

100 Years



Jewish Family & Children's Service: Toward Another Hundred Years

"ALTHOUGH UNFORTUNATE REALITIES SUCH AS LONELINESS, ISOLATION, POVERTY AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE PERSISTS, WE ARE HERE FOR PEOPLE OF ALL AGES, BACKGROUNDS AND FAITHS."

SEYMOUR J. FRIEDLAND, PH.D.

in 1864, at the height of the Civil War, a community of caring individuals established the United Hebrew Benevolent Association to help new immigrants, young families and the elderly. 136 years later, Jewish Family & Children's Service has remained steadfast to the mission of strengthening and preserving the quality of individual and family life.

As JF&CS looks toward another hundred years of service, we seek to remain consistent with our values of social responsibility and concern for all members of the community while simultaneously acknowledging that little will be the same three years from now.

According to executive director Seymour J. Friedland, Ph.D., it is critical that we understand our obligations and connections to the community while remaining sensitive to the change that community will inevitably experience.

"A hundred years ago we fulfilled our value of compassion by caring for orphans," he explained. "Today we accomplish this through programs such as Visiting Moms. Although our programs, services, activities and even locations change to accommodate shifting societal influences, we continued to be guided by a mission we have followed for 136 years."

The expansion of our social and financial support programs through The Center for Family Assistance respond to the stubborn persistence of poverty, disenfranchisement and isolation. The loneliness of old age is still present, and programs such as Friendly Visitors and Nursing Home Shabbat are available to provide a meaningful social and spiritual connection for elders. For those who face the challenge of infertility and childlessness we offer free support groups and lectures.

What makes JF&CS unique is our dedication to providing innovative, high quality services that care not only for the physical health of individuals and families, but also for their spiritual wellbeing and emotional state-of-mind.

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Welcome to the premier issue of JF&CS News: A Newsletter of Jewish Family & Children's Service. We will be sending this to you three times a year in a continuing effort to keep you abreast of all the exciting developments at Jewish Family & Children's Service.

The strength of our agency has always been the quality of the individuals who comprise it and the innovative nature of our services and programs. This is the same today as it was 136 years ago at our agency's conception and it will remain the same far into the next millennium. With dedicated staff and volunteers who work on behalf of those in need, JF&CS looks forward to the future with confidence knowing that those who require our help, at any stage in life, will have a place to turn for caring and experienced services.

In this issue, you will read about Marcia and Mort Ruderman, through whose generous charitable support we created the new Geriatric Care Management Program. You will also catch up with four young, truly amazing volunteers who illustrate that it is in service to others that we find what is most remarkable about ourselves.

Finally, you will learn about our new president, Stephen D. Lebovitz, and the six new members of our board of directors, each of whom has decided to dedicate his or her time, leadership and support toward the future success of the agency we all care about so deeply.

Thank you for reading the inaugural issue of JF&CS News.

Seymour J. Friedland, Ph.D.
Executive Director



Dear Friends:

I am honored to be writing you as the new president of Jewish Family & Children's Service. I have been a member of the agency's board of directors for the past ten years, and assumed my new role at the most recent annual meeting in May.

Like all of you, I lead a hectic life managing my company, CBL & Associates Properties, a real estate development firm, and spending time with my wife, Lisa, and our four children. But I am also committed to the mission and vision of Jewish Family & Children's Service, and am eagerly looking forward to working with our board and staff to meet the changing needs of elders, families, teens and children throughout our community.

As many of you realize, an illness in a family, especially one suffered by an elder who requires sustained assistance, can often bring about a real crisis, sometimes financial but always emotional. Many times, family members have no real idea how to provide the kind of support their loved one requires.

But that is why JF&CS is here: to help a family when at any point in life they need this support.

My wife and I know firsthand about the devastating effects Alzheimer's disease can have on families. In an effort to provide meaningful resources to families less fortunate than our own, together with our families in New York City and Chattanooga, Tennessee, we recently established the Safe at Home program, which offers experienced support to families when an Alzheimer's victim is living at home.

Alzheimer's strikes people without discrimination, from presidents to movie stars, but JF&CS is now poised to offer assistance to families needing help taking care of their loved ones with this dreaded disease.

