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Thank You, From Those You've Helped



As fall cools off and winter is on the horizon, small moments of kindness remind us of the power of compassion. Whether it's a warm coat, a shared meal, or an unexpected moment of joy, the generosity of our community towards JF&CS clients has a way of restoring both comfort and hope.

One client recently shared their gratitude after receiving donated winter essentials:

"Thank you so much for the warm winter coat, mittens, and hat. They will help me stay comfortable during the cold months ahead. I also truly appreciate the opportunity to pick up some food from the pantry. Your kindness and care mean a lot to me. It's wonderful to know that there are people and organizations such as JF&CS who are willing to help those in need. Your generosity makes a real difference, and this warm coat will keep not only my body warm, but also my heart."

For another client, something as simple as these donated jackets brought overwhelming joy. Their JF&CS Social Worker recalled, "He tried it on immediately, asking me how he looked, turning around and saying, 'This is so nice.' He was very grateful, thanking the agency for all the help he received." Living in a shelter with few belongings, that one jacket became a symbol of care and dignity for this client. "He truly has nothing," the Social Worker added. "I cannot emphasize enough how much a gift such as this is appreciated."

Sometimes, kindness offers more than comfort—it restores courage. One client shared how attending a Raptors game through donated tickets helped them reconnect with the world. "I hadn't left my house for three weeks. But when my JF&CS worker gave me those donated tickets, I found the courage to go out. The best seats I have ever had in my entire life and I don't have enough disposable income to go to many games. I invited a friend who is not a sports fan and he told me after the night that he is now the biggest Raptors fan. It almost made me cry, as that was special."

Each story is a reminder that generosity changes lives. Your compassion, through clothing and toy drives, food donations, shared experiences and more, helps our clients feel seen, valued, and supported.

Thank you for helping JF&CS continue to spread warmth this year. Together, we keep hearts and homes a little brighter.

Connect



Did You Know?

Our new **Youth Grief and Bereavement Program** offers compassionate support for young people coping with the loss of a loved one through individual counselling and peer support groups. The program also includes a **crisis stabilization** component, providing immediate intervention and community-based crisis counselling to help youth navigate intense emotions and begin their healing journey in a safe, supportive environment.

Join the Monthly Mitzvah Makers!

JF&CS' monthly giving program. [Click here](#) for more information.

Nourishing Our Community this GivingTuesday



This year on GivingTuesday, JF&CS is shining a light on one of the most urgent challenges facing our community: food security. For many of our clients, families, seniors, and individuals living on limited incomes, the rising cost of groceries puts healthy, nourishing food increasingly out of reach.

We believe no one in our community should have to go hungry. That is why our food support programs are designed not only to meet urgent needs, but to offer hope, dignity and stability.

Last fiscal year, **over \$36,000 in grocery store gift cards** was distributed to clients. These cards provide flexibility, allowing families to purchase the foods that best suit their needs, cultures, and preferences. That is something a pre-packed food box can't always do.

For clients struggling to make ends meet, these cards offer a chance to plan meals with pride and independence.

Our produce box delivery program has become a lifeline for so many. This year, **102 clients received a box of fresh produce** every two weeks, ensuring consistent access to fruits and vegetables that support health and well-being. Each delivery represents more than just food. It's care delivered directly to the doorstep.

JF&CS also brings the community together around meaningful moments of tradition and connection. During Jewish holidays, JF&CS also provides prepared meals to help clients celebrate with warmth and dignity. In 2025, we delivered **288 Passover meals** and **269 Rosh Hashanah meals**, ensuring that everyone can share in the joy of these special occasions, regardless of their financial circumstances.

Every delivery tells a story—a family able to cook a favourite recipe, a senior able to share a meal with friends, a parent who can rest a little easier knowing there's food in the kitchen.

On GivingTuesday, we invite you to help us continue this essential work. Your donation, no matter the amount, helps JF&CS ensure that every person who turns to us can access healthy, nourishing food all year long.

Join us on Tuesday, December 2, to make a difference that lasts far beyond a single day. If you don't want to wait, you can give today, ahead of December 2, by [clicking here](#).

Greetings from President Dr. Michael Minden

Jewish Family and Child Service is pleased to welcome Dr. Michael Minden as the new President of our Board of Directors.

Dr. Minden steps into this leadership role with deep gratitude and enthusiasm. His commitment to community, compassion, and Jewish values lies at the heart of his approach, and reflects the very foundation of JF&CS's work.

