



JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES NEWSLETTER

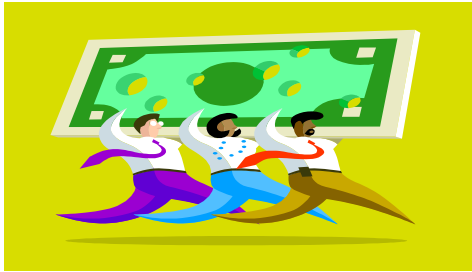
In Touch With the Community

Issue 35

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Human Services on the Chopping Block

By Mark Zarecki



The City of Ottawa is about to cut 15% from the budgets of social service agencies already stretched beyond their limits. While Counselors are claiming that social service funding has not been cut in years, a little clarification is in order.

Ten years ago, City funding for counseling and case management of low-income clients was allocated on a fee-for-service basis at \$65 per counseling visit, up to a prescribed maximum. In the case of JFS, that maximum was \$62,000, despite the fact that our actual costs were closer to \$160,000 for those services.

In 1995, budget allocations were changed to a grant system and agencies continued to receive the same funding as the previous maximum. This difference meant that service providers had the same amount of money but had to serve more clients. A year later, agencies were told to take on more program responsibility or lose their grants. Jewish Family Services began mentoring the Somali community, Family Service Centre began

mentoring the Native community and Catholic Family Services took on settlement.

While grants remained fixed, costs for salaries and program expenses rose dramatically. As federal and provincial governments downloaded their responsibilities, not only did we see a rise in the number of clients in need, but the breadth of those needs became more severe. We began to see more and more clients dealing with issues of poverty, marriage breakdown, discrimination and aging without communal supports for seniors.

There was still no increase until 1997, when we received a minor increase in allocations to assist with added overhead expenses necessitated by the agency having to move to a larger facility. That increase did not even cover the cost of inflation. Last year, we received an even smaller increase when we again had to move, in order to accommodate the growing, changing needs within the community.

While the City's spending on salaries and benefits has risen each year in line with inflation, the funding allocated to salaries of front-line workers in Social Service Agencies has not changed in more than 10 years. Now, with a population that is aging and deteriorating, the City wants to cut that funding by another 15%.

Sadly, the impact on JFS will make it almost impossible to serve low income, non-paying clients. Sad for a social service agency, tragic for many people in need here in Ottawa, and a sad statement about the values of a government with a history of caring.

Now is the time to speak out. City Counsel rules by constituent popularity. Call your Counselor today and tell them how you feel about the proposed budget. IT WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

JFS announces Fundraising Initiative to Support Budget Shortfall

By Jack Shinder, Board Member

The festival of Purim still rings in my ears – I love its stories of intrigue and the survival of the Jewish people in a hostile society. Currently, the citizens of Ottawa are considering whether we have enough pennies to support the poor of this city...and we at JFS will hang on their every word, for our future is deeply affected by the amount of money that we receive from the public purse.

However, these days the public is much less inclined to support “non-essential services”. I ask you – isn’t a warm meal and a friendly call to the homebound elderly “an essential service”? Whatever the outcome of this debate, it is shocking to consider that we, the citizens of the Nation’s Capital are uncertain enough of our social responsibilities that the essential work that is accomplished at JFS and myriad other agencies are being deemed unworthy of public support. We must do better! And if our political leaders will not listen to our message that they should support the less fortunate in our society then **we must step forward** with our spirit, our time and yes.... our money.



Increasingly, as we recognise the value of social services, we hold these same services up to the test of the private sector. What do we receive from them in support of the elderly, in support of the jobless, in support of those suffering a family breakdown? In seeking financial support from the community, whether by public grants or private donations we seek to establish in the minds of our supporters the worth of our enterprise.

After Passover, you will be receiving a request for funds to support JFS. Our one campaign for the year will endeavour to clarify for you the importance of the programs that we offer - our poverty assistance programs, our senior’s support services, our counselling programs, our settlement services and many other programs. The money that is required to offer these essential services must increasingly come from the private sector... and with this in mind, we are asking for your support.



If you are able to give of your time, we can make use of your skills. Please call the JFS office and let us know when you are available! If you are willing to make a

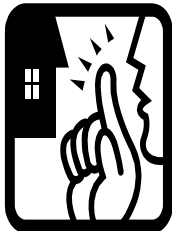
donation to support our programs, please look for and respond to our request in the mail in a few weeks time. There are many that are depending on you.

JFS's Privacy policy explained

By Steve Aronson, Board Member

Jewish Family Services of Ottawa recognizes the importance of privacy and the sensitivity of personal information. JFS has a privacy and confidentiality policy already in place. JFS has a professional obligation to keep confidential all information we receive as a result of the relationship between JFS and our clients, employees and donors. To ensure accountability, we have developed the policy and trained our service providers and support staff about our policies and practices. Under the existing policy, donor lists are not sold, given out or exchanged for any reason. Client information is only released with the written consent of the client. We are committed to protecting any personal information we hold.