It is programs like Safe at Home that we hope to make increasingly available to those in our community who need the services from JF&CS. For me, the ultimate goal of our agency is to create healthy families, happy individuals and peaceful lives – no matter what the circumstance. In the end, I can't think of a more important and worthwhile goal than that.

I look forward to communicating with you through JF&CS News over the next few years.

Best Regards,

Stephen D. Lebovitz
President

the friendly visitor

Friendly Visitors Young Volunteers Bridge Generations

At the age of thirteen, Amalie Benjamin had just completed her Bat Mitzvah and finished Hebrew school. Her parents sat down with her and asked, "What do you want to do with your time?"

Amalie called JF&CS. The volunteer coordinator suggested the Friendly Visitor program. Not only did Amalie volunteer but she talked her friend, Beth Baratz, into volunteering as well.

Andrew Mittman became a Friendly Visitor volunteer because his sister had a great experience as a Friendly Visitor visiting a woman named Anna, who had just turned 100. And, Socrates Rosenfeld, became a volunteer bridging a cultural and generation gap. The child of an Indonesian mother, Rosenfeld visited an elderly Russian couple with whom he (at first) had nothing in common.

The Friendly Visitor program, a part of Jewish Healing Connections, began in 1985 with a goal of reaching out to Jewish people who were disconnected from the community, and addressing the needs of the growing population of homebound elders, many living apart from their families. The program matches volunteers – of all ages – with frail and isolated elders, offers companionship, and promotes aging with dignity. Central to the purpose of Friendly Visitors is the Jewish principle of *gemilut hessed*, "acts of loving kindness."

"Obviously, we could not possibly reach the number of people we do without our volunteers," says Marjie Sokoll, M.Ed., director of Jewish Healing Connections and volunteer coordinator for JF&CS. "In turn we do all we can to ensure that volunteers have a positive experience. We are very careful to find the right opportunity to match the skills, goals, and motivation of the volunteers."

The Friendly Visitors program offers the opportunity for individuals of different generations to connect. "It is becoming increasingly rare in this society for young people to spend time with elders. In ancient societies, elders were respected for their length of years. By spending time with a senior and listening to their stories – the stories that make up a life – Friendly Visitors are helping elders to maintain their self-esteem, integrity and dignity," says Sarah Weisman, coordinator of the Friendly Visitor program.

Andrew Mittman, a senior at Milton Academy, visits elders at Avery Manor Nursing Home in Needham. He developed a close friendship with Estelle, who has recently died. "What I learned was how so little giving could mean so much to someone."

Throughout their high school years, Amalie and Beth visited seniors at the Sunbridge of Newton Nursing Home. "They went as a team," says Robin Baratz, Beth's mother.

Amalie especially enjoyed talking with the elders she met, and listening to their stories. She recalls with fondness a lifelong resident of Newton who insisted that she call him Uncle Dave – "a fascinating storyteller – and funny!"

"THEY LIKED BORSCHT, I LIKED FRENCH FRIES, THEY SPOKE OF MATH AND PHYSICS, I SPOKE OF MUSIC AND ART. THEY GREW UP IN THE COMMUNIST GHETTOS OF THE FORMER SOVIET UNION. I GREW UP IN NEWTON."

BUT HE SAYS THEY CALLED HIM THE "GRANDSON THEY NEVER HAD"



Adoption Resources

Susan was six months pregnant, homeless and desperate when she called Adoption Resources at 11:00 p.m. last June. She had been living with her abusive boyfriend, the father of her baby. But, she knew she needed to get away from him for her safety and the baby's well being. Unsure of what to do, Susan had opened her local yellow pages, and looked up adoption agencies. She saw Adoption Resources and called. Much to her surprise she was greeted by a friendly and comforting voice. Susan and her Adoption Resources counselor agreed that it would be best if Susan came to Boston, lived in housing provided by Adoption Resources, and received proper care from an obstetrician in a private hospital. Susan was not sure whether or not she wanted to make an adoption plan, but she knew she could not take care of the child properly. Along with the counselor she helped select an adoptive family for the baby, and agreed to an open adoption. Through Adoption Resources she would always know how her baby was doing as he grew up. After the birth of the baby, the Adoption Resources counselor encouraged Susan to go back to school. Today, Susan knows her baby is living and thriving with a loving family, and she is back in school preparing herself for a happy and promising future.

