



2020 ANNUAL REPORT

*Dedicated to nurturing a stronger and supportive
Jewish community and a more inclusive Ottawa.*



VISION

Through Jewish traditions, values and culture, to build a community where people can learn to care for themselves and each other with dignity, respect and compassion.

MISSION

In the spirit of “tikkun olam,” our mission is to strengthen Jewish life and to strengthen individual, family and communal life in the greater Ottawa community. This mission is accomplished through direct social service, partnership and advocacy.

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JFS OVERVIEW

In the social services world, there is much talk about the ‘continuum of care’—providing integrated services to support a single person throughout their lives.

For over 40 years JFS has been building and integrating essential support services for the young and the young at heart within Ottawa’s Jewish community across three basic human needs and has made an incredible impact in building a stronger, more diverse community.

These three support areas may seem separate, but they are, in fact, deeply connected. JFS nourishes our clients of all ages by offering services and programs that touch on these three pillars.



FOOD SECURITY

Sometimes access to food basics is a challenge for many people in our community and this becomes even more acute if you keep Kosher. Healthy and religiously appropriate food helps to sustain the body and soul, regardless of your age.



CONNECTION TO COMMUNITY

We’re social animals and need to be connected to our community in many ways to stay healthy and vibrant. However, this can be a challenge if you live on your own, or are on the margins of society because of mental health issues, social isolation, and/or financial barriers.



MENTAL WELLBEING

Our ability to respond positively to life’s ups and downs helps us move forward to live our life with determination and purpose. This is a challenge for many of us, young and not so young. JFS is here to offer support to our clients, where they need it, when they need it and how they need it.

THE COUNSELLING GROUP

JFS has been offering counselling services to the community for over 40 years. Counselling services are offered on a sliding scale, with the vision of making mental health counselling accessible to all who seek it. Our unique model allowed us to offer some type of subsidy to 70% of our clients this past year.

Our team of 41 highly trained mental health professionals provided service to over 2,000 community members through 10,000+ counselling sessions. While most of the team's mental health and wellness counselling work is done with individual adults, the group also supports clients requiring specific support through one of its specialized units—the Centre for Children, Youth and Families and the Centre for Couples and Relationships.

In addition to the direct work with the community, The Counselling Group is also committed to the ongoing development of highly skilled therapists. On an annual basis, staff at The Counselling Group supervise and mentor university counselling students, developing future quality mental health services.

THE WALK-IN COUNSELLING CLINIC

The Walk-In Counselling Clinic (TWICC) provides same day counselling services to individuals, couples, and families which are free of charge and do not require an appointment. The counsellors offering services in the Walk-In clinics are highly skilled and specially trained in brief counselling techniques.

These clinics are operated thanks to the funding of the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care and are offered through collaboration with JFS Ottawa at 10 different sites across Ottawa and the Ottawa Valley. Thanks to this widespread service, community members can access immediate mental health support any day of the week, in their own neighbourhood. In the past year, we were proud to expand our partnership into Lanark County and opened a new site in Carleton Place together with Lanark County Mental Health.



The program provided almost 3,000 counselling sessions, supporting 3,200 individuals.

DIVERSE SENIORS SUPPORT SERVICES

The Diverse Seniors Support Services (DSSS) unit supports multicultural seniors in our community to move from isolation to inclusion. In a culturally safe environment, we promote healthy aging and work hard to ensure that diverse seniors live with dignity, respect, and compassion.

Our services include health and fitness activities, friendly visiting (home visits), telephone assurance calls, case management, transportation to medical appointments, social & recreational events, hospice services, caregiver support and short-term counselling. Staff provide programs and services in Arabic, Cantonese, English, French, Kinyarwanda, Mandarin, Punjabi, Somali and Urdu.



The DSSS supported the wellbeing of almost 1,100 immigrant seniors.

TIKVAH

Our Tikvah unit is a demonstration of our commitment to supporting individuals and families in need, serving Ottawa's Jewish community members with dignity and compassion.

