reaching personal goals.
- Learning how to advocate for themselves

Classes and activities come in many forms—one-time workshops, multi-week courses, or ongoing groups—and classes will be offered in person and are drop-in. The School for Recovery is about learning from each other, growing together, and gaining tools that support long-term recovery and well-being.

Yoga Programs

Discover the benefits of yoga in a welcoming and supportive environment at Camden Life Center. Whether you're looking for gentle movement, relaxation, or a deeper mind-body connection, we offer two specialized yoga programs designed for all ages and abilities.

Chair Yoga

Chair Yoga is a gentle, low-impact practice designed for all ages and abilities—no prior experience needed! Using the support of a chair, participants can safely build flexibility, balance, strength, and relaxation without getting on the floor.

Perfect for those with limited mobility or anyone seeking a gentle introduction to yoga, this class also supports mental wellness by reducing stress, encouraging mindfulness, and fostering connection in a welcoming environment.

Mindful Movement

Experience the benefits of movement and mindfulness in a safe and supportive space with Mindful Movement Yoga. This gentle practice is designed for anyone seeking stress relief, relaxation, and a chance to reconnect with their body through simple, accessible movement.

What To Expect:

- Gentle & Accessible – Focuses on breath, mindfulness, and movement at your own pace.
- Calm & Restorative – Helps reduce stress, improve overall well-being, and encourage relaxation.
- Mind-Body Connection – Supports flexibility, balance, mobility, and a greater sense of inner calm.

No prior yoga experience is needed—everyone is welcome to participate!

Mindful Movement Yoga is made possible through a generous grant from the Community Foundation.



Community Education

Mental Health First Aid Trainings - Adult & Youth

Do you interact with people daily in your profession? Do friends, clients, or customers often confide in you? If so, you have the power to make a real difference in their lives!

Our **Mental Health First Aid training** equips participants with the skills to recognize the signs of mental health and substance use challenges in both youth and adults. You'll learn how to provide support in crisis and non-crisis situations, empowering you to connect individuals to the help they need.

The 5-Step Action Plan (ALGEE):

1. Assess for risk of suicide or harm
2. Listen non-judgmentally
3. Give reassurance and information
4. Encourage professional help
5. Encourage Support self-help & other resources.



By becoming a Mental Health First Aider, you can help create a more compassionate and informed community.

Build Your Own Training

At Camden Life Center, we understand that every organization and community has unique needs. That's why we offer Build Your Own Training—a customizable approach to learning that allows you to choose the topics that matter most. Whether you're interested in behavioral health, nutrition, culinary skills, childhood development, or overall wellness, we'll work with you to create a tailored training experience that fits your goals.

Our expert-led sessions provide practical knowledge and hands-on learning opportunities to empower individuals, teams, and organizations. Let us help you design a program that meets your needs and fosters growth in your community.

Narcan Trainings

Camden Life Center is committed to promoting community health and safety through our **Narcan training program**. This essential training equips participants with the knowledge and skills needed to recognize and respond to opioid overdoses effectively

What You'll Learn:

- **Understanding Opioids** – Learn about opioid use, risks, and the impact of addiction.
- **Recognizing an Overdose** – Identify the signs and symptoms of an opioid overdose.
- **Administering Narcan** – Gain hands-on experience in using Narcan (naloxone) to reverse an overdose.
- **Resources & Support** – Connect with local resources for ongoing help and support for individuals and families affected by opioid use.

Training Details:

Our Narcan training sessions are open to anyone interested in learning how to save a life—community members, caregivers, and professionals are all welcome.

Contact us today to find out about upcoming training dates and to register for a session. Together, we can make a difference in our community by empowering individuals to respond effectively to opioid overdoses.



Internship Opportunities

Are you looking to gain valuable experience while making a difference in your community? Camden Life Center offers internship and clinical placement opportunities at the Associate, Bachelor, and Master's levels, providing hands-on experience in social services, community outreach, and mental health support.

Why Intern with Us?

- **Real-World Experience** – Work alongside professionals and build practical skills.
- **Make a Difference** – Contribute to programs that directly impact individuals and families.
- **Professional Development** – Strengthen your resume, expand your network, and explore careers in social work, public health, and mental health.
- **Support Rural Communities** – Help bridge gaps in services while developing skills in resource navigation, community-based interventions, and problem-solving.

Placement Opportunities:

- **Associate Level** – Foundational experience in community services and outreach.
- **Bachelor Level** – Hands-on learning in program coordination, case management, and community engagement.
- **Master Level (MSW & Clinical)** – Direct client interaction, clinical case management, and program evaluation.
- **Clinical Placements** – Supervised opportunities for those pursuing clinical social work or mental health counseling.

Our Partners: Keuka College • Utica University • Syracuse University • Mohawk Valley Community College • SUNY Plattsburgh. Don't see your college listed? Contact us to explore opportunities that align with your program.

Join us in our mission to support and uplift our community while gaining valuable, hands-on experience for your future career.

Want to Help?

Volunteering

Volunteers are the heartbeat of the Camden Life Center, ensuring every guest feels welcome and supported. Through our partnership with 50 Forward Mohawk Valley, volunteers can stay active, build friendships, and make a meaningful impact. Together, they bring compassion and energy that strengthen our mission.

What Our Volunteers Do

- Welcome guests and provide front desk support
- Assist with Food \$en\$e, the Mobile Food Pantry, and community drives
- Support events like the Holiday Stroll, Wellness Day, and Spooktacular
- Help keep the Center connected to the community through outreach and special projects

Why Volunteer?

- Make a difference in your community
- Share your time and talents
- Stay connected, active, and engaged

Contact us today to get started volunteering!



Your support keeps Camden Life Center programs running strong. Financial Gifts: Donations directly fund food access, recovery, wellness, and youth programs that serve our community every day. Program Sponsorships: Businesses and organizations can make a lasting impact by sponsoring programs or events that bring hope and connection to Camden.

Every contribution makes a difference—thank you for helping us build a stronger community!





A program of the
Life Center Collaborative

**Visit our
website at:**

