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 You!*



for your donation to Schoke Jewish Family Service's Coronavirus Response.

Your generosity supported these programs:

- ☑ Freedberg Family Kosher Food Pantry
- ☑ Hirsch Kosher Home Delivery Meal Program
- ☑ Anachnu and Kavod SHEF Holocaust Survivor Programs
- ☑ Case Management and Emergency Assistance

A special thank you to Schoke JFS supporters who donated food and personal care items to the Freedberg Family Kosher Food Pantry.



**Look Who
 Visited the
 Schoke JFS
 Freedberg Family
 Kosher Food
 Pantry**



Matt Blumenthal, Connecticut House of Representatives for 147th District



David Martin, Mayor of Stamford

Schoke Jewish Family Service

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www.ctjfs.org

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Building Resilience in Challenging Times

In a recent article in the *Wall Street Journal*, psychologist Rick Hanson notes that the “brain has a negativity bias, which makes it like Velcro for bad experiences, and like Teflon for good ones.” When your boss gives you a performance evaluation, and there are ten points, nine of which are positive, and one that is not, we tend to focus on the one that is not.

So you can imagine, as we face daily news stories about increases in cases of COVID-19 throughout the country, it becomes difficult to remain positive. Families have experienced loss of jobs and income. With school and childcare programs altered, families are left trying to figure out what to do on a daily basis. So, what can you do when your brain is already working against you? Dr. Hanson goes on to say “deal with the bad, turn to the good. Take in the good and help it sink in. No matter how crazy it is around you or how bad it is, there are always things you can do.”

Schoke JFS is helping families do just that.

Providing opportunities to help others is one of the things Schoke JFS does to reduce stress and strengthen your immune system. Over the past few months, dozens of volunteers have made calls, delivered meals, and helped in the food pantry, providing a “listening ear” and concrete help to clients in need. Building connections has helped people feel less alone and supported, which in turn leads to more resilience. This is what those many phone calls and visits have provided at this critical time.

Just last week, Marta wrote to us: “Hello Schoke JFS, I hope you are all well. I spoke to John yesterday. He seems so nice and interesting and I can even speak French to him. It was so nice of you to connect me to him. I look forward to further conversations. I got the delicious food you sent. What a treat! It is so kind of you to take care of me. I ate a pear immediately. I wish I had more words to express how I feel. I am surrounded by your love and kindness. God bless you all. Love, Marta.”

In partnering with nearby Jewish organizations we are able to bring joyful programming to our *Anachnu* group of Holocaust survivors. We also help build resilience through our online support groups to combat loneliness and anxiety. Our online Brain Fitness classes attract dozens of participants who exercise their brains despite the pandemic. The Freedberg Kosher Food Pantry and Hirsch Kosher Home Delivered Meal Program provide wholesome, nutritious food that helps maintain physical wellness. The 500% increase in clients requesting food and assistance over the past few months has been met by caring, supportive staff and volunteers, who in turn help those in need build resilience to overcome the isolation and sadness that many are experiencing.

We are extremely grateful to all those who give of their time to volunteer. We are also grateful to all of you who have supported us and those whom we serve.

Wishing you all a safe, happy and healthy New Year.



Matt Greenberg, CEO



Paul Gordon, President

9th Annual Saul Cohen - Schoke JFS Lecture

Visit our website www.ctjfs.org for more details.

SCHOKE JFS WELCOMES NEW BOARD MEMBERS



David Brand



Jeri Appel



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Shushannah Walshe



Laurence Sheinman



Sally Kleinman

Schoke JFS Response to Coronavirus

Visit our website www.CTJFS.org/COVID19 for details about the programs and services we are offering during the COVID-19 pandemic.

ANACHNU Holocaust Survivor Services

The *Anachnu* Program very quickly moved their events online in the face of the pandemic. Already socially isolated and homebound, Holocaust survivors were extremely vulnerable. With the help of Schoke JFS staff and a team of dedicated volunteers, these seniors were honored with a medal ceremony on Russia's Victory Day – held outside and socially distanced. On Yom HaShoah, a memorial ceremony was arranged online for both *Anachnu* participants and community members. Frequently, survivors are entertained with concerts or online classes. Food and groceries are regularly delivered to this fragile population.



The *Anachnu* program is supported by the JFNA Center for Advancing Holocaust Survivor Care and the Claims Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany.

For upcoming *Anachnu* programs, please visit www.ctjfs.org/anachnu

Brain Fitness Program Continues Online

Without the interaction with friends and card games, seniors in our community are missing the activities that stimulate the brain. When the coronavirus pandemic arrived, social gatherings were stopped.

The Schoke JFS Brain Fitness Program has moved online to engage older adults in word games, brain teasers, and attention-strengthening activities to maintain an active brain. If you are new to Zoom, no problem, Toby Lazarus, Ph.D, Director of Brain Fitness Program, will help you to connect.

Mondays, 10:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Please contact Toby Lazarus, Ph.D. at 203-921-4161 or tlazarus@ctjfs.org to obtain the Zoom link.

Home Companion Program



The Schoke JFS Home Companion Program will match an older adult or homebound client, requiring help with the daily activities of life, with a trained and vetted home companion to help loved ones have peace of mind. In the time of COVID-19, care of our loved ones was complicated by social distancing and shelter-in-place orders. The Home Companion Program is instructing aides with the necessary healthcare and infection prevention information in order to support fragile members of our community.

For an evaluation of the needs of a loved one, please contact Isrella Knopf at 203-921-4161 or email at iknopf@ctjfs.org.

