

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

BRINGING LIGHT INTO OUR COMMUNITY

As we enter into the dark months of winter with COVID-19 still very much a part of our worlds it has been and will continue to be a hard time for many of us. During these times it is important to look at how we, as a community, can continue to support those around us while taking care of ourselves. As an agency, through our many support programs and services, we can let a little light into those dark places. Throughout this pandemic we have seen the importance of resiliency, creativity, and supports, and the JFS team has worked hard to be there for our community, even when our physical doors were closed.

As the world changes around us the JFS team continues to focus its efforts on our three pillars of care: Food Security, Connection to Community and Mental Wellbeing. Coping with COVID-19 illustrates not only how important these are but how fragile and precarious they can be for so many.

Food security has been a key challenge for a large portion of our clients. During the lockdown we saw the many ways in which food security was an issue and we responded in many important ways.

- Our Kosher Meals on Wheels delivered prepared food to our seniors and to some of our isolated clients. We adapted our financial assistance program to find easier ways to provide monthly assistance and fruit and vegetable distribution.
- To support our Holocaust survivor clients we coordinated with home care workers to help with grocery shopping, ensuring that clients had the food they needed.
- To support our diverse seniors we set up a temporary Meals on Wheels program as well as created a partnership with Operation Ramzieh to provide culturally specific food boxes.
- We also provided additional food gift cards to support clients in all of our programs who were struggling with food security and were able to shop on their own.



SARAH CASPI

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The negative effects of loneliness and isolation on individuals due to COVID-19 has had huge consequences on many, and thus we found ways to keep our clients **Connected to Community**. This included a Russian newsletter for our Russian seniors, Zoom get-togethers for our Tikvah clients, a virtual support group for women, a virtual day program for seniors with cognitive decline, wellness checks for all of our seniors, online cooking programs and yoga for children in our refugee communities, online art classes for our diverse seniors, and creative ways to provide much needed street outreach.

Knowing that connection to community is essential, and recognizing that much of the services that we offer were now virtual, we provided much needed technology to those in need, helping to decrease the growing digital divide.

COVID-19 has destabilized what we knew of as 'normal' and most, if not all of us, have experienced stress, anxiety and fear, jeopardizing our **Mental Wellbeing**. Knowing the effects that COVID-19 would have on our mental health prompted our counselling units, The Counselling Group and The Walk-in Counselling Clinic, to move rapidly and carefully adapt their services to virtual ones. You can read more about this shift later in this newsletter.

In addition to shifting our regular services to virtual we were able to create new interactive video-based online mental health support workshops. These linguistically, culturally and community-appropriate workshops focus on helping vulnerable community members better manage their anxiety and reduce stress.

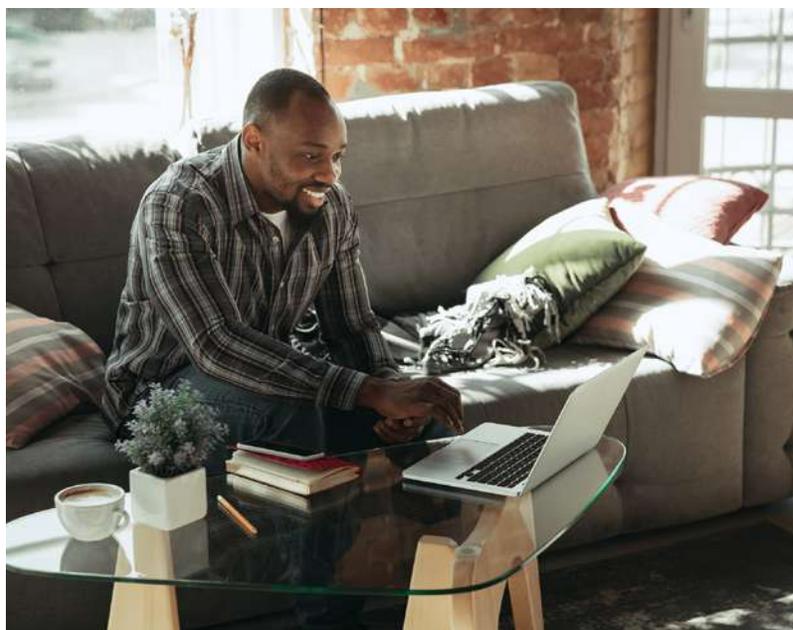
As a community agency we cannot do this alone and we have not. Over the past 9 months JFS has been fortunate to have received emergency financial support from funders, including the Jewish Federation of Ottawa, and received increased donations from our many supporters. Thank you!