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Andrew also valued the stories that his friend Estelle would tell. "Before I volunteered, it seemed like it would be a hassle to care for the elderly, but Estelle had so many awesome life experiences to tell me about. It's not every day you get a perspective like Estelle's. It gives you such an appreciation of life."

"BEING A FRIENDLY VISITOR

HELPED ME LEARN HOW TO

INTERACT WITH PEOPLE"

Socrates visited an elderly couple from the former Soviet Union at their apartment. Socrates, now a freshman at West Point, says it was at first a strange match. "They liked borscht, I liked french fries, they spoke of math and physics, I spoke of music and art. They grew up in the communist ghettos of the former Soviet Union. I grew up in Newton." But he says they called him the "grandson they never had" and he couldn't remember a time that the couple wasn't a part of his life.

Amalie and Beth began their freshman years in college in September – Amalie is at Northwestern University and Beth at the University of Connecticut.

"Being a Friendly Visitor helped me learn how to interact with people, and know what they want," says Amalie. I'm interested in becoming a journalist, and understanding people, getting them to open up and talk, will be important for that too."

Andrew's most challenging experience as a Friendly Visitor was "when Estelle was starting to get really sick. But her family was awesome, and very supportive. Even towards the end, when she would talk about her family, she would shine. She had a big picture of her late husband on the table. Of all the gifts she had been given throughout her life, her most treasured possession was her photo album."

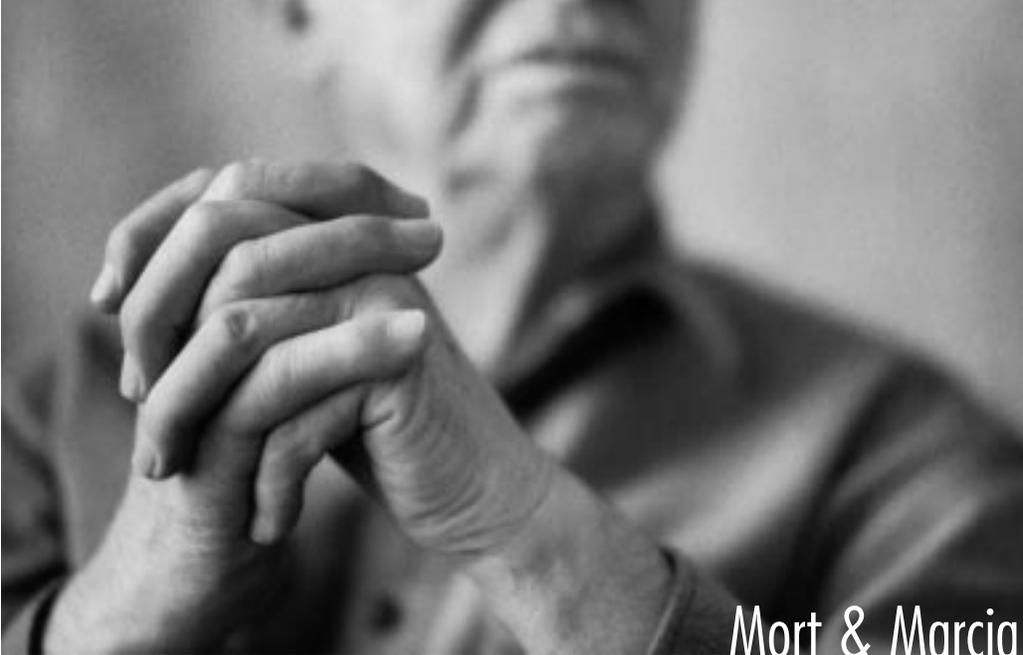
Amalie recalls her most difficult moment as a Friendly Visitor - she walked into a resident's room, and greeted a woman lying in the bed there. "She called me by a name that wasn't mine, and then I realized that she thought I was her granddaughter I was very, very conflicted. She liked the idea that her granddaughter had come to visit; it made her happy. I just decided to stay and talk with her. I was glad I was able to make someone happy."

To anyone who is considering volunteering as a Friendly Visitor, Andrew says, "Please do it. It's an experience not like any other. You might start out thinking it's something that can go on your resume, but it's not. It's so much more. JF&CS is such a worthwhile agency – to create these opportunities is very rare for anyone these days."

