

Join Our Email List! >>>

Get the latest news and information from JF&CS in your inbox. Simply go to jfcsboston.org and click on "Join Our Mailing List." We look forward to keeping you updated!



JF&CS in the News

- * WBUR highlighted the Parkinson's Dance Program on October 20. Visit jfcsboston.org to listen to the audio and read the online article.
- * Chronicle on Channel 5 aired a segment about Our Mothers of Twins, Triplets and More Support Group on July 3.

JF&CS Response to Economic Crisis

Everyone is feeling the effects of the economic crisis, but you don't have to go through this difficult time alone. Financial assistance, emergency food, and crisis therapy are just a few of the more than 35 programs and services we offer that can assist you and your family. If you need help or are feeling stressed, anxious, or depressed, please contact us. Call us at 781-693-1409 to speak directly to a case manager or email us at info@jfcsboston.org to get help today. We're here for you.

JF&CS HELPS CLIENTS MAKE ENDS MEET

Edna* is a JF&CS client whose husband suddenly passed in early spring. In her grief, Edna was overwhelmed with the effort of organizing and paying for his funeral. Edna decided to put all of the funeral expenses on her credit card so that her husband could have a proper burial, which seemed like the best solution at the time. A few weeks later, she realized how expensive this was going to be in the long term and called JF&CS for help.

Edna is one of almost 50 clients who have turned to JF&CS since we launched our Financial Literacy Program last spring, with demand far exceeding our original goals. The new program exists to help clients understand their financial situation better and to equip them with the tools necessary to grow and protect their resources.

The JF&CS Case Manager met with Edna several times and called the credit card company and the funeral home to advocate for reduced rates. JF&CS was able to negotiate a reduction in her monthly payments and in her interest rate from 15% to 6%. Edna saved approximately \$1,500 with this settlement and was able to pay her debt and still have money to live on each month. Even better, she could live without the burden of excessive debt.

In addition to financial education and advocacy, JF&CS also assists clients with short-term loans and grants. Another JF&CS client, Fred*, came to the agency needing assistance. He had just been rehired after being unemployed, but was unable to pay one month's rent and his landlord was threatening eviction. Fred did not want a handout and asked if there were some way he could repay the funding. Instead of a grant, we structured a short-term, no interest loan and he was able to pay his rent on time. Fred was very grateful and proud to be able to pay the money back so that it could be used for someone else in need.

Edna and Fred are like many people struggling in today's economy. Our financial assistance, education, and advocacy services are just one more important way we're helping people change their lives.

If you are able to support the work we do, please make a donation today to our Economic Crisis Fund with the enclosed envelope or online at jfcsboston.org.

** Name changed to protect client privacy.*

Caring for Generations

JF&CS
Jewish Family & Children's Service

Dear Friends,

October's financial earthquake will be felt by all of us for some time to come. While the agency is not struggling to meet expenses, in this climate all non-profits are bracing for losses in funding.



More important is the effect that the economy will continue to have on our most vulnerable citizens.

Even before recent events, the stress of making ends meet has risen along with record-setting utility, housing, food, gas, and childcare expenses.

We have seen an increasing number of families in dire straits, especially moderate-income families who are no longer able to access the credit that had once provided a buffer until better times arrived.

Now more than ever, the work we do is essential to helping people live as independently as possible while maintaining their dignity.

We give them hope. Hope comes in many forms — a grant for a job-training program, a loan for a startup business, a mortgage payment, or a full tank of home heating oil.

Hope can spring from education or advocacy to help people overcome the barriers to their success and begin to plan for a better future. And sometimes hope comes with a sympathetic ear and a shoulder to cry on.

It is difficult but rewarding work. No matter what the economic climate, I'm confident that our staff, volunteers, donors, and board members will continue to help those in need meet their challenges.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Seymour J. Friedland".

Seymour J. Friedland, Ph.D.
Chief Executive Director

A Fortunate Series of Events Brings a Family Together

Imagine coming to work one day and finding out you've won the lottery. That's what happened to Doreen Cummings, a JF&CS Director who works with people with disabilities. But instead of a winning ticket, she brought home a beautiful baby girl, Angelina, adopted through JF&CS Adoption Resources.