"For me, this role is more than a title, it's a full-circle moment, established in the values I was raised with," shares Dr. Minden. "I was raised in a family where tzedakah ("Charity") and community were core values. From a young age, I watched my parents give generously of their time and hearts, teaching me that giving back is both a responsibility and a privilege."

Leave a Legacy

[Click here](#) to learn about planned giving through the Gordon S. Wolfe Legacy Society at JF&CS.

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After moving to Toronto for university, Dr. Minden earned his Ph.D., became a Registered Psychologist, and built a successful career as a Corporate Psychologist, all while raising two daughters with his wife, Sandy. His professional life began with the Children's Aid Society of Hamilton-Wentworth, where he gained a deep appreciation for the essential work of organizations like JF&CS in supporting vulnerable individuals, children, and families.

That early experience inspired his long-standing connection to JF&CS and continues to inform his leadership vision today. As he begins his tenure, Dr. Minden looks ahead with optimism and purpose. A key priority will be bringing to life

the agency's new five-year strategic plan, guided by renewed vision, mission, and values.

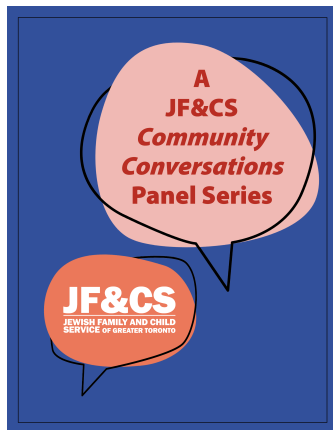
"My focus will be on listening, learning, and strengthening the partnership between the Board, leadership, and staff," he says. "Together, we will continue to be a beacon of hope, dignity and compassion for the Jewish community and beyond."

Grounded in the principle of Tikkun Olam ("Repairing the World"), the Jewish call to repair the world, Dr. Minden envisions a future where JF&CS continues to grow its impact and reach.

"I'm deeply optimistic about where we're heading," he adds. "I look forward to working together to create a future where every child is safe, every family is supported, and every person feels seen, heard and valued."

JF&CS welcomes Dr. Minden to his new role and looks forward to this next chapter.

Join the Conversation: Building Inclusion and Resilience Through Sports



In August, JF&CS launched a four-part *Community Conversations* panel series designed to engage families, caregivers, and professionals with expert insights on timely issues impacting community well-being. Following the success of the first event, *Head & Heart: A Parent's Guide to the School Year Ahead*, JF&CS is proud to continue the conversation with the next installment in our series: *Hands In: Levelling the Playing Field in Sports*, coming this **February**.

This engaging event will bring together athletes, educators, and community leaders for an inspiring dialogue on how sports can serve as a powerful tool for belonging, inclusion,

and pride. While sports have the ability to shape character, build confidence, and foster lifelong connections, they can also reflect the broader challenges faced by our community, including bias, exclusion, and antisemitism.

Through open discussion and personal stories, this event will explore how we can make athletic spaces more welcoming and empowering for all young people. We invite you to join us this February for what promises to be a meaningful and thought-provoking discussion. Together, we can build a community where every young person feels they belong, and where the playing field truly is level for all.

Be part of this powerful conversation shaping our community's future. Join the waitlist to receive more information as it is available by [clicking here](#).

Bringing Joy, One Dreidel at a Time

DRIVE for DREIDELS Community Chanukah Toy Drive



As the Festival of Lights approaches, JF&CS is preparing to brighten the lives of children, families, and community members through our annual Drive for Dreidels and Chanukah Tribute Cards initiatives.

Last year, JF&CS was able to brighten the lives of hundreds of children and youth during Chanukah. This year, we invite you to help us bring the holidays to our community once again by shopping our virtual wishlist, visiting one of our community drop-off sites, and making a monetary donation. Your generosity ensures that families facing financial hardship are able to experience the joy and warmth of Chanukah.

Through Drive for Dreidels, JF&CS provides toys and gift cards to families throughout our community. Every contribution, no matter the size, helps us spread light, dignity, and hope. When you light your menorah, take pride in knowing your generosity is helping others feel that

same sense of warmth and belonging.

If you'd like to learn more or donate brand-new toys or gift cards, please [click here](#).

And while you're spreading light, don't forget to share it with friends and family through our Chanukah Tribute Cards. Sending a tribute card is a meaningful way to wish your loved ones a Chag Sameach while helping those in need.

[Click here](#) to order your tribute cards today!

Be the light. Bring the joy. Help make this Chanukah shine for everyone.

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