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Talyah at Café Europa



In January, Talyah Breslin, our CEO attended Café Europa in recognition of International Holocaust Remembrance Day. Café Europa in partnership with the Bernard Betel Centre, is a program that provides Holocaust survivors with the opportunity to gather monthly for a social and cultural get-together. They eat, listen to music and sometimes even dance together.

Over 300 Survivors in their 80's and 90's attend each month. This particular Café Europa session had a profound impact on the Survivors who were able to share their stories with Talyah, as well as Talyah herself. She explains, "Since October 7th, I have found myself often reflecting on the paramount importance of Holocaust remembrance and recognition. My understanding and reflections on the Holocaust have become so much more visceral, personal and current. This reflection and deeper personal understanding of hate and discrimination has intensified my commitment to stand against the oppression or discrimination facing ALL marginalized people and communities. The inherent Jewish value of Tikkun Olam (commitment to repair brokenness in the world) has never been more important. I remain committed to standing up against hate and harm of all kinds and to strive for a world that is committed to repair and reconciliation, not destruction and hate. We have much to learn from Survivors and from the Holocaust."

The Café Europa program is also jointly funded by JF&CS and [The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany](#). To learn more about the program, please [click here](#). To become a Café Europa volunteer, please contact Andrea Pines at apines@jfandcs.com.

Mitzvah Gifts for Passover



JF&CS is excited to introduce Mitzvah Gifts just in time for the holiday. This Passover, consider giving a mitzvah gift that will help vulnerable members of our community celebrate a meaningful holiday. Through this new and exciting program, you can purchase one or more of the following: a seat at a community Seder for an isolated client, a Seder in a Box delivered to an individual client or family, or Kosher for Passover groceries. By giving a

Mitzvah gift, you are helping our clients celebrate a meaningful holiday.

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Join the Monthly Mitzvah Makers!

JF&CS' monthly giving program.
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Leave a Legacy

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

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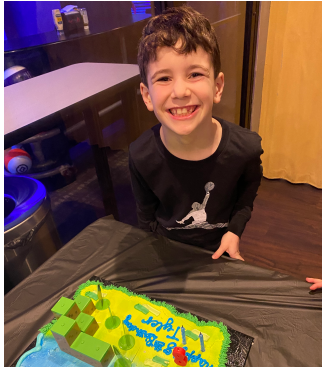
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If you wish to make this Mitzvah Gift in honour of a friend or family member, JF&CS will send them a card acknowledging your gift.

Tangible gifts make a real and immediate impact, so give a gift that gives back to the Jewish community. [Click here](#) for more information on the Mitzvah Gifts Program or to make your donation today.

Tyler's ECHOage Party



Eight-year-old Tyler's birthday was approaching, and he and his parents wanted to celebrate in a meaningful way. As a way to give back to the Jewish community and still provide Tyler with a birthday gift, mom Lindsay Detsky suggested they ask party guests to give a donation that is split between a charity of Tyler's choice and a group gift.

Choosing a charity seemed to be the only challenge. "My kids can never decide who and how they want to help," Lindsay explains, "Bubbies or babies? School supplies or camping gear?"

After reflection, Tyler chose to give to JF&CS. "I thought about how some people don't have any food, and I thought how doing this would help them get food," says Tyler, "JF&CS helps everyone! I can do a mitzvah and still get a present."

By hosting an ECHOage party, Lindsay hopes to teach their kids how to become community-minded and caring individuals. "Donating to Jewish Family & Child Service (JF&CS) means their gift helps our community's most vulnerable - at every age and stage. We want to raise kids who understand that it is our shared responsibility to take care of one another and build a strong, resilient community. Supporting JF&CS through ECHOage has become a birthday tradition. Reading Tyler's own words on why he chose to have an ECHOage party for JF&CS has made us incredibly proud!"

ECHOage makes it easy to plan, share, and host parties that support a charity of your choice. If you are looking to host your own ECHOage party in support of JF&CS, please [click here](#) for more information.

Mental Health at Holy Blossom



JF&CS and Holy Blossom Temple have been intertwined from the very beginning. Since the 1800s, Holy Blossom and JF&CS have stood as pillar organizations within the Jewish community and have planted the seeds of long-standing traditions. In fact, many JF&CS leaders have also been leaders at Holy Blossom over the decades.

In recent years, JF&CS has been working with Holy Blossom and the Luke Sklar Mental Health Initiative to create a safe space for the community to discuss mental health through free workshops. The Luke Sklar Mental Health Initiative aims to end the stigma around mental health, an endeavour that is paramount to JF&CS as well. The workshops are organized by a team of professionals, volunteering their time – a psychologist, social worker, nurse, and others who share the same passion for the cause.

Social workers from JF&CS have offered support during several workshops facilitated by the Initiative. From speaking on a panel about childhood sexual abuse in Jewish spaces to acting as a warm ear should anyone be triggered during workshops, JF&CS and Holy

Blossom have been advocating for those struggling with mental health in many ways. Other workshops have discussed trauma healing and growth, unpacking and understanding the phenomenon of suicide, understanding gender diversity in children and adolescents, and more.

At the most recent workshop, Shining a Light on Mental Health: An Overview of Mental Health First Aid Training, guest speaker Susan Kagan discussed some of the skills needed to support someone who is in a mental health crisis. JF&CS social worker Sasha Fink was available during the workshop to provide support to those attending.

According to the Mental Health Commission of Canada, one in five Canadians experiences a mental health problem within a given year. JF&CS is proud to regularly support Holy Blossom and The Luke Sklar Mental Health Initiative to help address the needs of our community. To view Holy Blossom's calendar and learn upcoming workshops, [click here](#).

SupportAbility Inclusivity Workshop



In honour of Jewish Disability Awareness and Inclusion Month (JDAIM) in February, JF&CS, in collaboration with Reena, hosted an empathy and inclusivity workshop for the grade 5 students at Associated Hebrew School. For the first part of the workshop, students participated in a set of interactive activities designed to provoke thought and discussion around inclusivity. Everyone also learned more about people with disabilities and the experience of neurodiversity.

Reena participants and staff were then invited to spend time with the students to create posters about what inclusion meant to them.

JF&CS Social Worker and SupportAbility program facilitator Sabrina Propper shared about the day, "It was special. The students remained engaged, and it was incredible to watch some of them implement tools they had learned from the workshop. I have no doubt that the morning was meaningful to many, and the experience will be remembered for years to come."

[Click here](#) to learn more about how JF&CS provides support to families of children with developmental disabilities and those experiencing disabilities themselves.

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