Doreen and her wife Sarah Macri have been married for three years and were just beginning to think about starting a family. One day Doreen was helping a client of CHAI Works photocopy an event invitation. Adoption Resources and CHAI Works share space, and as they made their way to the copier, they noticed a beautiful baby girl in the office.

While Doreen and the client oohed and aahed over the tiny four-week old girl, they learned that her name was Angelina, Doreen's mother's name, and that the family that was supposed to adopt her couldn't after all.

Angelina was considered "hard to place" because she has cystic fibrosis, a genetic disorder that affects the lungs. Doreen said, "The staff was distraught about finding a new family so I half-jokingly said, 'I'll take her home!'"



Sarah, Angelina and Doreen

Within an hour Betsy Hochberg, Adoption Resources Director, had asked Doreen if she wanted to look into it. Doreen said, "It happened so fast. I ran upstairs and looked up cystic fibrosis, then called Sarah while Betsy asked the birth mother if she would consider a same sex couple."

Doreen went to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation website and learned that although the average life span of people with cystic fibrosis is only 38, there are a number of progressive treatments and remarkable progress has been made in recent years.

Sarah said, "We thought long and hard before adopting Angelina, knowing that everyone — our families and friends — will be affected by her health. Then we realized we wanted to give her the best shot she can have." Doreen added, "We went in with our eyes wide open."

Angelina is now 2 ½ years old and like all active toddlers she enjoys riding her big wheel and practicing her ever-expanding vocabulary. She follows a careful regime of medications and physical therapy and is seen every three months at Children's Hospital. Sarah said, "She's a hoot! She's smart and very funny." In a final coincidence, Doreen and Angelina share the same birthday.

Jewish Family & Children's Service is the leading provider of comprehensive human services, delivering personalized and integrated care that improves people's lives.

JF&CS Clinics Help Holocaust Survivors Apply for Reparations

In 1939, Nazis began forming ghettos in sections of European cities to isolate and control the Jewish population. Inside the borders of more than 1,000 ghettos, Jews lived and worked in grim conditions.

With the generosity of attorneys at Goodwin Procter LLP, JF&CS is hosting clinics to help Holocaust survivors who worked in these ghettos apply for reparations from a new fund established by the German government. Goodwin Procter attorneys will interview survivors, help them complete the forms, and submit them to the German government.



Daryl Wiesen, Partner, Goodwin Procter LLP, said, “Sitting down with survivors and hearing their stories really brings home the importance of this project. The German government has set up a program that acknowledges the persecution of these individuals because of their religion, and provides some small compensation. To be able to help these survivors successfully complete the application is one of the most rewarding things I have done during my time as a lawyer.”

Victims of Nazi persecution are able to obtain a one-time payment of \$3,000 for “unforced work” in the ghettos — work in which one was not threatened with the application of physical force to complete. Most of this work was heavy physical labor like digging ditches, cleaning homes and streets, making food, collecting coal, and repairing damage done by Allied bombers.

To qualify, survivors must complete a detailed seven-page application form that asks them to describe their persecution history and dates and places they worked, an onerous and emotional task for fragile seniors.

Debbie Schwartz, LICSW, who is case manager of the JF&CS Hakalah Program, notified 85 clients about the clinics and to date 50 people have called in. Debbie said, “Applying for any reparations is very difficult because of the trauma they endured.”

It is a little known fact that more than 25% of survivors in the U.S., most of whom are in their 80s and 90s, live in extreme poverty. The one-time \$3,000 payment is essential in helping them meet basic living expenses like rent, food, and medication. Senior Paralegal Maria DeAndrade said, “For most of the people we will be meeting with \$3,000 is a substantial amount, especially in these economic times.”

Gift Certificates for Sleepy Parents

Now there is a new way to help sleep-deprived parents of newborns get the rest they need — with a JF&CS sleep support gift certificate.