Beginning on January 1, 2004, all businesses engaged in commercial activities must comply with the *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act*, and the Canadian Standards Association *Model Code for the Protection of Personal Information*, which it incorporates. The Act gives individuals rights concerning the privacy of their personal information. These obligations extend to JFS.



The JFS Board and staff have been reviewing the current privacy policy in light of the new changes. While no significant changes are anticipated, in order for the existing JFS privacy policy to comply with the new standards, there may be some minor changes. For example, a JFS staff member will be appointed as a Privacy Officer to investigate any complaints relating to the privacy policy.

Tikvah Happenings:

By Raphaela Fleisher, Tikvah Coordinator

The Tikvah program attempts to reach out to poor Jewish individuals and families in need. Referrals to the program often originate from other Tikvah recipients, community sources and by word of mouth. When considering a family or individual for eligibility into the program, an assessment of an individual or families' cost of living takes place. This includes their source(s) of income, whether it is social assistance or employment and whether or not they live in subsidized housing. Consideration for assistance is based on Statistics Canada's Low Income Cutoff Scale (LICO). LICO is calculated according to the average cost of basic needs such as food, shelter and clothing. In Ottawa, many recipients of this poverty relief program live well below this low-income cutoff rate.

Four times a year, the Tikvah program, supported by the Va'ad, has been fortunate to be able to offer a special distribution to current participants of the Tikvah program AND also to those who wouldn't otherwise qualify for assistance. We are able to expand our distribution at these times to include the additional expenses of food for the holidays.

For example, during the holiday of Purim the Emunah Women's Federation donated 50 Mischlot Manot to individuals and families who are currently involved in the Tikvah program.



As the Passover holiday is approaching, resources to aid Ottawa Jews living in poverty have been donated to the Jewish Family Services/Tikvah Program. This distribution continues to be the largest of our holiday distributions. For over twelve years, B'nai Brith Ottawa Lodge and Parliament Lodge have provided donated assistance to the Jewish poor through a holiday Passover distribution, in excess of \$20,000. Food vouchers and gift bags of matzoh, candles and grape juice are allocated to those in need. When this program first started, gift boxes of food were distributed. Over the past five years, \$20,000 worth of food vouchers have been gifted to individuals, couples and families to allow them to purchase food they prefer. To date, over 378 Jewish individuals including children and adults will receive this assistance.

Over the past few years, the Tikvah program has been able to recruit professionals (Dentist, Accountants etc) and services (moving companies) within the community, who have been willing to donate their time and resources to those who would not otherwise be able to afford them. This program is referred to as, "Im Tizku L'Mitzvot" (having the merit of doing good deeds). **We are currently in need of Lawyers** who would be willing donate some time. If you are interested in participating in this program, please contact the Tikvah Program.



A new objective of the program is to provide more outreach services to recipients of Tikvah assistance. On the last Wednesday of every month, starting **April 28th, from, 10 am- 12 pm** a drop in program will take place at Jewish Family Services. The main purpose of this initiative is to bring people together to relax, meet and greet the Tikvah staff and others involved in the program, as well as to share resources that would be beneficial to all. Refreshments will be served.

If you require further information about our existing programs, please contact: Raphaela Fleisher (ext. 309) or Andrea Gardner (ext.314).

The V'Hadarta Adult Day Away Program

By Wendy Birkhan, R.S.W., Social Worker, Seniors Unit,



The V'Hadarta Adult Day Away Program has made Tuesdays a day to look forward to for six Jewish seniors who struggle with the challenges of dementia. Each V'Hadarta Day is filled

with a spirit of friendship and smiles as the participants share their wisdom in both English and Yiddish; recipes are described with words like *shitaran* and *bissel*; game points are calculated in both 'our official languages' and songs learned in childhood find expression

once again in Russian, English, Yiddish and Hebrew! The day is filled with mental and physical exercises designed specifically to stimulate this population. Music, crafts and games are implemented to encourage ongoing use of deteriorating skills.

Comments from the participants and their families have been heart warming and helpful. "E," reports her daughter, "has problems waking up in the mornings – except for Tuesdays, V'Hadarta Day!" L. loves to be with other Jewish people; "its hard to be alone at this age", she says, "In the retirement home no one understands my Yiddish!", F. may be forgetful, but never misses V'Hadarta where she can play the piano as she did many years ago! P. loves to be involved in the projects such as sewing cushions for the couches and baking; D. is encouraged to join into discussions while maintaining her vocabulary skills. L. recalls that Tuesdays are 'lucky days' and often comments that it is no coincidence that V'Hadarta is held each Tuesday! S. blossoms at the program, where he can sing and joke

around with his peers. His family commented on the noticeable improvements he has made since joining V'Hadarta.

