

The Asper Helping Hand  
INITIATIVE

TAHHI offers interest free loans to Jewish individuals and families who are experiencing a temporary hardship. These loans are available for a variety of different purposes such as educational, medical needs, immigration, vocational, life cycle events, first time home buyers, family emergencies and debt consolidation. For further information on how to apply, please contact the Administrator of the TAHHI program, Shelley Garfield, at 478-8592 or email [sgarfield@jcfswinnipeg.org](mailto:sgarfield@jcfswinnipeg.org).

## Passover Assistance: Ma'ot Chitim

*Let all who are hungry, come and eat....*



**M**a'ot Chitim is defined as "Wheat Money", which traditionally meant a collection made before Passover to ensure a supply of flour for unleavened bread (matza) for the needy and indigent. In accordance with the statement in the Haggadah, KOL DICHFIN YEITEI V'YEICHOL - Let all who are hungry, come and eat, it is an important Jewish tradition that on Passover we as a community be concerned for the poor and the hungry (Sefer HaToda'a).

Ma'ot Chitim is distributed to families who have requested the need for help to meet the financial burden of purchasing Passover goods. Jewish Child and Family Service clients who need this help are identified by their social workers. Everyone in the community who requests assistance is eligible to receive help from this program.

Jewish Child and Family Service acts as the central agency for the collection and distribution of Passover assistance to those Jewish individuals and families in our community who need help. A contribution to the Passover Assistance program will help ensure those who are challenged with financial difficulties, mental health challenges, isolation and physical infirmity are supported.

The contents of the food hamper are determined by the size and makeup of the family. Consideration is also given for any dietary restrictions or allergies.

Last year the agency distributed 156 hampers with Passover products (supporting 290 individuals). Arrangements have been made this year with the Gwen Sector Creative Living Centre, the Manitoba Transit Heritage Association and J-peg to assemble and deliver the hampers. Past recipients of these hampers have expressed their heartfelt appreciation for the generosity of the community in helping them to fully participate in the celebration of the Passover holiday.

In the true spirit of "tzedakah" please contribute generously to the Passover Assistance program.

## JCFS Greeting Cards: \$10

JCFS continue to sell its beautifully designed greeting cards in packages containing six unique cards. The images on the cards were created by students from Gray Academy of Jewish Education. Proceeds from the sale of the cards will be used to support programs for children. Card sets are \$10. Call the JCFS office to order cards at 477-7430.



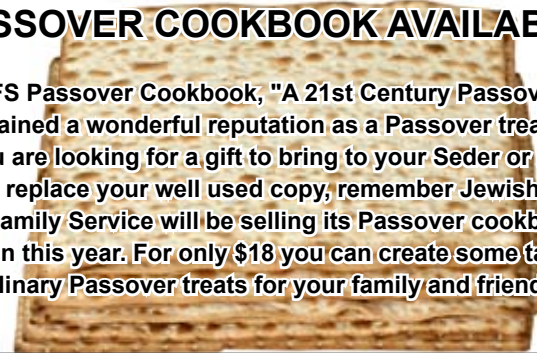
## IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS

*Claims Conference Home Care Services Program*

This year the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (Claims Conference) reached an historic agreement with the German Government to provide increased home care and cleaning services for eligible Holocaust Survivors all over the world. For more information, please contact Jewish Child and Family Service at 477-7430.

## PASSOVER COOKBOOK AVAILABLE

**JCFS Passover Cookbook, "A 21st Century Passover" has gained a wonderful reputation as a Passover treasure. If you are looking for a gift to bring to your Seder or need one to replace your well used copy, remember Jewish Child and Family Service will be selling its Passover cookbooks again this year. For only \$18 you can create some tasty culinary Passover treats for your family and friends.**



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Jewish Child and Family Service is committed to protecting the personal information by following responsible information handling practices in keeping with the privacy laws.

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JEWISH FEDERATION OF WINNIPEG



# SHERUT

MARCH 2011



JEWISH CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICE  
*Strengthening lives in keeping with Jewish values*

## JCFS Leads the Way in Suicide Prevention

**W**hat could I have done? How was I so blind to what was really going on? I should have seen the signs? Haunting questions that plague a person after a friend, relative, client or patient takes their life by suicide. Every year more people in Canada die by suicide than from traffic accidents. It is also known that in one year alone, 5-6% of the population has or will have serious thoughts of suicide. It is suspected that these numbers are no less in our own Jewish community. Furthermore, over the past several years JCFS has addressed multiple instances of community members living with thoughts of suicide, having attempted suicide, and sadly, having died by suicide.

In an effort to strengthen our community in the area of suicide intervention to those who work directly in the human services field, JCFS has taken the lead in our community by introducing ASIST, *Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training*\*, a specialized program directed at caregivers. ASIST is the most recognized and widely used suicide intervention training program in the world, with over 1 million people trained.