All the creative ways we have supported our clients and community over the past 9 months has demonstrated that we are an essential service and have an important role to play in helping our community get through these difficult times. I have been impressed to see our city's various agencies supporting each other's work so we, as a community, can take better care of each other.

Wishing you all a Chanukah Sameach, and may the light of this season help us all to continue brightening our community, especially for those whose days are particularly dark.

Sarah

SARAH CASPI



THE WALK-IN COUNSELLING CLINIC

Our network of community-based mental health clinics is here to help! Located throughout Eastern Ontario, our team offers same day, single-session, no cost mental health supports. Services are available in multiple languages. A full list of locations and days is available at www.walkincounselling.com

JFS OTTAWA'S IMPACT

WHAT INFLUENCES OUR PROGRAMS

It's usually in this space where we speak about how societal pressures or government policies affect how we develop or re-engineer our programs to support the community. This installment of 'What Influences our Programs' will focus on what's on everyone's minds--COVID-19. This virus and the physical distancing and isolation requirements put in place to slow its spread have taken over almost every aspect of our community and have affected each of us in very different ways. When we received instructions to close our offices in March, we knew immediately that we had to adapt quickly and seamlessly to ensure our clients would feel safe, supported and connected.



Dignity | Kindness | Compassion

Through additional support from the Jewish Federation of Ottawa,
JFS is here for you during this uncertain time.

We are community and are here to help.

If you are experiencing:

- Food insecurity
- Mental health challenges
- Abuse
- Loss of income
- Confusion around government supports and eligibility
- Challenges in supporting unwell or senior family members
- Disconnection from family and community because of social isolation and distancing

...JFS is here for you.



Phone: 613-722-2225 and leave a message
or email us at: info@jfsottawa.com

We'll get back to you within 24 hours.

This meant shifting traditional face-to-face programs to virtual and enhancing our supports based on the 'new normal' and the new challenges it created for both our clients and our team. Here is a highlight of how COVID-19 has influenced and affected supports for our Jewish community.

The **Tikvah** team initiated wellness calls to all of its clients to identify what they needed to feel supported. The team has moved to hosting groups, social activities and holiday celebrations virtually through Zoom. As long as the weather allows, they have been meeting clients outdoors for walks, in parks, or sitting in backyards maintaining physical distance and with all the appropriate PPEs. Since the pandemic they have been able to maintain their monthly Miriam's Well Fresh Food program, offering it concurrently with the Ottawa Kosher Food Bank as a curbside, drive-through program.

Supports to seniors have never been as important as they are now during a time where we are seeing senior isolation as the single most distressing barrier they are facing. Isolation affects food security, access to health care and cognitive health. Our programs and services attached to our **Thelma Steinman Seniors Support** unit have made an immeasurable impact on keeping our Jewish seniors connected.

Our weekly **Adult Day Program** for seniors living with mild to moderate cognitive impairment continues to run as a remote weekly program using an online Zoom format. New to the virtual program is providing each participant with one-on-one sessions three times a week, which has proven to be extremely valuable in keeping the clients socially connected and familiar with the program material. We are so amazed by the impact this has made that we are in the planning stages of adding an additional day in 2021!