Gift certificate recipients get expert advice from specialists at our Center for Early Relationship Support on any sleep issues affecting their family. It’s a great way for grandparents, siblings, and friends to support tired parents.

Meredith Joy, Administrative Director of CERS, said, “There are so many books on infant sleep. We help parents work through all the options.”

Parents can get help if their baby is not sleeping through the night or has difficulty falling asleep, if they have concerns about how to organize the baby’s schedule, or

need help preparing to go back to work.

All consultations are over the phone so concerned family and friends can help new parents living anywhere in the country.

Certificates are available in three amounts: \$100 for a one-hour consultation; \$50 for a follow-up appointment; or \$140 for both consultation plus follow-up.

Meredith added, “This is a great gift. It’s a way to give much-needed help to new and expecting parents.”

For more information about the JF&CS Sleep Support Program, visit jfcsboston.org. To order a gift certificate, call Debbie Walker, CERS Administrative Coordinator, at 781-647-JFCS (5327) or email her at dwalker@jfcsboston.org.

New Nutrition Services Program Removes Barriers to Healthy Eating

Think about how hard it is to put a healthy meal on the table every night for yourself or your family. Now imagine doing it while you're living in poverty, sick or disabled.

That's the situation many of our clients find themselves in — trying to eat well and stay healthy while facing enormous obstacles.

JF&CS has launched a nutrition program to help our clients eat healthfully and get the most from their limited food budgets. This ambitious and innovative program is a part of the agency's larger Hunger & Nutrition Initiative, and will address the nutritional needs and challenges of low-income seniors, families, young mothers with their babies, and people with disabilities.

“There are so many factors that go into what people choose to put on their tables. We help people find a balance that works for them.”

“We're doing the best we can for our clients nutritionally by minimizing barriers and helping people make good choices, despite facing significant life challenges,” said Director of Nutrition Services Alison Books, MS, RD, LDN. Alison joined the agency in January after serving as the Assistant Director of the Boston University Nutrition & Fitness Center, which she helped establish.

Often the life challenges clients face include complicated medical problems that may be prevented or alleviated with improved dietary choices. These changes may also result in reduced health care costs for medications and doctor visits thereby freeing up funds to pay for heat or rent. Nutrition Services is able to reach people who often fall through the cracks in the system and do not have the same access to quality nutrition care and information other people do.

The idea for a comprehensive nutrition program grew out of a need that began with Family Table, the JF&CS kosher food pantry. Family Table staff was looking for ways to enhance the nutritional quality of the food they provide to clients. The agency realized that many clients throughout the organization are vulnerable to nutritional challenges and so the program grew in scale.



Alison Books

On any given day, Nutrition Services may run a “cooking for one” class for seniors, or teach teen mothers how to properly nourish themselves and their babies. For Family Table in particular, research is being conducted in partnership with Boston University to assess the nutritional needs and concerns of Family Table clients. Nutrition Services also offers counseling sessions for people who require more individualized care and has the ability to perform home visits for those who cannot travel, including a Russian-speaking client weak from battling cancer. Other agency staff working with clients receive support on how to help clients meet their nutritional needs, such as in our CHAI residences for people with disabilities.

Alison said, “It's one thing for someone to tell you to eat healthy, it's another to have your own experience to pull from. We're trying to reach people in a very real and hands on way.” At one recent cooking class for people with mental illness, clients came away with the motivation and self-confidence to try healthy cooking on their own. At another workshop, seniors learned how to make the most of their limited food budgets, and could also sign up for food stamps.

“There are so many factors that go into what people choose to put on their tables. We help people find a balance that works for them,” said Alison. With the dedication of Alison and her newly hired staff dietician, Kristen Pufahl, MS, RD, LDN, along with the staff of JF&CS, the agency is well on its way to improving nutrition for JF&CS clients in need.

Senior Services

JF&CS is dedicated to helping seniors live independently in their own homes for as long as possible. We offer the broadest range of services to seniors in Greater Boston, with a comprehensive network that includes Geriatric Care Management, Home Health and Home Care, special expertise in Alzheimer's and Parkinson's Disease, Mental Health, and spiritual and social supports.

