

United Way of York County funds 74 programs through 37 Partner Agencies. Here is one way your dollars improve the lives of individuals and families in York County.

FOCUS AREA: FINANCIAL STABILITY

CRITICAL HELP FOR CRITICAL MOMENTS

MIDPENN LEGAL SERVICES

What would you do if you arrived home this evening and found a letter from the IRS saying you have to return last year's income tax refund?

This is what happened to Sarah, a mother to a daughter who has fallen into the opioid crisis, and a grandmother to her daughter's two children. In 2015, in order to provide the children with some stability, Sarah took her daughter and two grandchildren in to her home. In 2016, she found herself caring for the children while the mother was incarcerated and in rehab. In 2017, Sarah claimed her grandchildren as dependents on her 2016 tax return.

Later in 2017, she received a letter from the IRS that she was not allowed to claim the children and needed to return her income tax refund or send documents proving the children resided with her in 2016. Sarah immediately responded with information regarding the children. Sometime later, she received another letter from the IRS demanding payment.

At that point, Sarah came to MidPenn Legal Services' Low Income Tax Clinic, where a tax attorney asked Sarah if she had any receipts showing food, clothes and other items she purchased for the children.

Almost a year later, how many of you have these receipts?

MidPenn's attorney instead worked with Sarah to find other information to show that neither the mother nor father of the children were available to support the children. She located criminal records showing the mother was incarcerated and rehab records showing when the mother was in that program. Finally, she was able to obtain child support records showing that the father was not ordered to pay any support for the children since he was homeless and had no income.

After this information was submitted, MidPenn's attorney received a letter saying that the IRS accepted Sarah's explanation and that she did in fact have a right to claim the children. She did not owe the IRS anything. Further, they were going to release her 2017 refund.

Sarah was now debt free and could use her 2017 tax refund to support her family.

When you support the United Way of York County Community Fund, your gift supports 37 Partner Agencies, and will improve the lives of not only individuals like Sarah, but the lives of hundreds of thousands throughout York County.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