For Purim, each of our families received special *Mishloach Manot*, Purim Baskets, created with love by the participants. Each one contained a *Tzedakkah* Box, homemade chocolate *gelt*, a collage designed *greggor*, and of course our freshly baked *hamantashen!*

If you know someone who may be suitable for referral to V'Hadarta, please don't hesitate to contact me. We are still looking for volunteers to join our team and offer professional training to enhance your skills. Donations to the Koved Fund of JFS are welcome as V'Hadarta is dependant on this source in order to operate. Please consider how you can make a difference in the life of someone special and think V'Hadarta.

I can be contacted at 722-2225 ext 408 or by email wbirkhan@jfsottawa.com

What are Pervasive Developmental Disorders?

By *Simy Ilouze*

- Pervasive Developmental Disorders know no boundaries and can affect individuals of any race, color, origin or creed.
- Pervasive Developmental Disorders are present amongst many families in our regional Jewish community.
- Pervasive Developmental Disorders or P.D.D. is a generic umbrella term for a group of specific disorders.

These are: Autistic Disorder, Rett's Disorder, Childhood Disintegrative Disorder and Asperger Disorder.

These disorders are considered to be:

- a) "Pervasive" because they affect several areas of development.
- b) "Developmental" because they originate in infancy and childhood, therefore ruling out injury or disease.

c) "Disorder" indicating that they deviate from the patter of normal development.

Autism is one of the subtypes of the classification of P.D.D. Like all "Pervasive Developmental Disorders", it is caused by brain abnormalities. To be labeled "autistic", a person must have limited ability in the following areas of development: social interactions, communication and a significantly restricted repertoire of activities and interests.

Some of the characteristics associated with autism are: sleeping problems, eating disorders, behavior excesses, pica and a variety of sensory dysfunctions.

Autism strikes 1 in 500 babies. It is more common than Down Syndrome, childhood cancer, multiple sclerosis and cystic fibrosis. At present, there is no known cure for pervasive developmental disorders.

The quality of life of those affected, very much depends upon a planning for a life time approach, in which all of the stages of one's life are considered.

The "Brainstormers Group for Jewish Families with Special Needs Children" will meet on Sunday, March 28 at 10:00 am at Jewish Family Services. If you miss this meeting and are interested in more information, please contact Lynne Sherwood at JFS 722-2225 ext 409 or email lsherwood@jfsottawa.com



Volunteer Corner

Are you able to donate sheet music to our V'hadarta Adult Day Away Program?

We are looking for sheet music for piano - in particular the first half of the century - English, Yiddish, Broadway, all and any will do! We have the piano and the player and now we need the sheet music to help us along!

Have we got the Perfect gift for you!

A personalized Jewish Family Services GIFT CERTIFICATE!

Lillian's birthday was an extra special occasion. At Lillian's request, rather than giving her presents, her family and friends donated money to Jewish Family Services in honor of her birthday. We then presented Lillian with a JFS gift certificate from all those who had made donations in commemoration of her happy day.

Why not make your special occasion extra special with a JFS gift certificate?

Whether you or someone you know is celebrating a birthday, wedding, graduation or birth of a new child, enhance the mitzvah by including tzedakah in the festivities.

Mention us on your invitation or announcement!

Call Myra at 722-2225 to fill in the details.



Do you want to make a donation and are not sure which fund to give money to or what that fund does? This column will make that an easier task for you. Beginning with this edition, each newsletter will highlight a specific fund and its use.

What is the Street Smarts Fund??

By Erica Sher, Board Member

The **Street Smarts** project seeks to identify and connect with Street People, both those who are homeless and those at risk of homelessness.

The need for this outreach service was identified, when JFS took to assess the needs of street youth by actually walking the streets. JFS assessed that while other programs like this exist, none of them were sensitive to the needs of Jewish youth, specifically.

JFS **Street Smarts** works closely with the other street service providers so that client's needs are well served and duplication of effort is avoided.

Outreach workers originally sought to identify Jewish Youth, but they quickly saw that street people were requesting services. The mandate of the project was then broadened to serve all youth between the ages of fifteen and thirty who identify themselves as homeless. JFS links these clients with resources and supports and assists them in obtaining permanent housing and employment



The victories that the project is able to have are impressive and the project has already helped get 15 people get off the streets. The program is run with a lot of help from volunteers who have very low income themselves.

JFS continues to apply for government funding from a variety of sources so that it can keep this project alive – this does not always materialize.

Next time you're making your donation to JFS, please consider the **Street Smarts** fund as a beneficiary of your warmth and generosity.

Donations made between December 11, 2003 and March 15, 2004

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Richard Addelman	Lisa Bogdonov	June Davis	Mrs. G. Fischer
Murray Alice	Arieh Bonder	Janet Dollin	Goldstein Foodmarket
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 Gladys Greenberg
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 Margot Greenberg
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 Shelley Harris
 Bonet Hebert
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 Anna Heilman
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 Marvin Hershorn
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 Hennie Honigman
 Melanie Hotz
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