Direct financial aid is only one component of the assistance we provide. We work with each person's strengths, assisting them through challenging times. This includes being advocates in the community, managing food security programs and providing a safe space to be heard. With the further development of social programming, the Tikvah Unit has become a second home for many clients.

70 families every month benefit from direct financial assistance.

100 families every month receive fresh produce from our Miriam's' Well distribution.

Over **100** families were assisted with holiday distributions.

SHALOM BAYIT

Specially designated counsellors at Jewish Family Services offer confidential and anonymous support for women experiencing abuse.

This program is for Jewish women who have experienced verbal, emotional, physical, financial, sexual, spiritual/religious abuse, stalking/criminal harassment from a husband, boyfriend, or partner in the past or at present.

The Shalom Bayit counsellors served 25 clients.

Specialized services include: crisis/support counselling, referrals, safety planning, discreet follow-up support, advocacy assistance, outreach, rights information and long-term therapeutic counselling. The focus of the counselling is to build resilience, provide healing from trauma and enhance our clients' sense of safety.

Our counsellors are committed to raising the awareness of woman abuse in our community and is regularly called upon to share their expertise with other groups.

STREETSMARTS

StreetSmarts is a street-based outreach program that offers resources, referrals, and basic supplies to Ottawa's downtown homeless population.



As a consumer-led outreach program, many of our volunteers have lived experience, understand the effects of street culture, and are able to engage with those they are offering assistance to. In addition to their on-the-street work, the StreetSmarts team is frequently invited to attend High School Civics' classes to speak on a variety of subjects related to homelessness.

Youth Ottawa also invites StreetSmarts to many events as community outreach leaders inspiring youth to be social activists, particularly in the area of homelessness.

The StreetSmarts outreach teams regularly see 45-80 clients every day.

THE INEZ AND JOSEPH ZELIKOVITZ SETTLEMENT UNIT

JFS provides multiple programs in a variety of languages to support newcomers from several cultural, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds who are now making Ottawa their home.

JFS works in partnership with community service agencies to minimize gaps and provide high quality seamless settlement services to newcomer adults and youth. **Serving over 3,200 newcomers a year**, our menu of programs include: information and orientation, needs assessment and referrals, mental health and crisis counselling, sponsorship group support, mental health training for front line workers, and children and youth programming.



THELMA STEINMAN JEWISH SENIORS SUPPORT SERVICES

The Thelma Steinman Seniors Support Services unit is designed to assist Jewish seniors and their caregivers access resources and services which are necessary to keep seniors living independently and engaged in the community.

We offer services that are affordable, culturally and linguistically appropriate so they are accessible to clients from every socioeconomic status. These services include: transportation, adult day program for individuals with Dementia, Kosher Meals on Wheels, social programs for Russian speaking seniors, friendly visits, telephone assurance calls, assistance for Holocaust Survivors, case management and education related to aging.

The Thelma Steinman Seniors Support Services unit supported 291 Jewish seniors, including 68 Holocaust survivors.

PROGRAM FUNDERS AND MEMBER AGENCIES

JFS OTTAWA IS A PROUD MEMBER AGENCY OF:

Family Service Ontario
Local Agencies Serving Immigrants
Network of Jewish Human Services Agencies
Ontario Coalition of Agencies Serving Immigrants
Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women
Ottawa Community Support Coalition
Ottawa Hospice Palliative Care Network
Ottawa Local Immigrant Partnership
Refugee 613
Support Services Network for Male Survivors
Volunteer Ottawa

JFS OTTAWA IS A BENEFICIARY AGENCY OF:

The Alfred Landecker Foundation
Champlain Local Health Integration Network
City of Ottawa
Community Foundation of Ottawa
Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany
Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
Jewish Federation of Ottawa
JFSO Tzedakah Foundation
Nepean, Renfrew and Osgoode Community Resource Centre
Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration
Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services
Ottawa Jewish Community Foundation
RBC Foundation
Royal Ottawa Hospital
The Azrieli Foundation
United Way East Ontario

JFS OTTAWA'S CORPORATE SPONSORS

GOLD MEZUZAH



SILVER MENORAH



BRONZE CHAI



CO-PRESIDENTS' REPORT

This past year has been one of great change, adaptation and demonstrated resilience. As our fiscal year drew to a close, the full effects of COVID-19 on our community began to be felt. True to form, our Executive Director, Sarah Caspi, marshalled our talented leadership team and dedicated staff to face this challenging situation head on. Staff were redeployed to meet emerging needs and provide essential services in ways not envisaged only a few months earlier.