Al Benarroch, JCFS Clinical Director, who has been trained as an ASIST facilitator, sees the critical importance of this training as a way of helping to build confidence and competence in the area of suicide intervention. "Most professionals in the human service industry do not receive any type of formal training on how to help a person at immediate risk for suicide. Many professionals are more likely to receive CPR or First-Aid training, also a very important skill, although they will be more likely to encounter an acutely suicidal person in the course of their work."

Al co-facilitated a two day session held at the Asper Jewish Community Campus, with Val Horner, a retired nurse and senior ASIST coach and trainer, who has conducted the workshop over 230 times.

JCFS is well known in the community as a valuable resource for individuals or families dealing with anxiety, depression or other challenging issues. Workshops such as our Bereavement Support Group and Suicide Survivors Bereavement Group have been a great help to those who are grieving after the death of a loved one. We are hoping to offer ASIST training several times a year to anyone, both professionals and community members, who feel they could benefit from the training.

The ASIST program helps the caregiver recognize and respond to the signals a suicidal person sends out. Role-playing, lecture and group discussion play important roles in the training. Learning the model for effective suicide intervention is very empowering and gives a person confidence in knowing how to appropriately and directly ask the question "Are you having thoughts of suicide?" Skills are learned for helping the person at risk work through their feelings and seek the immediate and longer-term supports they require to support life. The training program emphasizes the importance of accessing

personal and community resources that a person contemplating suicide has available to them. Hope, emotional supports and information are all powerful life saving tools.

Once again, JCFS has taken a leadership role in the community in addressing this important issue, and in keeping with our mission - Strengthening Lives in Keeping with Jewish Values. It is in this way that our community is further strengthened when we support those in need. What greater mitzvah can there be than to save a life.

*\*ASIST: A LivingWorks program - LivingWorks is a Canadian based organization that has been helping communities world-wide become suicide-safer since 1983 ([www.livingworks.net](http://www.livingworks.net)).*



Al Benarroch, JCFS Clinical Director and Val Horner, ASIST coach and trainer

# JCFS Happenings

## OLDER ADULT SERVICES

### Spring Groups for Aging Seniors and their Families

Do you have a parent or spouse with early stage memory loss? You are invited to attend a meeting to introduce you to our **Social Connections** group. This weekly program is designed to provide social and cognitive stimulation for the individual and a well deserved break for you as the family member. An information session will be held Wednesday, April 13 at 2:00 pm and/or 7:00 pm at Jewish Child and Family Service.

**Healthy Caregiving** - An information and discussion group for adult children caring for their frail elderly parents in the community. This program will offer a variety of topics related to caregiving.

**Taking Charge - Empowerment Group** - This program focuses on helping seniors make positive changes in their lives in a supportive setting. If you are a senior who is feeling alone or isolated, this group will be of interest to you.

**Reaching Out Program** - A specialized social group for survivors of the Holocaust takes place at the Gwen Sector Creative Living Centre every second Thursday afternoon. Entertainment and lunch is provided at a minimal charge.

For registration information for any of these groups please contact Cheryl Hirsh Katz, Supervisor of Older Adult Services, phone 477-7430 [chirshkatz@jcfswinnipeg.org](mailto:chirshkatz@jcfswinnipeg.org)

## SUPPORT FOR THOSE WHO HAVE LOST A LOVED ONE



JCFS continues to offer support groups to individuals who have experienced the death of a loved one. Two eight week bereavement groups were started in February and will continue until April.

Laurie Abbott participated in our bereavement group two years ago after she was left a widow in her early 40's. Laurie credits the group for being "such a positive gateway to allowing her to deal with her anger."

For information on our next bereavement group contact the agency at 477-7430.

## SUPPORTING NEWCOMERS TO OUR COMMUNITY

CHAT, the conversation group for new immigrants that was started last year, is continuing again. Members of this group have a relatively high level of English proficiency, and are looking for opportunities to practice conversing about topics of current interest. The meetings, which began on Thursday, February 24th, are being offered for five consecutive evenings in a relaxed social setting. We are grateful for the involvement of Bella Weinberg who has volunteered to facilitate this group.

## ARE WE READY AS A COMMUNITY TO TAKE A STAND AGAINST ALL FORMS OF ABUSE?



Rabbi Mark Dratch will be a Guest Speaker at the JCFS Annual General Meeting in June. Rabbi Dratch is the Director of J-Safe, The Jewish Institute Supporting an Abuse-Free Environment works to promote a Jewish community in which all of its institutions and organizations conduct themselves responsibly and effectively in addressing the wrongs of domestic violence, child abuse and professional improprieties, whenever and by whomever they are perpetrated.

Rabbi Dratch served as a congregational rabbi for 22 years. He was a Vice President of the Rabbinical Council of America, is chairman of its Task Force on Rabbinic Improprieties and responsible for spearheading and formulating its new policy guidelines for responding to allegations against member rabbis.

He is a member of the Clergy Task Force on Abuse of Jewish Women International, a member of the Jewish Advisory Committee of the FaithTrust Institute, a member of the Editorial Board of The Journal of Religion and Abuse, and a sought after speaker and consultant in matters of domestic violence and clergy abuse.

