

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

As our community faces the uncertainty that is now part of our lives we know that the city is worried not only about the health of its friends, families and neighbours, but also about the economic challenges and uncertainty that lie ahead. **JFS is here to support Ottawa through this and we are committed to helping in every way we can.**

Our goal is to continue supporting all our clients despite our physical office being closed. We have been reaching out in novel ways to offer the same and, in many cases, enhanced support. Even through unprecedented challenges and an environment that shifts on a daily basis, JFS continues to support its clients through direct financial support for certain members of the Jewish community, taking care of our most vulnerable seniors by delivering kosher meals prepared by Hillel Lodge, making wellness telephone calls, organizing grocery and medical drives whenever possible, connecting clients to available online resources such as grocery and food delivery programs and translation services, when needed.

We are working together with Federation to offer community members additional financial support during this crisis time. Existing and new clients will be able to access financial support to help offset whatever additional expenses are presenting themselves at this time. We've increased our Kosher Meals on Wheels deliveries, even having JFS Board members help with the additional deliveries.

We have made a major shift in terms of our counselling services, moving to a secure teletherapy platform. This allows us to continue supporting our clients, including OJCS students and their families, during this time of stress and uncertainty. Continuity and familiarity are key to maintaining good mental health in a time of crisis and we've gone so far as to replicate each counsellor's office as a video-call background. When our counsellors and clients connect by video the 'office' setting on screen is familiar and comforting. As well, our network of Walk-in Counselling Clinics has made a similar shift in its clinics around the community, moving from in-person sessions to phone and secure online support.

We cannot send you this update without letting you know that JFS is committed to the health and wellbeing of its entire team. We cannot support the community if we don't support ourselves at the same time. Even though we are physically not in the office to benefit from social connection, we remain connected to each other, supporting our colleagues through these unprecedented times.

The world looks uncertain at the moment, but the power of communities of people pulling together to help each other and to be there for each other can overcome anything.

We are open and have staff available to connect if you, or someone you know, is facing hardships. Please call our office at 613-722-225 or email us at info@jfsottawa.com.


SARAH CASPI

IN THIS ISSUE

P.2 JFS Ottawa's Impact
P.3 The Difference We Make
P.4 Donors Spotlight

P.6 Staff Member Spotlight
P.7 Donor Recognition

JFS OTTAWA'S IMPACT

RBC FOUNDATION HELPS TO GROW JFS OTTAWA'S CENTRE FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

The JFS Ottawa's Centre for Children, Youth and Families recently received a major grant from the RBC Foundation to expand our mental health and counseling services for children, youth and families.

What we know to be true is that when children, youth and families are facing



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emotional and social challenges they need help and support navigating services available to them. Across Ontario, youth can wait up to 18 months for mental health care and with the onset of 70% of mental health problems occurring during childhood or adolescence, this is an urgent and unmet service gap. Thankfully, it's one that JFS Ottawa, with the support of the RBC Foundation, now has additional resources to address.

"Many young people are struggling with their mental health. Sadly, only 1 in 5 will get the help they need," said Marjolaine Hudon, Regional President, Ontario North and East at RBC. "As part of our commitment to youth, RBC has created the RBC Youth Mental Well-being project to support youth mental health programs. The programs offered by JFS Ottawa are critical to helping youth and their families in our community access the help they need, when they need it."

'JFS Ottawa is one of the few multi-service providers in Ottawa to offer counselling for children, youth and families, but has been limited by our capacity to handle the growing numbers of children and families across the city needing support,' says Sarah Caspi, JFS Ottawa's Executive Director. 'The RBC Foundation grant is an incredible endorsement of our work and their commitment to helping us grow this important part of our work is very much appreciated.'

On behalf of our clients, we want to thank the RBC Foundation!

THINGS YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT JFS

Last year, we supported 8,300 clients. This is a 4,050% increase from when we first started in 1979.

PASSOVER GREETING

Passover reminds us to stand up for people and to support those in need. JFS is here to do this, whether this is working with a woman fleeing violence, supporting a senior with cognitive decline, helping a newcomer or supporting a young person recovering from a mental health crisis. Passover also allows us to sit together to discuss how we, as a people, got to where we are today and how this journey informs our actions on a daily basis.