In this column Nancy Mazonson, MS OTR/L, the Coordinator of our Parkinson's Family Support Program, answers frequently asked questions about current strategies for living with Parkinson's Disease.



Nancy Mazonson

Q: My father has Parkinson's and he needs a lot of care, but when I ask how I can help, he says that he doesn't need my assistance. He's very forgetful, moody, and he falls asleep all day long. He just doesn't seem like himself. I'm so worried about him. How can I get him to accept my help?

A: This is a very common situation. Parents reject help because they don't want to be a burden to their children. The first thing is to learn the communication strategies that will help you connect with him. There are many hidden symptoms of Parkinson's that affect behavior and cognition and physicians often hesitate to acknowledge that these are major parts of the disease. Cognitive and personality changes are what make it so difficult to be a caregiver. And these symptoms are usually what adult children notice first.

To address these complex issues, this winter JF&CS will host a free five-session support group for adult children of people with Parkinson's. The series will help attendees understand the symptoms and challenges posed by the disease and explore strategies for intervening effectively to help parents cope and plan for the future.

Q: My husband has Parkinson's and my doctor recommended that he see a physical therapist. He did much better after therapy but our insurance has run out and we can no longer get that kind of service. What else can we try?

A: Our innovative Parkinson's Dance Program focuses on the kinds of physical challenges that

people with Parkinson's encounter. It incorporates many of the exercises from physical therapy or speech therapy but in a fun and sustainable way. The exercises are set to music, which research has shown is very helpful in overriding the immobility of Parkinson's. Dancing is uplifting for both the caregiver and the person with Parkinson's and it's also something enjoyable that you can do together. The six-session class will be held throughout the year. You don't need any prior dance experience and you don't have to be a good dancer. Beginners are welcome!

Q: My mother has recently started taking medication for Parkinson's. Are there non-medical interventions we can be using to relieve her symptoms?

A: You and your mother may be interested in our Community Wellness program that combines exercise with a chronic disease self-management program model. Chronic disease self-management is a current trend in medicine and is an international movement. As our population ages, many people are living longer with one or more chronic conditions, for example diabetes and arthritis. Our Community Wellness program teaches useful techniques that are specific to Parkinson's. In twelve sessions over six weeks, we help participants create an action plan for managing the disease by setting small achievable goals and lifestyle interventions. The program gives people the tools to improve their quality of life and potentially slow symptom progression.

About Nancy Mazonson

Nancy Mazonson, M.S., OTR/L, is an occupational therapist and Geriatric Care Manager at JF&CS. She has extensive experience working in inpatient and community-based rehabilitation settings, and has specialized in working with people with degenerative neurological conditions. Nancy has been the coordinator of the JF&CS Parkinson's Family Support Program since its inception in September 2006.

Volunteer Spotlight

Lisa Lewtan, Creative Entrepreneur

Entrepreneur Lisa Lewtan brings energy, creativity, and vision to everything she takes on, from co-founding a technology business to raising three children to starting a video production company. So it's no surprise that she approaches philanthropy with the same creativity.

After the sale of the company she and her husband grew from a small start-up to a worldwide leader in the financial software industry, Lisa was ready for a new challenge. She said, "I wanted to do something meaningful and creative."

After not finding the perfect match for her talents and interests in the non-profit arena, Lisa made an inspired leap and carved out a new way. She said, "I decided to do the work I'm good at and contribute half of what I make to a charity."

She started a video production company that produces high-charged animated montages for Bar/Bat Mitzvahs, anniversaries, birthdays, etc. to fulfill her artistic side, and then went to the JF&CS website and started reading about their services. She was deeply moved when she learned about Kol Isha, the domestic violence program.

Lisa said, "No one talks about domestic violence. It's hush hush. I realized helping women in bad situations is something I could get charged up about. Here's where I could make a difference."

On her website, lisalewtan.com, Lisa writes, "Lisa Lewtan Productions is a way for me to bring all my talents and energies together in one place. Doing so, hopefully I can make your event more dynamic and, by giving 50% of my fees to charity, make the world a better place."