Our new **Care for the Caregiver** program has been remotely supporting Dementia caregivers by providing them with relevant tools and resources and, most importantly, offering essential mental health and wellness



support as they navigate their complex relationships. This program has paid particular attention to how COVID-19 has exacerbated their situations.

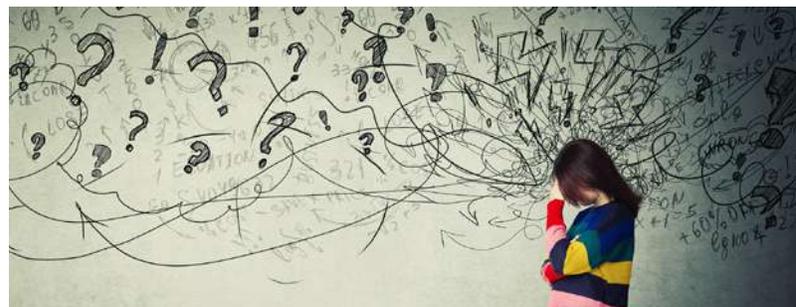
With physical distancing and isolation in place, access to food became a challenge for many of our clients. When the lockdown happened we actively sought out additional resources in anticipation of increased demand. Almost immediately our **Kosher Meals on Wheels (KMOW)** program saw an increase of 800% (!), an increase from 6 meals a week to 55 being distributed.

Our other programs, such as **friendly visiting**, **case management** and **chaplancy** all continue to be offered virtually through whatever technology works best for the clients.

Supporting our Jewish community's mental health needs has always been a priority for JFS and it continues to be given the continuing restrictions and isolation. You can read more later in the newsletter about how **The Counselling Group** and **The Walk-in Counselling Clinic** have responded to COVID-19. With an abundance of caution and

with security of proper PPEs, JFS continues to have a social worker onsite at the Ottawa Jewish Community School.

JFS is here for our community. We are community and are here to help. If you or someone you know is struggling please reach out.



THE COUNSELLING GROUP WORKSHOPS

The Counselling Group is here to support the community during these very trying times. We offer a variety of workshops (fee-based/no-fee) to help you manage stress, anxiety and anger. A full schedule can be found at www.thecounsellinggroup.com

HOW WILL YOU ASSURE JEWISH TOMORROWS?



The teams at JFS Ottawa and Hillel Lodge support your loved ones throughout their lives. We support the young and the young at heart with dignity, kindness and compassion.

A gift in your will is not about the zeroes--it's about ensuring the continuity of Jewish institutions important to you. A legacy gift of any size makes a difference!



THE BESS AND MOE GREENBERG FAMILY
Hillel Lodge
THE JOSEPH AND INEZ ZELIKOVITZ
LONG TERM CARE CENTRE



To create your Jewish legacy contact:

David Dern, JFS Ottawa
Director of Development
ddern@jfsottawa.com
613-722-2225

Mitch Miller, Hillel Lodge Foundation
Executive Director
mmiller@hillel-ltc.com
613-728-3990

THE DIFFERENCE WE MAKE

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS DURING A PANDEMIC

THE COUNSELLING GROUP

Adapting to the 21st century, The Counselling Group has been offering a form of virtual counselling for some time prior to COVID-19. However, with COVID-19 all regular in-person counselling ceased.



As a result the Counselling Group transformed quickly to be a fully operational virtual clinic via teletherapy. This required an update of technology, training of staff as well as supporting clients. During the first week of transformation, sessions were offered solely via phone. Video counselling (using secure Zoom) was introduced a week later. The team quickly developed protocols and procedures allowing it to maintain professional and quality service to its clients, which included on-line clinical practices, safety protocols and electronic forms and communication. Some clients were pleased with the change and embraced the opportunities it holds, while others were more hesitant or struggled due to their personal life situation. A large group of clients initially chose to “wait it out” until COVID-19 passes and in-person services resume. With the return to the office lingering, and based on the instructions and recommendations of public health authorities, most of this group transferred into teletherapy services. At this point, all sessions are still completed via teletherapy while protocols are being developed for in-person sessions.