Many services that could no longer be provided in person, are now being delivered with technology that is becoming more familiar to us all. In person provision of needed goods was still maintained while ensuring safety for clientele and staff. As we recover from the pandemic, we will continue to reinvent how we can deliver our services. This will require continued imagination and creativity from management and staff.

In spite of these challenging times, the Agency continued to deliver critical services to communities in need. These programs include providing:

- support to seniors,
- dignified poverty relief within the Jewish community,
- counselling services,
- support of immigrant families and integration of those individuals into the fabric of Canadian life and
- ongoing development of our ground-breaking StreetSmarts program that impacts vulnerable street-involved individuals.

A very special and heartfelt thank you goes out to our many supporters, volunteers and funders during this unique time. Many reached out to us, unsolicited, knowing our ability to deliver needed services to populations at risk and offered significant funding and contributions.

We are thrilled to have such talented and dedicated individuals who have volunteered to serve on the board and its newly structured committees. A major focus of the board this past year was to update our governance to take into account the growth, size and prominence of the Agency. This will leave us well positioned for upcoming opportunities and challenges as well as ensure that the Agency complies with new provincial charities legislative requirements. Completing this exercise was a significant undertaking.

We are thrilled to see many other agencies within the broader Ottawa community continue to reach out for partnership opportunities with the Agency to leverage our reputation and experience. As well, the Agency continues to build a very cooperative and collegial relationship with the Jewish Federation of Ottawa and we look forward to building upon it.

The programs offered by our agency have become yet more needed through these past few months. Each of us, whether funders, volunteers or donors offer crucial support to the committed and enthusiastic staff who devise and deliver these services. Thank you to all who contribute to the fulfillment of our mission.

— Mark Luden & Steven Morgan, Co-Presidents



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

As I reflect back on this past year I am awed by the resilience, compassion and commitment of both the staff and clients alike. **It has been a remarkable year at Jewish Family Services.**

In my inaugural year as Executive Director my goal was to build on the amazing legacy of Jewish Family Services and move us forward with a focus on staff engagement, building capacity and a renewed human resource infrastructure through three initiatives: (1) Strategic Planning (2) Revision of our Human Resource Policies and Procedures and (3) Staff Training. I am proud to report that all three pillars have moved forward.

Each unit at the agency took time to explore how they could develop new programs and create new partnerships to meet the needs of our clients. One new initiative that we are very excited about, as part of our Thelma Steinman Seniors Unit, is our *Care for the Caregiver* program which provides caregivers with access to a Certified Dementia Consultant, trained in the area of providing positive approaches to care. This new program will be invaluable to those in our community who are supporting a senior in their life affected by Dementia. Another is our new partnership with Lanark County Mental Health, who recently opened their doors as our 10th Walk-In Counselling Clinic site. These are but two examples of our units identifying and addressing gaps in our social services both at a community and municipal level.

With the onset of COVID-19 and the abrupt, but necessary, lockdown and closure of our physical space I was once again reminded of the compassion and commitment of our staff

and the resilience of our clients. As an agency we learned to adapt to working from home, pivot our services and redefine our programs and services. And we did it very well, as a team.

We met this challenge through the help of a very strong and committed staff, generous and essential emergency funds, and community support. We know that there are people relying on us, as their connection to community and as their support network of essential resources. We are well aware of the issues of food insecurity, lack of access to technology and unaffordable housing our clients face. The pandemic has amplified these issues and with the data now in, has also shown us how COVID-19 disproportionately affected our clients. Recent times have made it abundantly clear to us and our entire community that JFS is an essential service for so many individuals and families facing hardships. From Settlement to Senior Care to Mental Health Services our JFS staff have responded.

