

# Center partners with Sesame Street Workshop

The Community Center of Northern Westchester, a food pantry and clothing bank serving thousands of northern Westchester families, is partnering with Sesame Workshop, the nonprofit organization behind Sesame Street, to present "Food for Thought: Eating Well on a Budget," a bilingual (English-Spanish) outreach to help families cope with uncertain or limited access to affordable and nutritious food.

Locally, "Food for Thought" is being presented in free workshops created by Community Center staff and volunteers including Dr. Randi Feldman, a retired pediatrician, and Shirley Buontempo, a Community Center board member. The first workshop was held Sunday, Feb. 6, at the Bedford Hills Community House. A similar workshop is scheduled for March 20 at the Mount Kisco Public Library.

Drawing on a passion for good nu-



**Children learned lessons about healthy eating with help from Community Center of Northern Westchester volunteers during a recent "Food for Thought" workshop.**

trition as key to pediatric health, Dr. Feldman leads an informative, interactive presentation of healthy foods, including easy preparation of nutri-

tious snacks and low-cost meals. At the workshop, Dr. Feldman used a table filled with fresh fruits, vegetables and whole grain items to explain the importance of nutritious eating and to demonstrate food preparation. She also addressed a critical topic for families in attendance: how to provide quick, healthy options for those with limited time and money.

Workshop attendees received the Food for Thought educational outreach kit consisting of practical advice for families, a storybook, healthy recipes and an original video featuring the debut of four new Sesame Street Muppets, the "Superfoods." The video also includes Elmo and friends, along with real families as they try new foods, learn about the importance of healthy snacks, and discover that sharing a meal together is a perfect opportunity to connect as a family. Sunday's workshop used two

of the video segments, including one addressing the social and emotional issues related to food insecurity.

Sesame Workshop's Food for Thought initiative was developed with the understanding that food insecurity can have long-term impact on young children, including subsequent effects on health, school performance, growth and development.

Nationwide, Sesame Workshop's 400,000 kits will be distributed through local groups, such as the Community Center of Northern Westchester, as well as agencies including the National WIC association, Feeding America, Head Start, Meals on Wheels and other key organizations.

All materials used with Food for Thought are available at [www.sesamestreet.org/food](http://www.sesamestreet.org/food). Support for Food for Thought is provided by UnitedHealthcare and the Merck Foundation.