Youth and Young Adult Initiative

Jewish Needs Task Force
A committee of eight — four JFS Board members, one community member and three staff members — convened during 2018 at the request of the Board to explore ways JFS can more fully meet the needs of the Jewish community. The committee interviewed and discussed the topic with 15 Jewish community partners and institutions. In January, the committee presented their findings to the JFS Board.

While they identified several priorities, the request we heard the loudest from organizations was the need for youth and young adult mental health services, which is consistent with the feedback JFS has received from the community during the last several years.

Supporting Youth and Families
JFS has been working to support young adults and families throughout the years with its services and engagement opportunities. JFS has been providing clinical oversight for a counseling partnership with Hillel at the University of Washington since the program’s inception. Last year, JFS hired Erica Wickoda to establish the child and family therapy practice with a trauma-informed approach that is embedded within our greater network of domestic violence, counseling and addiction services.

During the last year, JFS also has been able to provide Mental Health First Aid trainings for adults and for people who work closely with youth in the community. Shaida Hossein, Community Engagement Specialist, led the first training focused on supporting youth for community members in February.

A CRISIS EXISTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE STRUGGLING AND THE ADULTS IN THEIR LIVES WHO SUPPORT THEM.

Creating a Continuum of Care
This year, JFS is able to begin work on an initiative that will seek to improve the mental health outcomes of Jewish youth and young adults, including helping their parents feel more supported. The new initiative will also improve knowledge about mental health for parents and (Continued on page 3)
EXECUTIVE NOTE

BY RABBI WILL BERKOVITZ, CEO

Supporting Inner Calm & Outer Strength

On my desk, I have a framed playing card my son gave me a few years back. It is from a game called 'Magic: The Gathering' that he was playing the time. On top of the card he circled the words 'Inner Calm, Outer Strength,' which describe the powers of this particular card. I felt he was offering me wisdom for both parenting as well as leadership, which is funny given he was only about 10 years old at the time.

Finding inner calm and outer strength can be very challenging when we are navigating complicated waters in our lives. We all need people who help us find the inner calm needed to make clear decisions and find the strength to move forward on those decisions, even if we are uncertain or things seems to be spiraling. Anyone who has had to support a teenager who is struggling or a loved one who is aging knows how difficult this can be. Sometimes we need someone who can help us find our balance or just point us in the right direction.

The number of admissions for suicidal thoughts or attempts at children’s hospitals doubled between 2008 and 2015. Major depressive episodes in young adults, age 12 to 17, increased from 8.7 percent to 11.3 percent in 2014, especially among girls.


As a result of many conversations with leaders across the community, as well as looking at the data, it has become clear there is an increasing need for us to expand our services to better support teens, young adults, their families and the organizations that work with them. So, in the coming months we intend to do just that. Our goal is to build out an initiative that addresses the rise in depression, stress and anxiety among young people.

As a first step, we have started offering Mental Health First Aid trainings to help give people the basic tools to step in and help, much the way many people have been trained in CPR. We will also be increasing our counseling services for youth and young adults. Our goal is to learn from, and collaborate with, our community partners to provide the services and support needed most. And, in this way we will all find a bit more inner calm and outer strength.
OUR PRODUCT IS OUR PEOPLE
New Faces & (Re)Introductions

Rosemary D’Agrosa, Director of Supportive Living Services
Rosemary is a licensed independent clinical social worker who began her career 20 years ago providing counseling and case management in community health centers.

What have you learned in your extensive social service background about supporting community members?
As a social worker, I understand that you have to meet people where they are. Supporting someone’s stated goals and their stated needs is critical in our work.

READ MORE: blog.jfsseattle.org

Brian Sindel, Food Bank Manager
Brian had previously been the Food Bank Specialist for four years, where he managed the monthly Eastside Food Bank and the Home Delivery Program.

What have you learned from JFS volunteers, clients and community members?
I’ve learned just about everything from them, including how to best display food or treat people with the most respect and dignity.
But, the most important thing I have learned is that if you ask, you shall receive. The support from volunteers, donors and the community is incredibly generous and makes our work possible.

Dee Dee Vasquez, Psychiatric Consultant
Dee Dee has been a psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner for three years at Navos, a mental health care provider in Seattle, where she also serves as one of two lead psychiatric consultants at Kline Galland. She will be working across JFS programs to support staff and clients.

What brought you to JFS?
I was immediately impressed with JFS, its breadth of services and commitment to community. Given my background, it was also important for me to hear that JFS takes a trauma-informed approach to its work.

YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT INITIATIVE (Continued from page 1)
professionals that work closely with teens and young adults.
The initiative will begin this calendar year, and full implementation will take up to two or three years.

Scope One: Addressing the Clinical Need
JFS is hiring a therapist for youth and young adults during the 2019 calendar year and will continue to explore how we can better meet the needs of the community.

Scope Two: Parent and Professional Support
We are expanding our Youth Mental Health First Aid trainings in the community and looking at additional ways to support parents and professionals who work with youth.

Scope Three: Teen Engagement and Outreach
Exploring teen engagement opportunities.
WELL-BEING

More Than Sports, It’s Building Community

The crack of the bat echoes through Safeco Field as Dee ‘Flash’ Gordon takes off to first base. From not far behind the catcher, a small group shares cheers of excitement and sighs of disappointment throughout the game.

This small group at the Seattle Mariners home game includes staff and clients of Supportive Living Services (SLS) at Jewish Family Service. Their comradery begins building on the way to the game as they discuss division rankings and the finer distinctions between the American and National leagues.

They are busy catching up with one another and getting to know others in the group, because baseball is not the only reason they came out.