We have received tremendous support from the community, both through the emergency campaign and individual donations. We had people reach out to us to see how they could help us take care of our community.

We have also received a great deal of support from our funders throughout the year. Their support and flexibility during COVID, helped us adapt to the new reality and adopt new

ways of providing programs and services to our clients. Various COVID related emergency funds provided much needed funds, that supported our clients and staff in a myriad of ways.

Thank you to our Board of Directors for their support and guidance throughout the year, especially during this most recent time. A special thanks to Mark Luden and Steven Morgan, our Co-Presidents for their dedication and investment of time.

I want to thank each and every staff person at JFS for their skill, compassion and dedication to JFS and who, despite the challenges we have faced throughout the year, have continued to provide excellent programs and services to all of our clients. Together, they make JFS the amazing place that it is.

I am surrounded by an incredible team of Directors who support the work that I do. I would like to give a special shout out to Andrea Gardner, my Associate Executive Director who

has been a tremendous help in navigating the challenges COVID-19 has presented us. To Michael Gershuny and his team for their agility in bringing access to mental health counselling possible through a virtual platform. To David Dern for providing excellent leadership in accessing emergency funding. To Karen Ruyter whose Human Resource leadership and collaborative demeanor has helped us create a gradual return to office plan. And to Laurie Chochinov, who has supported our fiscal responsibility and has been a helpful resource as we create new partnerships.

— Sarah Caspi, Executive Director

**May we all stay safe
as we continue to
move forward.**

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2019/2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EXECUTIVE

Dr. Mark Luden
Co-President

Steven Morgan
Co-President

Dr. Riva Levitan
Vice President

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Ariella Mintz

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Dr. Khashayar Shariati

Erica Sher

Jenny Shinder

WHEN THE LIGHT FADES

They often rise with the sun, ready to fulfill their daily obligations of mitzvah and in the honouring of their commitment, they bring joy to those people who have too little joy in their own world.

Their smile brings to the daily routine, a bit of sunshine where none might have lived before their visit; their warmth and kindness reaches into the homes and hearts of the fortunate few who benefit from the long reach of their compassion.

And when they leave us, we who are left behind, must work to fill the empty wake of their passing with the memories they've left for us.

They will always be well remembered in our hearts. Warmly dedicated to the volunteers and clients who have left us over this past year.

THE JFS TEAM

Fatima Abdo
Nimo Abubakar
Johara Aden
Amal Ahmed
Hasna Alami
Lamia Al-Ansari
Mawdah Albatnuni
Sarah Alderwick
Nadeen Almubarak
Basma Al-Taie
Iris Beer
Hoda Bimbachi
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Jesse Henneberry
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Adriana Jary
Sabine Jean
Christopher Johnson
Donia Jomaa
Shannon LaValley
Marianela Leon De Mujica
Ping Lin
Liza Maarouf

Tara MacMaster
Victoria Martindale
Alla Mazor
Karen McIntosh
Reina McSheffrey
Jennifer Munroe
Rana Musa
Kaltoun Mussa
Safia Nawaz
Tal Ohana-Palgi
Kathryn Owens
Mirjana Pobric
Mariana Rakiteansky
Valerie Repta
Shelley Rivier
Quinn Rivier-Gatt
Karen Ruyter
Julia Sage
Jeffrey Scharf
Jordana Shainbach
Dmitri Shkliar
George Sladowski

Angela Spinney
Gabriella Stern-Young
Shannon Sweeting-Woods
Agnieszka
Szymanowicz-Yalcin
Laura Thomas
Crystal Tierney
Olga Timakova
Esperance Umutesi
Carmen Urbina
Gohar Vardanyan
Cameron Wade
Fathia Warsama
Sophia Weaver
Lisa Webne-Behrman
Gabrielle Wilson
Dalia Wood
Sara Youbi
Stacey Young
Ella Zabarsky
Samiyah Zawawi

