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A Different Drive for Dreidels



DRIVE for DREIDELS

NOVEMBER 9 until DECEMBER 10

There are thousands of children in the GTA whose parents cannot afford to buy Chanukah gifts without your help. Chanukah is going to be an especially difficult time due to the pandemic and the need is greater than in previous years.

Due to health and safety guidelines, toys and gift cards will not be collected from community members this year. This Chanukah, your monetary donation to JF&CS will allow us to purchase toys and gift cards for our community's most vulnerable children and teens.

CLICK HERE TO DONATE

Help shine light and bring holiday happiness to children and families in our community.

JF&CS
JEWISH FAMILY AND CHILD
SERVICE OF GREATER TORONTO

For more information please visit www.jfandcs.com/d4d or call 416-638-7800 x 6999

OVER 20 YEARS AGO, DRIVE FOR DREIDELS WAS ESTABLISHED TOGETHER WITH THE COOPERHEAD FAMILY. WE THANK ALL OF OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS THROUGHOUT THE YEARS FOR THEIR SUPPORT.

For over 20 years, JF&CS has helped vulnerable clients celebrate Chanukah by providing toys and gift cards for children in our community. Drive for Dreidels was initiated by Bonnie Lawrence Shear and her sons, Bob and Josh Cooper, when they discovered that a significant number of Jewish families could not afford to purchase Chanukah gifts for their children, including children in foster care. It was with the help of JF&CS that Drive for Dreidels was founded and has successfully helped thousands of children and families celebrate Chanukah throughout the years.

Today, JF&CS families are facing a long and difficult winter. Many are managing a combination of challenges such as income

loss, school changes, as well as other uncertainties. Chanukah is going to be an especially difficult time for families due to the pandemic and the need is greater than in previous years.

Different from past years, due to health and safety guidelines you will not see our drop boxes that have traditionally been overflowing with toys. **This Chanukah, your monetary donation to JF&CS will allow us to purchase toys and gift cards for our community's most vulnerable children and teens, and these gifts will be delivered to our clients.**

[Click here](#) to support Drive for Dreidels.

In addition, this year, JF&CS is excited to once again be offering [Chanukah tribute cards](#)! All proceeds raised through the sales of our Chanukah cards will go towards the creation of holiday meal gift bags for clients. These bags will be packed in partnership with Chabad midtown and each package will be dropped off directly to the client's home. The bags will include:

- Fresh soup
- A Dozen fresh potato latkes
- Salad

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COVID-19 Resources

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Join the Monthly Mitzvah Makers!

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

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- 2 donuts (kit for self-topping)
- Chocolate gelt
- Tin menorah candles and dreidel
- Chanukah themed plastic table cloth, paper plates and napkins

Help shine light and bring holiday happiness to children and families in our community by supporting Drive for Dreidels 2020 and our Chanukah tribute card campaign this holiday season.

To make a gift* today, please [click here](#) or call our donation line at 416.638.7800 x 6999.

**A tax receipt will be issued in the full amount donated*

Former Client Becomes Day School Teacher



This month, a JF&CS social worker shared with us some fantastic news about a former client who has defied the odds to do what they love. This story, told by the client's worker, reaffirmed our belief that our Children in Care really are some of the strongest and most resilient people.

"It is with pride and pleasure that I tell you about my client Sarah because she epitomizes everything we hope and try to do at JF&CS. Sarah is a former Child in Care who came to us when she was seven years old. While in care, Sarah certainly struggled with the impact of the family turmoil she had experienced but she was a resilient kid and with support from her foster families and Child in Care Workers, she got through the early grades and successfully completed high school. This alone is a feat as the likelihood of children in the foster care system completing high school is exceedingly low. According to a 2017 Toronto Star article, only 44 % of Ontario Crown wards complete high school compared to 81% of students in the general population. But Sarah did not stop there. After graduating from high school, she worked in a variety of service jobs while applying to university. She then went on to successfully complete a BA followed by two years of Teachers College."*

Although the pandemic was difficult on her financially, she recently received not one but TWO job offers to teach full time! Sarah is now working as an elementary teacher and teaching kids who are around the age that she was when she first started with JF&CS. We couldn't be prouder of what our Children in Care can go on to accomplish and Sarah is just one wonderful example of that.

**Names, photos and certain identifying features have been changed in order to protect the anonymity of our clients.*

Donor Support Ensures Staff & Community Safety

Thanks to the generous support of our donors and community members, JF&CS has received critical personal protection equipment (PPE) for staff and clients. JF&CS staff now have full access to masks, suits, gloves and hand sanitizer, ensuring their safety during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Through the acquisition of PPE from community donors, JF&CS provided every staff member with two reusable masks. In addition to masks, JF&CS was able to secure a donation of surgical gowns from Mount Sinai Hospital. These gowns can now be found in our stock room of PPE which has been established for front-line workers to access and restock.

