



JFCS community members enjoy a beautiful July afternoon together. For more, turn to p. 7

## A client searches for support and finds hope

Struggling with persistent mental-health issues related to a history of trauma, disabled and one uncertain paycheck away from houselessness, Asher\*, in his 30s, came to JFCS seeking help. Soon, **he received the support he needed from across the agency.**



**“Thank you so much for making me feel safe to share hard things.”**

- Asher

Asher first received support from a clinician – a licensed clinical social worker – to help him manage his mental-health challenges that hindered his ability to work. **The trust relationship Asher and a member of JFCS’ Counseling team forged allowed him to open up,** expressing fear about getting too far behind in his rent payments and where his next meal would come from.

The clinician helped Asher secure **gift cards for groceries so he could make rent.** A disability support specialist also entered into the relationship, guiding JFCS’ client with referrals and resources so he could gain access to disability benefits and develop connections within the disability services community.

Douglass Ruth, LCSW, clinical director, says, **“JFCS provides mental-health services and helps the client acknowledge some of the stressors and barriers impacting the severity of his symptoms.**

*continued on p. 2*



JFCS  
Jewish Family & Child Service

Stability & Hope. Now & Always.

# FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

Dear Friends,

**We wish a very happy and healthy Jewish New Year to you, our Jewish Family & Child Service community!** We're so glad to be in touch in the new year's first newsletter as JFCS' new leadership team.

JFCS hears directly from you – and from the Greater Portland Jewish Community Study results that were released over the summer – that **you need greater connection, mental-health support and sense of belonging.** This newsletter includes the many ways JFCS helps meet community needs and is expanding to do more of this crucial work.

Here, you will learn about:

- **Asher\*** and how he benefits from many agency services
- JFCS' **Disability Empowerment Hour**
- **Clinicians** meeting clients one-on-one and leading larger groups
- **Volunteers** ready with a friendly call or visit to clients seeking more support
- **Holocaust Survivors** gathering in and celebrating community

**JFCS enjoys sharing how we provide for the community;** if you have a story of your own or a concern to raise, please be in touch. We look forward to building upon JFCS' past leadership legacy and doing so starts with you.

Warmly,



Bill Treuhaft  
Board President



Susan Greenberg  
Executive Director

## **"A client searches for support..."** *continued from p. 1*

Because we had a counselor, intake case manager and disability specialist, we could each address an area of need to provide the best outcome."

Doug added, "Furthermore, because of continued counseling support beyond Asher's immediate crisis, JFCS used ongoing community support to develop a plan for meeting life goals, reducing the chance of relapse."

Asher said, "I want you to know how helpful the gift cards are to me specifically, since the government benefits I do receive limit me from purchasing household items or clothing that I need."

He continued, "Thank you so much for making me feel safe to share hard things."

*\*Asher is a pseudonym to protect the client's privacy*

# Friendly Callers/Visitors



**People are craving connection.** We hear this from our clients and volunteers alike, as well as from the late-spring 2022-23

Greater Portland Jewish Community Study results. Enter JFCS' new Friendly Caller/Friendly Visitor program, relaunched and more robust now that most pandemic restrictions have lifted.

**"Volunteers are very eager to provide this service to clients, especially those who are chronically homebound,"** Sammy Monk, volunteer coordinator, says. "Many volunteers say they relate to JFCS clients as they do to family members, and providing them support is deeply fulfilling."

In a nutshell, **Friendly Callers are volunteers desiring to connect with a client needing a friendly voice and some conversation.** The commitment is 30 minutes a week. Friendly Visitors serve a similar purpose, but in a client's home. Visitors and clients make an appointment to meet for an hour every week or every other week.

Often, JFCS case managers recommend the program to their clients who have expressed loneliness or a desire to connect with more people. Clients also can take the initiative to sign up to be matched with a Friendly Caller or Visitor. JFCS case managers and Sammy work hand in hand

to ensure a great client-volunteer match.

Sammy says, "Volunteers express that being a Friendly Caller or Visitor doesn't feel like they're doing work for someone else; they feel they themselves benefit from spending time with clients who often share fascinating stories, poignant life advice and good laughs."

Said one long-time JFCS volunteer about the Friendly Caller program: **"It's been very rewarding for both the client and me."**

Your time and kindness could make a very big impact on a JFCS client, like this member of our JFCS community:

"I am very fortunate because JFCS matched me up with one wonderful Friendly Caller, and later connected me to a second absolutely wonderful person. The first person still calls me every week for a brief shmooze. Although the second Friendly Caller is no longer in this area, she continues to occasionally keep in touch with me. **JFCS is definitely an important part of my Jewish life.**"

*Would you like to volunteer for the Friendly Caller/Friendly Visitor program?*

*Please contact Sammy at [volunteer@jfcs-portland.org](mailto:volunteer@jfcs-portland.org) or visit the volunteer page at [www.jfcs-portland.org](http://www.jfcs-portland.org).*



# Lifelong learning also takes place where we live

JFCS' Counseling is bringing learning opportunities to a greater swath of our community. Clinicians Missy Fry, LCSW, and Douglass Ruth, LCSW, have established a regular relationship with Schnitzer Investment Corp. representing a collection of subsidized housing buildings in downtown Portland.