OUR VOLUNTEERS

Christopher Adam
Sarah Agulnik
Sharon Appotive
Michael Baker
Aviva Ben-Choreen
Joan Bernstein
Elly Bollegraaf
Leslie Breiner
Hannah Cammy
Galina Chilova
Eva Eichler
Zahava Farber
Sydney Featherman
Zigfrid Fleishmaher
Martin Freeman
Eva Fried
Vera Gara
Harvey Goldberg
Max Greenberg
Ira Greenblatt
Les Grumach
Deborah Gurwiicz
Edith Halmos

Tracy Hartman
Susan Heisl
Johnathan Honey
Janet Isserlin
John Jackson
Janet Kaiman
Joanne Kalman
Bob Kaminsky
Nili Kaplan-Myrth
Allan Karovitch
Dean Kathron
Shelli Kimmel
Chana Krevsky
Stanley "Skip" Kronick
Arkadi Kvitko
Lidia Kvitko
Riva Levitan
Xian Chun Liang
Laura Lozanski
Mark Luden
Sarah MacRitchie
Natalia Markova
Marina Milyasvkaya

Sharon Mintz
Aberra Minywab
Vadim Mittelman
Steven Morgan
Tammy Myers
Oyulinka Obadina
Natasha Ovodova
Erica Phillips
Sandy Pollack
Cynthia Powell
Sabrina Price
Alexandra Rekadze
Alexei Rekadze
Brenna Rivier
Esther Rossman
Inessa Rozina
Larry Rubenstein
Joel Sachs
Charles Schachnow
Wesley Schacter
Rabbi Joel Scher
Sheila Senman
Steven Senman

Khashayar Shariati
Erica Sher
Hugh Shewell
Jack Shinder
Jenny Shinder
Leslie Siegman
Jacqueline Sitwell
Rosemarie Skoll
Dana Strauss
Donna Strauss
Steven Tessler
David Weinstein
Candice Wilder
Batia Winer
Sid Woznica
Simon Wright
Toby Yan
Gabriella Stern-Young
Mikaela Young
Sandra Zagon
Rony Zamor

To those we may have missed, we offer our sincerest apologies.

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS

We owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to our volunteers, without whom we would not be able to go that extra mile. Our volunteers' altruistic acts of kindness enrich our community and society and as provide us with a precious resource.



Join us
on October 20 to help us celebrate another
year of nurturing a stronger and supportive
Jewish community and a more inclusive Ottawa.

Annual General Meeting 2020

October 20, 2020, by Zoom

Elaine Rabin Award presented to Operation
Ramzieh. Volunteer of the Year Award presented
to the StreetSmarts outreach team.

JFS ✨
OTTAWA
JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES

Thank you
for celebrating
with us!

ELAINE RABIN SOCIAL SERVICES AWARD

Operation Ramzieh is a volunteer-driven initiative led by the owners of and supported by the staff of DreamMind Group, a Canadian company who owns a variety of restaurants and bars.

When their industry shut down due to Covid-19, they engaged their team to keep the city's most vulnerable fed and safe at home during the pandemic. As well, their initiative has eased the pressure on hospitals and medical staff so they can focus on responding to the city's urgent medical needs.

DreamMind president, Abbis Mahmoud, personally contributed the first \$40,000 to kickstart this project. Named Operation Ramzieh after his mother, Abbis was confident that they could help others just as his mother did by feeding those in need back in his home country of Lebanon. In order to achieve this goal, their team was able to buy essential food and other necessities at cost. The entire operation is volunteer driven.

In April 2020, JFS saw that food security was becoming the number one concern for seniors in newcomer, refugee and racialized communities. The staff approached the DreamMind group to see if Operation Ramzieh was able to help meet the need of our clients and they agreed to partner with us.

Since May 2020, the volunteers from Operation Ramzieh have delivered over 3,300 food boxes to almost 270 households (over 1,000 individuals!) as a result of over \$120,000 received from a number of successful grants. Yasher Koach!

OPERATION RAMZIEH



VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD

This year's JFS Volunteer of the Year award recipient is the StreetSmarts Outreach Volunteer Team.