In addition to the Friendly Visitor program, JF&CS has many volunteer opportunities for men and women of all ages. If you are interested specifically in Friendly Visitor please call Sarah Weisman at 617-558-1278. For other interesting volunteer opportunities call 617-558-1278 and ask for Marjorie Sokoll.

Cover Image: Gerry Daley and 3.5 year old son Michael.

Gerry and Kitty Daley adopted Michael and Russell (pictured above) as infants through Adoption Resources at Jewish Family & Children's Service.



care

Mort & Marcia Ruderman Fund

New Geriatric Program

“OF ALL THE PLACES AND INSTITUTIONS THAT MATTER TO US, JF&CS HAS THE SOFTEST SPOT IN OUR HEARTS. THIS IS THE AGENCY THAT TRULY CAN HELP PEOPLE AND FAMILIES DIRECTLY.”

Projects that address the needs of the youngest and oldest members of the Jewish community have always been a top priority for Mort and Marcia Ruderman. Their exceptional philanthropy to different organizations has touched many lives. For instance, Mort’s father suffered from heart disease for a number of years. He was always treated with care and kindness at Beth Israel Hospital. Therefore, their gifts to Beth Israel are usually earmarked for the Jewish elderly, especially for those who need care and help, or whose families may live far away.

Knowing of the Rudermans work for the elderly JF&CS approached the couple with a proposal to help fund the new Geriatric CARE Management Program. The program helps seniors and their family members locate resources to meet the unique needs of the senior. “Of all the places and institutions that matter to us,” Marcia explains, “JF&CS has the softest spot in our hearts. This is the agency that truly can help people and families directly. We know a great deal about the Jewish community, and we know there are many elderly who need the help JF&CS can offer.”

“Our two main concerns are for the elderly and the youth,” adds Mort, “especially for those who can’t provide or do for themselves or who may be alone. We are happy to help this new JF&CS program, because it offers help to people who need assistance in all the care-giving areas of their lives, and gives their children peace of mind knowing their parents are well cared for at all times.”

Mort Ruderman grew up in Malden and lived there until he and Marcia were married. He still maintains his Malden friendships and has strong ties to the synagogue, Congregation Beth Israel – where Charles Weinberg was the young rabbi who Mort remembers with enormous fondness for the work the rabbi did with children. Although there are now very few young Jewish families remaining in the Malden, the Rudermans are committed to the young people of the community, and continue to maintain a bus for those who send their children to the Maimonides School in Brookline.

The Geriatric CARE Management program is working with a number of families in the area. The program continues to grow as more adult children realize the assistance CARE provides in helping them take care of the needs of their elderly parents and/or relatives.

For more information call 617-227-6641 and ask for Karen Wasserman.

russian teen

Russian Teen Program



ALLA PROVIDES A SPECIAL PLACE WHERE STUDENTS FROM THE FORMER SOVIET UNION AND NEWLY INDEPENDENT STATES CAN DROP BY ANYTIME TO TALK ABOUT THEIR PROBLEMS.

For Dmitri, doing something as simple as going to the store to buy groceries was as challenging as climbing a mountain. All the products were in a language he could not understand. Even walking down the street to or from his mother's apartment, filled with signs he couldn't read and people speaking a language he could not comprehend were a daily nightmare.

But it was high school that Dmitri feared the most. The stress of finding his classes, navigating the cafeteria, and sitting in class trying to decipher the teacher's lesson, was frightening. Trying to find new friends, among those with whom he could not communicate, and who seemed to have so little in common with him, was overwhelming.

Like most teenagers, Dmitri wanted to fit in. Although he tried his best to adjust, he felt perpetually on the outside, looking into a world that he longed to join. He watched many of his Russian friends, also recent immigrants, fall pray to absenteeism, bad grades and substance

abuse as a way of dealing with similar frustrations.

For a long time, Dmitri, and hundreds like him, had nowhere to turn for help.

Then he met Alla Denisenko, teen outreach worker for the JF&CS Russian Teen Program. Alla, originally from Moscow, understood the myriad of challenges Dmitri and others like him faced. She listened to Dmitri as he explained his problems. Then she contacted his parents and teachers and explained to them what Dmitri was experiencing.