Please attend the JCFS Annual Meeting on June 6th to learn more about how we can work towards an abuse free Jewish community.

JCFS has a long history of assisting new immigrants to the Jewish community. As the local arm of Jewish Immigrant Aid Services of Canada (JIAS), JCFS not only provides initial resettlement services, but also supports with integrating into the general community.

Typically, the best predictor for a smooth settlement process is the quick securing of financial stability through employment. With financial stability families are able to focus on building strong social connections, affiliating and becoming part of a greater supportive community.

Consider becoming a mentor in the YACHAD MENTORSHIP PROGRAM. If you are a professional or business person, your experience and knowledge of the labour market could help support Jewish newcomers to our community. Contact Carina Blumgrund, at 477-7444 or [cblumgrund@jcfswinnipeg.org](mailto:cblumgrund@jcfswinnipeg.org). The Yachad Mentorship Program is supported by a grant through the Jewish Foundation of Manitoba.

## A Message From Our Board President



Many of us are fortunate to have family and friends that we can turn to help us deal with life's great challenges. Some, though, are not so privileged and during times of crisis lack the support system that so many of us take for granted. At JCFS we make sure that those people are not alone for we live by the creed that we are all one family. JCFS will always be there to provide the assistance that anyone in our community needs. We are family – through good times and bad.

And there are good times. JCFS is honoured to arrange bar and bat mitzvahs for our foster children and to ensure that their experience is identical to that you would wish for your own children. We make sure that our foster children attend all of their school events — complete with a new prom dress or suit for graduation — because that is what family does.

And as family, we are also there to assist those who are coping with life's challenges. A few weeks ago I was privileged to be a guest at a fundraising event sponsored by the Women's Philanthropy division of the Jewish Federation and to accept on behalf of JCFS a generous donation. The funds raised at this event will be directed to aiding those in our community who are suffering major health problems. Our staff will provide whatever assistance is needed - from putting in place home care, to arranging for a companion to provide support during chemotherapy, to delivering a challah and a hot meal on Shabbat.

None of the work that JCFS does could occur without the support of our volunteers and donors. On behalf of the Board and Staff, I would like to express my sincere appreciation for all that you do. It is through your generosity that we ensure that no member of our Jewish family is ever alone.

*Heather Leonoff*

## Emily's Corner

*(a word from our Executive Director, Emily Shane)*

As you turn the pages of the calendar, the accompanying photos reflect season after season — from fall to winter to a long awaited spring and finally summer. The calendar also marks the passage of one holiday cycle and the anticipation of the beginning of another.



We are now seeing the end of Purim, a holiday marked by happiness and celebration (and good food), and are anticipating the coming of Passover (also marked by good food).

At Jewish Child and Family Service, the New Year usually begins in September, winter holidays revolve around Hanukkah, and spring break falls during Passover. This sets us somewhat apart from the rest of the social service world in Winnipeg, but truly reflects the Judaic framework under which we operate. It also affects what we do, not just the way we do our business.

On behalf of the Winnipeg Jewish community we assume the responsibility for ensuring that all who want to celebrate Passover are able to do so. Whether it is finding a client a place at a Seder table, or Kosher L'Pesach food, JCFS, with your help, ensures that our community fulfills the mitzvah of Ma'ot Chitim. Having the opportunity to share and celebrate Passover together is truly a gift and a blessing.

I want to thank you in advance for your generosity and kindness in making certain that everyone has a 'Freilach' Passover, and wish you and your family a Happy Healthy Passover.

*Executive Director,  
Emily Shane*

## Yachad Mentorship Program

*Yachad, (Hebrew for together) is a new JCFS initiative.*

The Yachad Mentorship Program is aimed at maximizing opportunities for employment and community integration of Jewish immigrants to Winnipeg. It will bring them together with established Jewish community members currently working in similar/related occupational fields. These relationships will build professional contacts, supportive relationships and a sense of community caring.

## We Need Your Ideas, Stories, Photographs

Next spring, the Jewish community of Winnipeg will celebrate an important milestone. It was in 1912 that the community first met to discuss how best to address the needs of homeless children and families facing severe financial difficulties. That meeting led to the establishment of the Jewish orphanage and the creation of the United Hebrew Relief Society, both precursors of today's JCFS.

In celebration of one hundred years of caring for each other, JCFS wishes to honour those leaders in our community who first lit the torch in 1912 and those who have carried it forward this past century. We want to honour their memories by preserving their stories.

To make this important project a success, we need your help. Do you have any memories from your parents or grandparents about their contributions to Jewish social services? Do you have any photographs such as the wonderful photo we have of social worker Thelma Tessler Edwards meeting with the first group of war orphans arriving in Winnipeg in 1947. We are seeking to honour those who made a real difference in the lives of those who needed the assistance of our community.

If you have any ideas of people we should recognize, any stories or photographs, please let us know by contacting Merrill Shwaid at [mshwaid@jcfswinnipeg.org](mailto:mshwaid@jcfswinnipeg.org) or at 477-7441 and help us honour those who have made a difference over the past one hundred years.