THE WALK-IN COUNSELLING CLINIC

The Walk-In Counselling Clinic was hit hard by COVID-19. Over its 7 years of operation, the Clinic had established a unique clinic setting which is dependent on in-person sessions. With COVID-19, all sites were closed and began adapting their practice to online services delivery. Within 2-3 weeks many of the sites re-opened, providing phone services and video counselling, and after 5 weeks all sites resumed service. Since using online services, the model has been adapted by the different clinics depending on their available resources. Some sites were able to maintain the 1.5 hour session which includes a consultation break, while others moved to a shorter session model which includes a pre- and post-consultation with a clinical supervisor. With an attempt to ease access to Clinic’s services, a single call-in number for all sites was created and operates in multiple languages. The Walk-In Counselling Clinic has also partnered with a city wide initiative, Counselling Connect, which allows clients to book their sessions online and in advance. As of July, some sites began offering in-person sessions again and it’s anticipated that in the future, the network will continue to operate with a hybrid model of service.



DONOR AND FUNDER SPOTLIGHT

EMERGENCY FUNDERS

Two weeks into our new fiscal year our world was turned upside down. COVID-19 disproportionately affected our client base, our city's most vulnerable—those not fully included in our city's mainstream community due to intersecting barriers such as physical, age, mental health, financial, language and cultural. With pandemic restrictions put in place, our agency experienced an increase in demand for services not only from existing clientele, but also from new clients forced to rely on us. On behalf of our Board, our team and, most importantly, the thousands of Ottawans that we work with, we want to thank you all for your unwavering support of our mission!

JFS Ottawa's 22 monthly donors, our 15 Life & Legacy donors and 360 annual donors

The Alfred Landecker Foundation

The Azrieli Foundation

Canadian Women's Foundation

Champlain Local Health Integration Network

City of Ottawa

Community Foundation of Ottawa

Conference on Jewish Material Claims against Germany

Employment and Social Development Canada

Good Companions

Government of Canada

HelpAge Canada

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

Jewish Federation of Ottawa

JFSO Tzedakah Foundation

Nepean, Renfrew and Osgoode Community Resource Centre

New Horizons

Ontario Community Service Agency

Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration

Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services

Ottawa Community Foundation

Ottawa Jewish Community Foundation

Ottawa West Community Support

RBC Foundation

Royal Ottawa Hospital

Second Harvest

Social Planning Council

The Sprott Foundation

United Way East Ontario

Women and Gender Equality Canada

Together, these donors and funders injected over \$700,000 into our community to support us through the pandemic.



LIFE & LEGACY

JFS works with complex, long-term issues that require ongoing investments in time and resources. Regardless, these Life & Legacy donors 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. Thank you!

Mitchell Novick and Ilana Albert-Novick

Anonymous donor

Sarah Caspi

Lorne Cutler

David Dern

John and Dayra Diener

Paul Gardner

Jessica Greenberg

Richard Roth and Riva Levitan

Patsy Mallek Royer

Sandra Pollack and Steven Poleski

Rabbi Idan and Shifra Scher

Graham and Erica Sher

Jeffrey and Adele Sidney

Life & Legacy Letter of Intent

Our Promise

In keeping with Jewish tradition and an abiding commitment to my/our future, I/we wish to share my/our legacy with others. I/We sign this declaration in order to provide for future generations and assure continuity of services and programs in Jewish Ottawa.

Please choose one:

- I/We have already included a legacy gift for the Jewish community in my/our will or estate plan.
- I/We will leave a gift and will formalize the gift within _____ months (maximum 1 year).