Every year at Passover, and most especially this year as more and more of our community is in crisis, we must affirm our obligation to care for one another by proclaiming the words "Let all who are hungry come and eat." At JFS we take this literally with our food security programs such as our Kosher Meals on Wheels, financial assistance or supporting the Ottawa Kosher Food Bank through our Miriam's Well fruit and vegetable distribution. As we proclaim this at Passover, it is also an opportunity to affirm our responsibility to support those in need throughout the year.

Chag Pesach Sameach!

THINGS YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT JFS

JFS's Jewish Community Chaplaincy Program provides outreach to Jewish residents of non-Jewish long term care homes. Our Chaplain provides weekly friendly visits, holiday programming, and spiritual care.

THE DIFFERENCE WE MAKE

JFS GROCERY BUS

Clients of our Diverse Seniors Support Services (DSSS) Unit are immigrant seniors, many of whom live alone and on a fixed low income, making them vulnerable to social isolation. If you add in language barriers, they are at a higher risk of being disconnected from social and health care services and supports. This causes additional burdens on their formal and informal caregivers.



The JFS Grocery Bus Program was initiated to address these isolating factors by offering free weekly transportation for grocery shopping. As well, when bringing seniors from their homes to a grocery store, it also provides an opportunity for our case managers to observe and connect with our clients, helping to determine if they require additional support services.

In the past months, over 60 Chinese seniors living in Kanata, Stittsville, Barrhaven, and Riverside South joined us for trips to T&T Supermarket. This program is an important tool for JFS staff

to engage vulnerable seniors in community while encouraging independent living. We are so pleased to be able to offer this program to Ottawa seniors.

LYFT OFF

One of the biggest economic and social barriers our clients face is access to transportation, often preventing them from attending medical appointments, getting groceries and attending programs to break social isolation.

We are excited that a LYFT Community Grant has been awarded to JFS. This will allow for a customized ride sharing program to help clients attend appointments and remain active in the community.

Our LYFT/JFS transportation pilot program launched in February with much success with our first LYFT OFF (ride share) on February 27. This pilot program addresses a gap in our current transportation program, ensuring clients are able to attend their appointments at times when the JFS van or a volunteer driver is not available.

Clients can access the LYFT program after a simple screening interview to ensure suitability. JFS then books and monitors the ride from pickup to the drop off.

We look forward to our continued community partnership with LYFT!

NEED A LYFT?

A pilot project in partnership with Thelma Steinman Senior Support Services and LYFT



Call to Book Now:
613-722-2225 x411

Email us for information:
rbraun@jfsottawa.com

For more information about our LYFT program, please contact Ranit Braun 613-722-2225 ext. 411 or by email at: rbraun@jfsottawa.com

DONORS SPOTLIGHT

LIFE AND LEGACY

JFS Ottawa welcomes Riva Levitan and Richard Roth as our first Life & Legacy Donors!

What is your connection to JFS?

I (Riva) am happy to serve on the Board and the Executive of JFS which does such meaningful work. As a practicing family physician in Ottawa's West end, I've been so grateful to be able to refer patients, just down the road, for much needed support at JFS. My patients have been supported by the Tikvah program, by the senior support program and through the first-rate counselling group, to highlight a few. The social determinants of health are so important!

Why is it important that JFS remains a healthy community agency?

It's crucial that we are able to support our most vulnerable community members now and for years to come. Challenges in maintaining stable housing, food access, jobs and domestic abuse are present in every community and in every generation.

Why did you choose to become a legacy Donor?

We have always believed in saving for the future. My husband, Richard, is a former Chair of



RICHARD AND RIVA

the Ottawa Jewish Community Foundation, whose mandate is to secure the long-term financial stability of our Community and its agencies. The Life & Legacy program is a natural extension of that and an opportunity for us to do something meaningful and significant in our lifetime.

Why should others consider becoming a JFS Life & Legacy donor?

We believe that JFS must be a welcoming home where neighbours can reach out for help and receive it unconditionally. We would encourage anyone who

supports and values the work that JFS does to consider becoming a JFS Life & Legacy donor. You can make a difference and support our community's most vulnerable for generations to come.

THINGS YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT JFS

In our first 40 years, our operating budget has increased 12,250%.

JFS relies on 100+ volunteers to help us deliver our programs.

THIS PASSOVER, CONSIDER FOUR MORE QUESTIONS...