Not only does Lisa donate 50% of her profits to Kol Isha, but she has also extended herself personally to help victims of domestic violence. In October, Lisa hosted Kol Isha's annual fall event in her home, where attendees met Satya Montgomery, the new director of Kol Isha, and heard a client describe her experience.

Satya said, "I appreciate Lisa's gracious contributions to the program. It is through the commitment of



Lisa Lewtan

volunteers like Lisa that Kol Isha can continue to reach out to survivors in the Jewish and Russian-speaking communities who are suffering in silence, to let them know there is a place they can turn to help them escape the abuse."

Lisa is a student of Tae Kwan Do who is nearing her black belt. This fall she will share yet another of her interests when she and her daughter co-chair a mother-daughter self defense class at the agency. At this unique event a martial arts instructor will teach women greater awareness of dangerous situations and defensive moves to protect themselves.

Lisa said, "This class will bring together and empower mothers, aunts, sisters, cousins, and daughters."

Not content to rest on her many accomplishments, Lisa has a passion for personal growth and physical health, traveling around the world on "self-improvement weeks" devoted to expanding her knowledge of art and culture. Lisa said, "I feel so lucky and fortunate. If I can help one woman turn her life around then I've done something good." Thank you Lisa!

The Mother-Daughter Self-Defense class will be held on December 7 at JF&CS. For more information or tickets please contact Rachel Books at 781-693-5708 or email her at rbooks@jfcsboston.org.

Volunteering with JF&CS: Volunteers are a vital part of Jewish Family & Children's Service. For more information on how you can help, call us at 781-647-5327 (JFCS) or visit jfcsboston.org to find out more.

A Fortunate Series of Events *continued from page 2*

Sarah and Doreen are teaching Angelina how to protect her health. Angelina knows that she has to hold her breath when she leaves a building in case smokers are outside, that she needs to wash her hands a lot, and that she can't play with kids who have colds. The couple has a video of her at 13 months old, pushing the top of a hand sanitizer and clapping her hands together.

“...we realized we wanted to give her the best shot she can have.”

Surprisingly, one of the biggest challenges the couple has faced is that Angelina looks like a typical healthy child and is not disabled in any way. Sarah said, “The number one thing that makes us crazy is that people can't see it. They walk by us and cough or touch her hand. We need to educate the public about safeguards for people with cystic fibrosis.”

The JF&CS community rallied around the new family, throwing a huge baby shower. Doreen said, “Everyone was overjoyed. The momentum and positive support was fantastic.” Sarah added, “It was a beautiful experience from start to finish. JF&CS was so welcoming from minute one.”

Doreen added, “It's scary to think that I could have missed her if I didn't go to the copier that day!”

JF&CS Helps Homeless Mom Find Her Place

Claudia* grew up in Puerto Rico and wanted a different life. When she was 22 she decided to move to Boston to follow family members who had settled here and fulfill her dream of a good education and a stable life for her daughter.

But when she arrived here, the support she had envisioned vanished, as family members including her mother would not allow her to join them in their homes. In a short time she found herself living in a shelter, 8 months pregnant, with a one-year old daughter.

She sent her daughter back to Puerto Rico to be cared for by her father and had her second child while living in the shelter. Homeless, with a newborn, and away from all supports, she fell into a depression.

Right after the birth of a child is a crucial time. The risk was that her situation would get worse and she'd feel less empowered and be less able to come out of shelter.

Lizzie McEnany, Psy.D., Early Connections Clinician and Consultant to Horizons for Homeless Children, is the case manager who worked with Claudia. Since the agency moved to Waltham, CERS has been very active working with women in the Waltham shelters.

Lizzie said, “Claudia had all the risk factors for post-partum depression: stressful life events, lack of social supports, isolation, conflict with extended family, and poverty.”



This was worsened by the fact that she was feeling disconnected from her own mother, who, though living in Boston, was unable to support her financially or emotionally.

Fortunately, Lizzie met Claudia when her baby was only two weeks old. Lizzie said, “I connected with her very soon. She agreed to see me and a JF&CS Visiting Mom so we could doubly support her.”