*Legal and Financial Planning presentation*

**Self-care for older adults is the clinicians' focus** and their presentations are making a very positive impact, says Miley Stanton-Flowers, service coordinator supervisor.

**"I have had several residents let me know how much they appreciate the kindness and wisdom that Missy and Doug bring to these classes"** that are more like "friendly and compassionate conversations" and less like "lectures," Miley says.

Missy and Doug carefully craft their presentations on topics very important to seniors' wellness, including those that many people – of any age – shy away from.



*Missy Fry, LCSW, with Schnitzer Properties residents*

These include **forgiveness, the process of grief, self-compassion, stress during holiday seasons and recognizing cognitive distortions.**

Recently, more than 50 residents attended, "Legal and Financial Planning: What every older adult needs to know." JFCS provided materials about elder law and end-of-life planning in four different languages.

"Getting to know the residents in these communities through our groups, presentations and classes has been the highlight of this work," Missy says. **"They are consistently engaged in the topics, eager to offer their own insights and wisdom and consistently lift each other up and share their overwhelming gratitude for living here,"** she adds.

Counseling's psychoeducational events at residences like Schnitzer Properties are made possible by the partnership, as well as in large part thanks to the Jewish Federations of North America's (JFNA) Center for Holocaust Survivor Care and Institute on Aging and Trauma, and The Sephardic Foundation on Aging.

# Helping Your Child Manage Anxiety



Together, JFCS, Portland Area Jewish Educators and Congregation Neveh Shalom recently completed its no-cost, four-part series addressing childhood anxiety and how to achieve calm through a Jewish lens.

This is the second “Helping Your Child Manage Anxiety” series, due to the very positive impact of the first and request for more from the community.

**“With school having recently begun, we helped parents and caregivers better navigate kids’ back-to-school anxious episodes that so many families experience,”** says JFCS’ Laura Cohen, LCSW, ACSW, child and family therapist, who helped create and facilitate the successful series.

## JFCS Support Groups

Join our ongoing, drop-in groups

### Grief Connection

Join us for our monthly drop-in grief-processing group for adults. No registration required. This group meets the first Friday of every month from 10am-11am on Zoom.

**Next meeting: October 6 at 10am.** For more information and the Zoom link, visit [www.jfcs-portland.org/grief-connection](http://www.jfcs-portland.org/grief-connection)

### Cancer Support Group

Community is important. Cancer is lonely. JFCS has combined these two truths to create this support group open to anyone with a cancer diagnosis. No registration required. This group meets the 2nd Tuesday of every month from 3pm-4pm (*new day and time*)

**Next meeting: October 10 at 3pm.** For more information and the Zoom link, visit [www.jfcs-portland.org/cancer-support](http://www.jfcs-portland.org/cancer-support)

### Community Connection

Join JFCS for weekly conversations on Zoom. It is a space for anyone in the community to connect with others and share what’s on their mind. This group meets many Fridays at 10am. No registration required.

For specific dates and Zoom link, visit [www.jfcs-portland.org/services/counseling/calendar](http://www.jfcs-portland.org/services/counseling/calendar)

**For the full calendar of upcoming group sessions, visit:**  
**[www.jfcs-portland.org/services/counseling/calendar](http://www.jfcs-portland.org/services/counseling/calendar)**





## Empowering you, with input from you

A self-described empowered disabled man, Kiel Moses created and launched the Disability Empowerment Hour. JFCS' Disability Support Services (DSS) is **here to learn from and provide helpful information to greater Portland's disabled community.**

That starts with conversation. "Hearing from the disabled community and what they need is crucial for DSS," Kiel said.

During the late-August Disability Empowerment Hour, Kiel and Zoe Muller, MSW, co-facilitated a roundtable, **"Your Voice Matters."** The well-attended Zoom-based discussion was open to the disabled community and their allies.

Topics discussed included:

- referrals to disability-specific services
- social events and outings
- disability advocacy and justice

**"JFCS," Kiel said, "is ready and committed to hearing from people with disabilities and their allies to respond as best as possible to their needs."**



*Co-facilitators Kiel Moses and Zoe Muller*

### Want your voice heard? It matters.

Please respond to DSS' brief survey, available at [www.jfcs-portland.org/DSS-survey](http://www.jfcs-portland.org/DSS-survey) and share your ideas for Disability Support Services and how it can support you.



In honor of Holocaust Survivor Day, JFCS put on a delicious picnic for nearly 70 people, including 33 Survivors and their loved ones and caregivers, who spent an afternoon together at Cook Park in Tigard. Under a warm June sun, Survivor clients thrived in community and with JFCS' case managers. JFCS is grateful to volunteers who helped take clients to and from the venue and sincerely thanks Seed the Dream Foundation for helping to fund the lively event.



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