Do you value Ottawa's Jewish organizations?
Do you support these organizations on an annual basis?
Do you want them to exist for future generations?
How will you assure Jewish tomorrows?

JFS 
OTTAWA
JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES

LIFE & LEGACY 
Assuring JEWISH TOMORROWS
A program of the HAROLD GRINSPOON FOUNDATION

To create your Jewish legacy, contact:

David Dern, Director of Development
ddern@jfsottawa.com
613-722-2224 x325
www.JFSOttawa.com

STAFF MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



In August of last year JFS welcomed Michael Gershuny as its new Director of Counselling and Mental Health Services. Michael is an internationally educated Social Worker who holds both a Master's degree in Social Work and in Educational Counselling.

As the Director of Counselling and Mental Health Services Michael oversees a staff of over 40 employees and four managers. Working closely with the staff Michael's role is to support and to further develop the high quality of services in both The Counselling Group and The Walk-In Counselling Clinic.

As a skilled counsellor Michael also provides clinical counselling to individuals experiencing a wide range of emotional and psychological issues. His areas of specialty and interest include interpersonal relationships, depression, anxiety, self-esteem issues, trauma, grief and loss, aging, chronic mental health, and LGBTIQQ+ and identity related issues. Michael is bilingual and able to offer counselling in both English and Hebrew.

Fun fact about Michael: when he was a university student, Michael co-founded IM Design, producing one of a kind, fashionable and reusable tote bags. This was before "being green" was "cool"!

He approaches every day with the mantra that every difficulty is a learning opportunity and believes that "the roots of heaven originate in the human heart".

THINGS YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT JFS

JFS's Strategic Plan ensures that we focus our efforts on Food Security, Connecting Clients to Community and Mental Wellbeing.

LEADERSHIP AND TEAM DEVELOPMENT

"Leaders aren't born, they are made. And they are made just like anything else, through hard work. And that's the price we'll have to pay to achieve that goal, or any goal" – **Vince Lombardi**

Leadership is a critical function of management, supporting an agency as it works towards achieving its goals. JFS is committed to nurturing and empowering its Management and Director teams with dynamic leadership skills, ensuring our agency has the tools to continue supporting our entire team and the community.

With the support of a generous grant from Jewish Federation of Ottawa's *Innovative Capacity Building Fund* JFS will be working with Aspirant Leadership Coaching and Consulting to further nurture our management team's leadership capacity. This leadership development opportunity through workshops and group coaching will help our team become even stronger, assisting us to develop even more innovative and responsive supports for our community.

We are excited to see the results of this important initiative and thank Federation for making this opportunity available to us!

FEEDING YOUR COMMUNITY THROUGH THE EZRA CAMPAIGN

When you last saw this picture, you opened your mail and opened your hearts and wallets to support our Ezra Campaign. Your compassion helped us raise almost \$28,000 for those in the community who face challenges accessing food because of mental health issues, social isolation or financial barriers. Yasher koach!



THE LIFE AND LEGACY PROGRAM

Dignity, kindness and compassion -- We believe that everyone deserves to be treated this way. For 40 years, you have been our partner, using these values to guide us as we serve those who need it most. When we see homelessness, domestic abuse, mental illness, or people living precariously because of unstable incomes, you are with us, ready to guide our neighbors from crisis to calm, from anguish to awareness, and from isolation to connection.

Through all of this, you trust us to identify the needs of our community and with ingenuity to develop programs that make a difference – guiding people to stability and health.



JFS represents the Jewish values of tzedakah and tikkun olam to our broader Ottawa community and our clients, many of whom are not Jewish.

Our Legacy donors are people just like you who believe that JFS must

be a welcoming home where neighbours can reach out for help and receive it unconditionally.

Your Life & Legacy gift will ensure that the Jewish community will always provide for the most vulnerable among us.

Please Join Us! Contact David at 613-722-2225 x325 or ddern@jfsottawa.com

CORPORATE DONORS

JFS relies on the generosity of our community to support our work.
Thank you!

GOLD MEZUZAH



SILVER MENORAH



BRONZE CHAI



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Community Foundation of Ottawa

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JFSO Tzedakah Foundation

Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration

Ontario Ministry of Children, Community
and Social Services

Ottawa Jewish Community Foundation

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