In 2001 with support from JFS, Pete Cassidy founded the outreach program StreetSmarts. Pete was the heart and soul of StreetSmarts. He knew what the homeless needed, and he reached out every day to Ottawa's homeless and street involved, providing crisis intervention, advocacy, referrals and essential items to those hardest to serve.

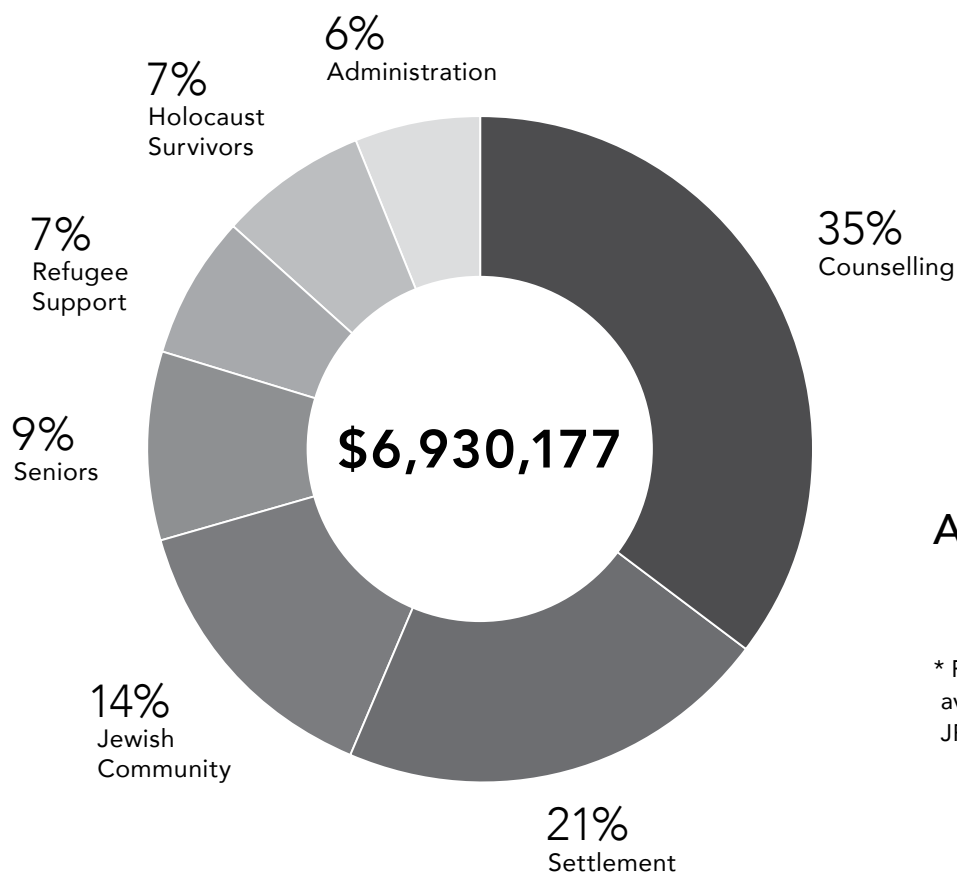
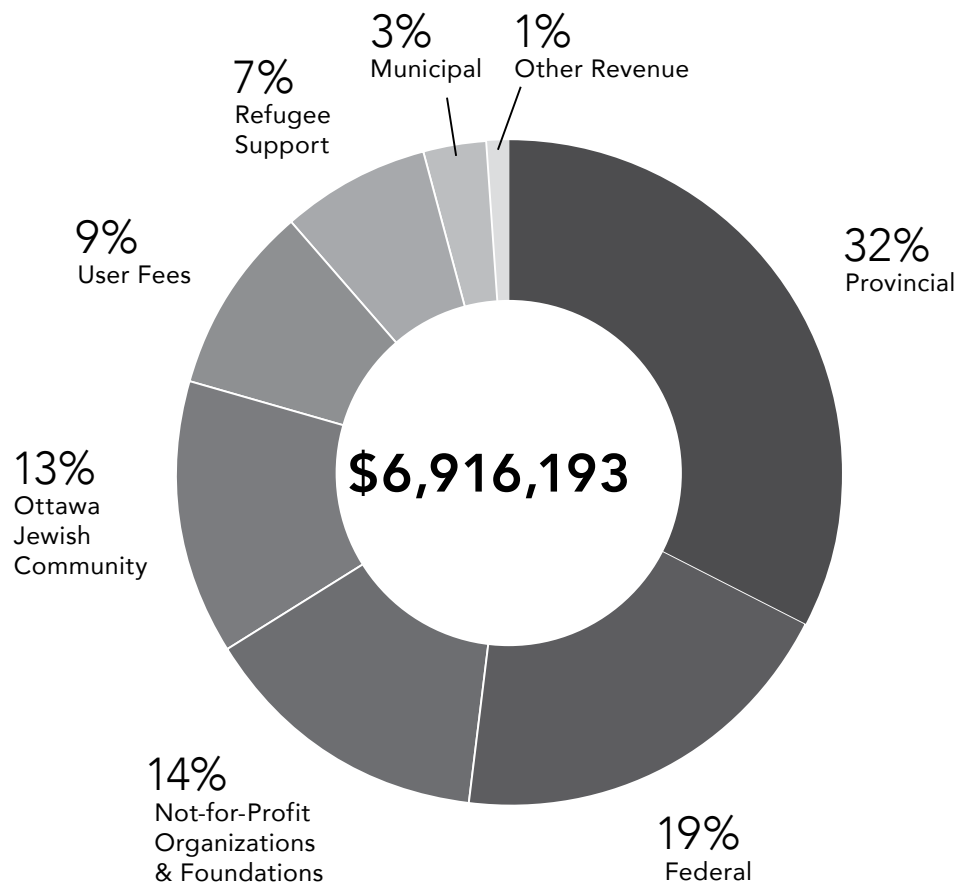
Now, 20 years later StreetSmarts has established itself as a unique street based outreach program offering resources and referrals and delivers basic supplies to Ottawa's homeless population. It is a grassroots program servicing clients of all backgrounds. The program could not exist without the work of a group of passionate and committed individuals, some of which have lived experiences with homelessness and addictions, and others simply want to be a part of the solution.