“Here, it’s more of a community thing,” Thomas* said. “The noise, the comradery and the smell.” Waves of cheers and unified chants, the buzz of discussion with those around you, the scent of fried food and sunscreen. That community feeling is particularly meaningful and rare for people who can often be isolated or feel alone because of their mental health.

JFS knows that community is not just a desire, but a need that can affect mental health outcomes.

“Well-being is more than sports, it’s building community,” Shaida Hossein, SLS Community Engagement Specialist said. “It can reduce suicide risk, make people feel more hopeful with their recovery and life goals, and show an increased willingness and trust to accept help from others.”

Barriers — of expense, transportation, access to care, mental health and misconceptions about mental illness — can limit, and at times, prevent people from engaging in community experiences and building relationships. JFS helps reduce or manage those barriers and offers people the opportunity to join activities with others. Reducing barriers includes providing donated tickets and transportation to events, providing a safe space for clients to feel valued, as well as recognizing and supporting individual needs during the event.

At JFS, socializing is client-driven. “Clients have ownership of their goals for increasing community engagement and decreasing their isolation,” Shaida said. “When we find out what they enjoy doing on their own, we can then help them create opportunities to participate in those activities.”

“YOU JUST CAN’T BEAT A DAY LIKE TODAY AT THE BALLPARK. THERE ARE BLUE SKIES AND YOU CAN SEE PART OF THE SEATTLE SKYLINE … IT’S SO NICE OF THE DONOR TO GIVE US THESE GREAT SEATS.” — Brent

(Continued on next page)
These celebrations are inclusive, accessible, community-wide and suitable for all ages. They grew out of a need for holiday events that were meaningful for individuals with cognitive disabilities, as well as their families and friends. Sha’arei Tikvah has developed into an integrated, welcoming community that prays and celebrates together. Sha’arei Tikvah events take place four times a year.

Rosh Hashanah Service • Chanukah Celebration • Purim Celebration • Summer Shabbat

LEARN MORE: jfsseattle.org/shaarei-tikvah/
The Lamplighter Society recognizes the inspiring example of individuals and families who have contributed to JFS in one or more of the following ways:

- Given $1 million or more in their lifetime.
- Made a Named Fund Endowment gift.
- Given $100,000 the current fiscal year and/or previous two fiscal years.

This special acknowledgement honors leaders in our community who have made an extraordinary financial commitment to JFS and whose generosity truly lights the way for others. We extend our deepest thanks to these inaugural members of the Lamplighter Society:

Anonymous (1) • Diane Aboulafia & Peter Shapiro • The Isaac Alhadeff Foundation
The Sam & Barbara Altabet Giving Fund • Steven Baral • Karyn & Joe Barer • Lynn & Howard Behar
Donna Benaroya • Becky Benaroya • Joyce & Raymond (z”l) Benezra • Kathy & Steve Berman
Joann & Carl Bianco • Susan & Jeffrey (z”l) Brotman • Alison Danz • Carolee Danz • Judy & Krijn de Jonge
Amy & David Fulton • Berthe & Stan Habib • Ambassador Suzi & Eric LeVine
The Loeb Family: Frankie & Dick, Dianne & Steve, and JoEllen & Don • Inge & Hal (z”l) Marcus
Catherine Mayer & Martin Selig • Lucy & Herb Pruzan • Michele & Stan Rosen • Sheri & Howard Schultz
Karen & Gary Schwartz • Bill Sternoff • Isabel & Herb Stusser • Goldie & Stan (z’l) Tobin

This list represents all gifts made through January 2019.

LEARN MORE: Please contact Lisa Schultz Golden at lgolden@jfsseattle.org or (206) 861-3188.

Caring for Aging Loved Ones

Learn about caring for aging loved ones in one or both of the following workshops with Adam Halpern, JFS Director of Older Adult Services. Adam is a licensed independent clinical social worker (LICSW) and geriatric mental health specialist (GMHS).

LONG-DISTANCE CAREGIVING
Tuesday, April 9 | 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.
Join us for a discussion about caring for a loved one from a distance.

A TEAMWORK APPROACH
Tuesday, May 7 | 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.
Join us to learn how to support your loved one while working as a team.

RSVP to Talya Gillman at education@jfsseattle.org or (206) 861-8784.
Jewish Family Service is excited to share our new website that provides a clear and proactive expression of who we are, reflecting and highlighting our community, while making it easier to find how to get help, get involved or give.

Get Involved

Volunteer with JFS and help make a difference today!

**PASSOVER BASKET MAKING & DELIVERY**
Volunteer to help provide holiday food baskets so community members can celebrate tradition.

*Sunday, April 14 | 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. or 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.*

**FAMILIES FIGHT HUNGER**
Support food security and the Polack Food Bank with hands-on volunteering and advocacy.

*Sunday, June 2 | 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.*

RSVP to Volunteer Services at volunteer@jfsseattle.org or (206) 861-3155.
SEE YOU THERE!

Community of Caring Luncheon

TUESDAY, APRIL 2, 2019

Sheraton Seattle Hotel

Event Chairs: Michele Rosen and Rabbi Dan Bridge

jfsseattle.org/luncheon

MISSION
JFS helps vulnerable individuals and families in the Puget Sound region achieve well-being, health and stability.

APPROACH
Jewish history and values guide our work; therefore, we provide effective services to people of all backgrounds and also have a responsibility to meet the particular needs of Jewish individuals and families in the region.

Marty Nelson, Board President
Rabbi Will Berkovitz, Chief Executive Officer
Rachel Seymour, Editor & Writer

Jewish Family Service is a private, non-profit, 501(c)(3) social service organization. Contributions are tax-deductible under section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code.

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