Working closely with parents, teachers and other school staff, Alla provides a special place where students from the former Soviet Union and newly independent states can drop by anytime to talk about their problems. She organizes group outings during school breaks, and helps students with college and entrance exam applications. In addition, Alla creates planning sessions that involve parents and students together, strengthening the family bond that is threatened by the overwhelming challenges of immigrating to a new country.

news & notes



(from left) Jackie Weinstein, Stephen Schultz, Betsy Rosen, Eric Silverman, Lyuba Varticovski, MD, and Mark Berkowitz.

■ Agency Elects New President, Six Board Members at Annual Meeting

■ Stephen D. Lebovitz was officially named president during the agency's annual meeting on May 17th, succeeding Mark Rubin. Six new board members were also announced during a ceremony at Young Israel in Brookline.

■ Stephen Lebovitz has been a member of the JF&CS board of directors since 1991. He is the president of CBL & Associates Properties, Inc., a developer and owner of shopping centers in the eastern United States. A graduate of Stanford University, Mr. Lebovitz received his MBA from Harvard Graduate School of Business.

■ Among the six new board members elected are local area businesspeople, consultants, doctors and entrepreneurs.

■ Mark. E. Berkowitz is a partner of Arthur Anderson LLP in Boston. The chair of the Combined Jewish Philanthropies Accountant's Team for many years, he is a member of several professional organizations, including the Mass Bar Association and the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

■ Elizabeth Rosen is an independent consultant in marketing and advertising. She has spent several years working in advertising in New York and as a direct marketer for Bronner, Solsberg & Humphrey of Boston.

■ Stephen Schultz is partner and president of The Gonzo Corporation in Canton. Previously a member of the board for Temple Israel in Sharon, Mr. Schulz co-chaired the temple's capital campaign for rebuilding and remodeling. He is a graduate of Northeastern University.

■ Eric S. Silverman is president of Aspen Investment Group, a private investment firm, and chairman of Rentgrow, Inc. A past president of the Sloan Club of Boston, Mr. Silverman currently serves on the board of several companies and has been a member of the Young Entrepreneurs Organization since 1994. A graduate of Bowdoin College, he received an MBA from MIT Sloan School.

■ Lyuba Varticovski, M.D. is the author of 40 scientific manuscripts and two patents. Her current staff appointment is with the division of hematology and oncology at St. Elizabeth's and Tufts University School of Medicine. Dr. Varticovski attended college and medical school in Siberia, Russia and received her doctorate at the University of Valle in Columbia.

■ Jackie Weinstein is a member of JF&CS' Disabilities Committee and has served on the board of Camp Starfish, a special needs summer camp. A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, Ms. Weinstein received her J.D. degree from the New York University School of Law.



Sell-Out Crowd Expected for 4th Annual Autumn Dinner and Auction

a sell-out crowd of over 300 is expected for this year's Autumn Dinner and Auction to be held at the Fours Seasons Hotel on Thursday, November 9th. A celebrity auction hosted by Susan Wornick of WCVB-TV, Channel 5 will once again be among the highlights of an evening that is expected to raise over \$200,000 for Jewish Family and Children's Service.

Some of last year's fabulous auction items included a Super Bowl trip, a five-night stay at Canyon Ranch, a trip to the Four Seasons Nevis and an exquisite Bulgari watch. This year, we are very pleased to announce that renowned chef Michael

Schlow of Radius, will cook a private dinner for ten in someone's home compliments of Amy and Ben Bloomstone.

To-date, Rodman Ford Sales, Inc., The Rita J. and Stanley H. Kaplan Family Foundation, Amy and David Abrams, and Amy and Ben Bloomstone have generously agreed to support this important evening as Event Sponsors. Event Benefactors include David Fialkow and his partner Joel Cutler, Judy and Steve Kaye, Steve and Lisa Lebovitz, and an anonymous donor.

Amy and David Abrams and Amy and Ben Bloomstone are also donating their time and leadership as Event Chairs. Their committee consists of Andrea and Gerald Dovner, Auction Chairs; Alan Dana and Tony Solomons, Program Book

Chairs; Elizabeth Baum, Ticket Sales Chair; and Auction Setup Chairs Ann Falchuk and Nancy Rossman.

If you have any questions about the Autumn Dinner and Auction, or if you would like to purchase a ticket, please contact the Development Office at (617) 227-6641.



(from left) Amy & David Abrams and Amy & Ben Bloomstone

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