In addition to ensuring staff safety, we provided clients with protective masks which enabled them to safely enter public spaces, such as the TTC, grocery stores and pharmacies. Clients expressed their deep gratitude for these masks, knowing the JF&CS was looking out for their safety. One of our Child Protection Workers, Nicole, said:

"The PPE provided by the Agency and our generous donors is the reason I feel safe conducting in-home visits with families during this pandemic. The PPE alleviates my anxiety by significantly reducing the chance of being exposed to and spreading the COVID virus and thus empowers me to continue my work as an essential service and keep children/youth safe. Thanks to the PPE, I don't have to choose between protecting myself and protecting my clients, and even though it doesn't feel "normal" wearing it, I feel a sense of normalcy being able to go out in the world and do the things I've set out to do...and that in itself is priceless."

Thank you to the following donors for supplying PPE: Bridge to Health, David Wasserman, The Incredible Printing Group of Companies, Promote Me Inc., Helen Goldlist, Last Straw Distillery, Rafinova, TakeCare Supply.

Your donations ensured that our community could continue accessing critical programs and services safely. Thank you!

Spreading Holiday Cheer



Over the High Holidays, [Mimi and Ry](#) took the lead on assembling 100 grocery and goodie bags for JF&CS clients. Together with student volunteers from CHAT, Mimi and Ry meticulously curated bags filled with apples, honey, produce, challah, juice, candles, matches, grocery cards, donations and more. They put so much time and effort into considering each and every client's needs and paid close attention to every detail, going above and beyond. These beautiful bags took a lot of work and coordination to put together but clients absolutely loved them. One of the clients who received a bag said:

"I just got home from doing a little grocery shopping and the gift bag was at my door. Wow! Whoever decided what to put in the parcel is so thoughtful and smart to include

such nutritious food plus Challah, apple and honey, matches for lighting the candles and

the Chabad booklet for a spiritual uplift and observing Rosh Hashanah. The flowers were a most lovely added touch.

It was so uplifting getting the bag and rather than dreading spending Rosh Hashanah and the Chaggim alone, now I'm actually feeling excited and looking forward to making the holidays as nice as I can."

Thank you to Mimi and Ry, the volunteers from CHAT and to everyone else who made this initiative such a success.

Foster Parent Appreciation Event



On October 22, we were delighted to celebrate our foster parent community and honour our retirees for their years of service. We were privileged to hear from Landy Anderson about her experience in the Child Welfare system. She commended the JF&CS foster parents for their tireless work, especially during these trying times. At the event, Brian shared some words of gratitude to our amazing foster families:

"We wanted to share that we have been so inspired, touched and honoured to see the selfless acts of giving, care and concern for our most vulnerable, even more so during this pandemic. We have been first-hand witnesses to you and your families going out of your way, taking on risk, lack of privacy and personal time to accommodate our strict requirements and the needs of our protection families. We acknowledge and recognize the sweat and tears you put in as caregivers. You have each, in your own ways, helped ease these times for our children and youth in care. You have provided routine, structure, and a loving and caring environment, despite what was going on outside your doors. We are genuinely grateful, and amazed and again, truly humbled to work with you all. Thank you for continuing to believe in the work and may you each merit from the strength, resilience and selflessness you provide".

Brian Says Goodbye

It is with sadness and gratitude for his service that we announce the retirement of our Executive Director, Brian Prousky. Brian has had a long and illustrious career which includes being a founding member of the Regional Adoption Program for the Children's Aid Societies of Durham, Kawartha Haliburton and Highland Shores as well as being a founding member of the Durham Region Intimate Partner Violence Empowerment Network. Here at JF&CS, Brian has been a true leader and friend to all. He has built a culture at JF&CS that is collaborative and transparent and continues to ensure that JF&CS is there for everyone and anyone whenever they need it. In his message to staff, Brian wrote:

If you don't know this already, please know how much I've loved your generosity of spirit, not just in supporting individuals and families but in supporting one another. Please know how much I've loved your courage, empathy, determination and optimism. Please know how much I've loved your commitment to patiently healing and repairing our community one person or one family at a time. Most of all, please know how much I've loved our shared understanding that we are the people we serve. That the only difference between us and our clients is the misfortune of their circumstances. And that



the hopes and dreams we have for our own children are precisely the hopes and dreams we have for the children we serve.

Thank you, Brian, for all that you've done for JF&CS and we wish you nothing but the best for your retirement.

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