The volunteer team is able to open doors and facilitate referrals to programs and provide linkages to other community supports as well as social and housing services. They also operate a crisis hotline where street involved people can call and speak to a person 24 hour a day, 7 days a week.

The StreetSmarts team understands the hardships and effects of street life, and are able to engage with those hardest to serve. They provide a shoulder to lean on, lend a compassionate ear to listen and are ready with a hug for individuals who too often feel invisible and ignored in our society.



WHERE OUR FUNDING COMES FROM



PROGRAM INVESTMENTS AND AGENCY ADMINISTRATION

* Full financial statements are available online or by contacting JFS Ottawa directly.



HOW WILL YOU ASSURE JEWISH TOMORROWS?

Whatever you cherish most about Jewish life...learning, community, worship, caring for those in need or social justice, by leaving a legacy you ensure that the things you value are sustained for future generations.

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Dedicated to nurturing a stronger
and supportive Jewish community
and a more inclusive Ottawa.

TO DISCUSS
CREATING YOUR
JEWISH LEGACY
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BRIAN AARENAU

B.A., M.M.S. (Finance)
Financial Advisor

Brian has more than 20 years of experience successfully assisting clients with their finance and insurance goals.

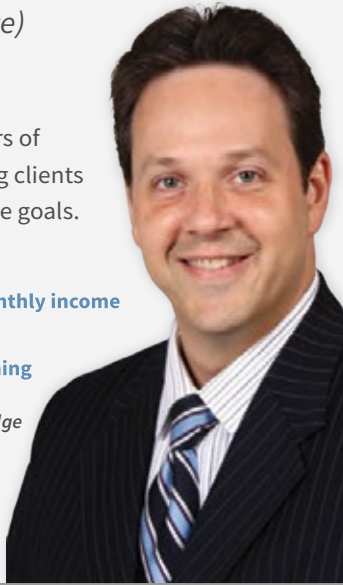
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