Claudia was paired with a Visiting Mom who is Spanish speaking. While she provided emotional support, Lizzie concentrated on therapeutic assistance.

For Claudia, being in the shelter was a means to an end, with the goal of getting into public housing. But this meant she had to stay in the shelter to “keep her place in line.” Lizzie provided crucial support during her moments of desperation. She also taught her the concept of the squeaky wheel and encouraged her to keep calling the housing authority. She said, “Claudia had a very rocky year, but she did a lovely job caring for her child through it all.”

Fortunately, with Lizzie's help and her own determination, Claudia was able to move into an apartment and enroll at a community college in Boston. Her older child rejoined her and she secured childcare through a state voucher program. Most importantly, she now feels confidence in herself and as a parent. Lizzie said, “I'm glad I had this opportunity to share in her success.”

Claudia is starting to make friends and is so happy that she and her children can be together in a safe place. With her tough year behind her, she can look to the future and to raising her young family in “mi casa.”

** Name changed to protect client privacy.*

EVENTS

* Kol Isha Mother-Daughter* Self Defense Women's Empowerment Class

Join us for a self defense class taught by Sensei Jason Gould, a 20+ year practitioner of the martial arts. Learn practical skills that will provide a basic understanding of the key principles of self defense. Kol Isha (A Woman's Voice), the domestic violence program of JF&CS, is one of the many vital services currently offered by the agency. JF&CS is the leading provider of comprehensive human services delivering personalized and integrated care that improves peoples lives.

Sunday, December 7, 2008

Two sessions available: • 10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
• 12:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m

Location: JF&CS Headquarters, 1430 Main Street, Waltham

Light refreshments will be served. All fitness levels welcome. Must be 13 years of age or older to participate.

RSVP by November 17 by contacting Rachel Books at 781-693-5708 or rbooks@jfcscoston.org.

Event Chairs: Lisa Lewtan and Lexi Lewtan

**Come in pairs with you mother, daughter, niece, aunt, or friend, etc.*

* Benefit Save the Date

Please join Melissa Weiner Janfaza and Andrew Janfaza for a wonderful evening to benefit JF&CS at the new Mandarin Oriental Hotel in Boston. This important event raises over half the unrestricted dollars for JF&CS yearly. Dinner, music, and irresistible auction items will make this a night to remember.



Melissa Weiner Janfaza and Andrew Janfaza



Board of Directors

Chief Executive Officer

Seymour J. Friedland, Ph.D.

President

Elizabeth A. Rosen

President Elect

Harvey M. Greenberg

Board of Directors

Joseph H. Albert

Beth Lebovitz Backer

Neal Balkowitsch

Mark R. Belsky, M.D.

Patricia Berenson

Amy Bloomstone

Cindy Goldman Blotner

Margo Davis, Ph.D

Jonathan Dorfman

Gerald Feldman

Lisa Heyison

Melissa Weiner Janfaza

Julie Riven Jaye

Stewart Karger

Henry Kay

Mark Levy

James M. Litton

William Miller

Robin Neiterman

Dale Okonow

George Pelz

Alan Pinshaw, M.D.

James Rabb, M.D.

Matthew Rosenthal

Lisa Rubenstein

David Schechter

Beth C. Schlager

Eric S. Silverman

Susan Florence Smith

Steven J. Snyder

Donna Stein

Elinor Svenson

Jackie Weinstein

Jamie Weintraub

Donald Wertlieb, Ph.D.

Jewish Family & Children's Service
1430 Main Street
Waltham, MA 02451

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Boston, MA
Permit 415

Caring for Generations

JF&CS
Jewish Family & Children's Service

Editor: Elizabeth Carey, Director of Marketing Communications
Writer: Ginna Hall
Published three times a year. Circulation: 10,000

HEADQUARTERS | 1430 MAIN STREET | WALTHAM, MA 02451
781-647-JFCS (5327)

174 PORTLAND STREET | BOSTON, MA 02114
617-227-6641



VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT JFCSBOSTON.ORG