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Benny's Birthday Party That Gives Back



When it came time to plan her son Benny's birthday, JF&CS Board Member Lisa Winberg knew she wanted to do something meaningful. "We chose to host an ECHOage party for Benny because we want our kids to understand the importance of giving back to the community and to know that they are never too young to make a difference," she shares.

ECHOage is a platform that encourages children to split their birthday gifts between a charitable donation and a personal present. It's a simple and joyful way to introduce young children to philanthropy. "When I first heard about ECHOage, I was

really impressed by the idea and have been hosting my kids' birthdays through ECHOage ever since!" Lisa says. "We love that instead of getting a gift from each guest at his party, Benny is able to make a significant donation to JF&CS and still have some money leftover to buy something special for himself."

The family has a long history of involvement with JF&CS, making this experience even more personal. "Our family has been involved with JF&CS for many years, and as a Board Member, I am especially proud that my son is able to contribute his birthday money to helping other kids in our community. From as young as 3, I think that the kids are able to understand that they are 'sharing' their birthdays with other kids, and it makes them feel good knowing that they are doing a mitzvah," she added.

By celebrating with an ECHOage party, Benny and his family demonstrate that generosity and empathy can start at any age—and that small acts of kindness can make a big difference. If you are looking to host your own ECHOage party in support of JF&CS, please [click here](#) for more information.

Gearing Up for Camp with JF&CS

For many children, summer camp is a fun-filled time of discovery and friendship. But for some families in our community, the cost of camp gear can be prohibitive.

That's why JF&CS was proud to host our annual Camp Tuck Shop for clients from June 11–13. This unique initiative allowed families to choose the items their children need to feel confident and ready for camp. Thanks to the generosity of our donors and community partners, we are able to offer an exciting array of brand-new camp essentials, including duffel bags, towels, backpacks, water bottles, sunscreen, flashlights, clothing, and more.

Did You Know?

We celebrated Passover across the agency with warmth and meaning this spring. Highlights included:

- an inspirational Model Seder at the JDD
- generous community donations to our Passover Mitzvah Gifts program for clients
- and a Kosher-for-Passover recipe book compiled by our Wellness Committee, which included favourite recipes from our staff.

Join the Monthly Mitzvah Makers!

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

Leave a Legacy

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

We Can Help You



Each year, hundreds of children benefit from our camp programming. Families leave the shop feeling supported and grateful, knowing their kids will be taken care of and well-equipped for a summer of fun. The children themselves often light up with excitement as they pick out their camp gear, building not only anticipation for camp but also a sense of dignity and belonging.

"Thank you, once again. Not only for the obvious help and financial assistance that makes it possible for my children to attend camp at all, but for the dignity, kindness and caring you all provided as I was there."

It can be hard to ask for help and hard to receive it, too. You all helped me to leave feeling uplifted and excited for camp rather than feeling like a charity case." - A JF&CS Client

Together, we are helping families overcome barriers and making sure every child can enjoy the magic of summer camp.

To learn more or to support our camp programs, please visit our [donation page](#).

[Learn](#) about our programs and services.

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Celebrating Resilience and Achievement at the JDD



Graduation is always a meaningful milestone, but at the JDD, it carries even greater significance. On June 24th, staff, students, graduates, and loved ones gathered together for a heartfelt ceremony celebrating the accomplishments of our middle and high school students.

For the students at the JDD, the journey to graduation is filled with hard work, perseverance, and personal growth. The JDD supports young people who face mental health challenges or complex needs that may prevent them from successfully navigating a traditional school setting. Through small class

sizes, tailored support, and a nurturing environment, the JDD empowers these students to reconnect with learning and build the skills and confidence they need for future success.

The ceremony featured moving speeches from students, teachers, and JF&CS staff, as well as plenty of smiles, cheers, and a few happy tears.

"Every one of you knows what it feels like to face something hard, and to keep going anyway," shared JF&CS CEO Talyah Breslin. *"It's a form of strength that unites people, no matter their background or beliefs. You are part of a shared story of resilience, and you are not alone."*

Families beamed with pride as they watched their children reach this turning point, many of whom once struggled to imagine such a moment.

Everyone at JF&CS extends our warmest congratulations to this year's JDD graduates and students. You inspire us with your resilience, your fortitude, and your determination. The entire community is proud to stand behind you as you take your next steps forward.

Building Community: Recent Highlights from the JF&CS Staff

At JF&CS, our work is guided by compassion, collaboration, and a deep sense of community, and our remarkable staff put those values into action every day. Over the past few weeks, we



have come together to learn, connect and celebrate, further strengthening the bonds that help us serve our clients with care and excellence.

NOVA Exhibition

JF&CS staff members visited the powerful NOVA Music Festival Exhibition, which chronicles the tragic events of October 7 and its aftermath. The experience was powerful and emotional, reminding us of the resilience of the human spirit and the importance of standing in solidarity with victims

of violence and antisemitism.

Walk with Israel Street Festival

JF&CS was proud to have a booth at this year's UJA Walk with Israel Street Festival. Staff and volunteers shared information about our programs and services, and connected with community members. It was inspiring to see so many people come together in support of Israel and Jewish life in Toronto.

Pride Month Education

In honour of Pride Month, JF&CS's EDI Committee has been sharing a number of inspiring and educational speeches from 2SLGBTQ+ advocates. Together, we explored the history of Pride and human rights, deepened our understanding of 2SLGBTQ+ identities and experiences, and reflected on how we can foster greater inclusion in our work and within our agency.

Staff Barbecue

There was plenty of laughter and connection at our recent JF&CS Staff Barbecue. Colleagues gathered to enjoy a delicious barbecue lunch, sunshine, and great company. After several busy months of hard work, the barbecue was a wonderful opportunity to relax, recharge, and celebrate our dedicated team.

Together, these events and experiences reflect the heart of our agency—learning, bonding, and community. Getting together reminds us that supporting one another is at the core of all we do at JF&CS!

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