Donor Name(s) : _____

Date(s) of Birth: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

I/We understand that this legacy gift will be placed in a permanent endowment fund by the organization(s) selected. It is my/our desire that the following community partner organization(s) benefit from our gift:

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Camp B'nai Brith | <input type="radio"/> Jewish Memorial Gardens | <input type="radio"/> Tamir |
| <input type="radio"/> Congregation Machzikei Hadas | <input type="radio"/> Kehillat Beth Israel | <input type="radio"/> Temple Israel |
| <input type="radio"/> Hillel Lodge LTC Foundation | <input type="radio"/> Ottawa Jewish Community School | <input type="radio"/> Torah Day School of Ottawa |
| <input type="radio"/> JET | <input type="radio"/> Ottawa Torah Centre Chabad | <input type="radio"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="radio"/> JFS Ottawa | <input type="radio"/> Soloway Jewish Community Centre | |
| <input type="radio"/> Jewish Federation of Ottawa | | |

Optional:

My/Our gift to the Jewish community will be completed through:

- Gift in Will
- Gift from Retirement Plan Assets
- Gift of Life Insurance
- Other (please specify): _____

The approximate value of my/our gift will be \$: _____ or _____ %

Please choose one:

- I/We give permission to include my/our name(s) in a LIFE & LEGACY honour roll to inspire and encourage others. It should appear as: _____

- I/We prefer to remain anonymous

Donor Signature(s): _____ Date: _____

This declaration of intent is not a legal obligation and may be changed at donor's discretion.

Please complete and return this form to:

David Dern, Director of Development
JFS Ottawa | 2255 Carling Avenue Ottawa, ON K2B 7Z5
ddern@jfsottawa.com | 613-722-2225 x325



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!

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.

STAFF AND BOARD SPOTLIGHT



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Welcome to our 2020-2021 Board of Directors!

Steven Morgan and Dr. Mark Luden, Co-Presidents

Aviva Ben-Choreen, Vice-President

Ariella Mintz, Treasurer

Dr. Alan Karovitch, Secretary

Jack Shinder, Past President

Christopher Adam

Dr. Nili Kaplan-Myrth

Dr. Riva Levitan

Marina Milyavskaya

Dr. Khashayar Shariati

Erica Sher

A big Yasher Koach goes to the Governance Committee for ensuring that JFS's By-Laws are up to date. The time and effort put in to this endeavour will certainly be felt for years to come.

The Board of Directors would also like to thank outgoing board members Esther Rossman, Hugh Shewell, Leslie Siegman, and Jenny Shinder for their commitment and dedication to JFS.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

We are dedicating this spotlight to the entire JFS Team!

If there's one thing that the last nine months have shown, it is that JFS has very creative, innovative and dedicated staff who will not hesitate to go above and beyond for clients.

Thank you for all that you do for JFS and our community!

CARE FOR THE CAREGIVER

Supporting loved ones with Dementia requires your creativity, compassion and an abundance of emotional energy. When you introduce a pandemic whose restrictions shift everything you've worked for, you need new ideas, new energy and new support. That's where JFS can help. This fee-based consulting program is for members of the Jewish community caring for someone with dementia. For more information about the services contact Iris Beer at **613-722-2225 x311** or **ibeer@jfsottawa.com**.



BIKING FOR BUBBIES

JFS knows that we exist as part of a larger community of care and take every opportunity to support our partners. This small but fierce team of JFS staff helped raise funds for Hillel Lodge's Feeding Assistance Program. Although our team 'Chafing the Dream' couldn't ride together on the day of because of the weather, we did find some time to get out and ride in honour of the program.



CORPORATE SPONSORS

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

GOLD MEZUZAH



SILVER MENORAH



BRONZE CHAI



IS A BENEFICIARY AGENCY OF

- Champlain Local Health Integration Network
- City of Ottawa
- Community Foundation of Ottawa
- Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany
- Gevurah CDC Fund
- Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
- Jewish Federation of Ottawa
- JFSO Tzedakah Foundation
- Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration
- Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services
- Ottawa Jewish Community Foundation
- RBC Foundation
- The Azrieli Foundation
- United Way/Centraide Ottawa