

The names of the persons in the following stories have been changed to protect their identities.

Hard working Father



As the economic health of the nation continues to be uncertain, those most affected are the ones who can least afford it. More and more industries are being impacted every day. Downsizings, plant closings and lay-offs have become routine. Fortunately, Essex County residents do have some recourse when unfortunate situations befall them.

A single father in his mid 30s is left to raise his 9-year old daughter and 7-year old son. The mother abandoned the family rather than seek treatment for her substance abuse issues. Nevertheless, Robert Smith remained a hardworking, dedicated father and a dependable employee. Employed for several years as a contractor with a local engineering firm, on March 29th, Robert went to his bank as was his custom and deposited his paycheck only to find out days later that the check had bounced. When he approached his employer about the incident, he was told that some administrative mistake had been made and that the employer would make good on the check. They also assured him that the firm was in fine shape financially and would be around for years to come.

Trusting the assurances he had received from his employer, Smith continued to work for the company for another month. Paid monthly, upon receipt of his next paycheck, this check also bounced. This time when he approached his employer, it was disclosed that the company was indeed undergoing financial difficulties and that the plant was in the process of shutting down operations. Needless to say, this left Smith with a mountain of bills and nowhere to turn.

Having been an NESF client several years ago, Robert's sister mentioned to him that he should see if NESF could help him through his predicament. When Smith came to NESF, he was over \$2,000 in arrears with his rental payments. He had recently secured a new job, but it would be several weeks before he would be paid and in the interim he needed assistance to prevent his pending eviction. An NESF case manager advocated on behalf of Mr. Smith with his landlord. NESF also provided Mr. Smith with one month's rental assistance and negotiated a payment plan with the landlord. Mr. Smith was able to keep a roof over his head and to keep his family intact due to the intervention and assistance of NESF.