Freedberg Family Kosher Food Pantry

When the offices of Schoke Jewish Family Service closed in mid-March, most our services went virtual, but the Freedberg Family Kosher Food Pantry could not be an online service. With the outbreak, there was a 500% increase in the number of clients requesting food, cleaning supplies, and personal care items. Families were in need because they lost their paycheck or they were afraid to go to work. The Schoke JFS offices were transformed to accommodate the increased need.



Our community stepped up in so many ways. Through can collection drives at the Stamford JCC, shipped orders from our Amazon Wish list, diaper donations, and Chabad of Stamford organizing a Lag B'Omer Parade to drop-off donations curbside, Schoke Jewish Family Service was able to continue to feed our community.

To continue helping, visit www.ctjfs.org/kosher-food-pantry

Hirsch Kosher Home Delivered Meal Program



The Hirsch Kosher Home Delivered Meals Program delivers meals to clients across Fairfield County. Thank you to all our volunteers who bring the food from Jewish Senior Services, our kosher food provider in Bridgeport, to our Stamford office to be re-bagged and distributed to our clients.

With the support of a generous anonymous donor, Shabbat meals are being delivered, at no cost to the recipients, to our homebound seniors in the Stamford and Upper Fairfield County area.

Visit www.ctjfs.org/koshermeals for more information or contact Jill Knopoff at 203-921-4161 or jknopoff@ctjfs.org.

Jewish Twenties and Thirties Meet on Zoom

A Coronavirus outbreak could not prevent the Jewish Twenties and Thirties group from getting together! Whether they played games online or participated in a happy hour, the singles' group enjoyed each other's company virtually.

If you are a Jewish twenty or thirty-year-old looking to connect with others like yourself, please contact Ashley Mail at amail@ctjfs.org or join the Facebook group: Jewish Twenties and Thirties.



To continue to support our services during this difficult time, please contact Lisa Rich, Associate Development Director at 203-921-4161 or LRich@ctjfs.org

How to Maintain Mental Health in a Pandemic

Eve Moskowitz, LCSW

According to the World Health Organization, mental health is a state of well being in which every individual realizes her or his own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to contribute to her or his community.

The journey to optimum mental health, during these trying times, is confronted with several obstacles. Illness and death, creating loss and grief for so many, is the most obvious and impactful. For those who are lucky enough to remain in good health and to maintain financial stability, the major challenges to mental health can be feeling the loss of control, isolation, and fear of the unknown. It is difficult to imagine that under these circumstances, while in self-isolation or socially distancing, it is possible to realize one's potential, work productively and fruitfully, and make significant contributions to the community.

More specifically, the need for social distancing and segregation increases people's anxiety, stress and depression, as does the fear of getting sick and economic down turn. This is all exacerbated by the fact that there appears to be no end date in sight and no consistent guidelines implemented throughout the country for risk management. Additionally, world-wide dread seems to add to people's despair, many expressing a sense of hopelessness regarding a future return to "normal".

Nonetheless, people are resilient and when the need for coping and adaptation are present, people find their strength and ways in which to persevere. Support from family and friends continues to be a major source of comfort for many, the Zoom gathering having replaced many social events. The guidance of professional therapists or counsel of clergy remains an ever-present resource, again, with adaptations and creativity, being provided in alternate venues and by alternate means.

Many insurance companies have taken the opportunity to certify all licensed professionals for teletherapy and waived co-pays and high deductibles in order to ensure their members can receive much needed services. In addition, most social service agencies are offering support groups free of charge to build fortitude and find resilience.

NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) is providing additional resources to the public during the COVID-19 pandemic, increasing free services with a Crisis Text Line (text HELLO to 741741), a Disaster Distress Helpline (800-985-5990) and the National Suicide Prevention Helpline (800-273-TALK).

Finally, we at Schoke Jewish Family Service, continue to provide mental health counseling through teletherapy, as well as a Bereavement Support Group, a Divorce Support Group, and a free COVID-19 Support Group, offered on Thursdays at 4 PM. All major insurance providers are accepted and a sliding fee scale is available.

For further information contact Eve Moskowitz, LCSW, Director of Clinical Services at 203-921-4161, ext. 122.



SCHOKE JFS LEGACY GIVING CIRCLE

Schoke JFS extends our deepest appreciation to the following people and their families for their support through a Legacy Gift:

- | | |
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☆ *Of blessed memory*



A program of the HAROLD GRINSPOON FOUNDATION

In collaboration with the United Jewish Federation, Schoke JFS has joined the Harold Grinspoon Foundation Life and Legacy program. Please consider Schoke JFS in your legacy giving in 2020. Your gift offers hope to families in need across our community. For more information about this community-wide initiative, contact Matt Greenberg at 203-921-4161.

Do a Mitzvah - Volunteer!

Hundreds of volunteers from across Fairfield County have stepped up to support our community during this unprecedented emergency.



OTHER WAYS TO SUPPORT SCHOKE JFS

amazonsmile

Purchase items for the Freedberg Family Kosher Food Pantry on Amazon. Orders are shipped directly to Schoke JFS.

DONATE YOUR VEHICLE

Donating your vehicle (car, truck, van, SUV, or boat) to Schoke JFS is a great way to support our work. Proceeds from the sale help us provide services to our clients.

Free Pick-Up! Tax Deduction!
We accept vehicles in any condition!



SEND A TRIBUTE CARD

Send a tribute card in memory or in honor of a family member, friend or colleague, or to celebrate a special event.

THANK YOU

to our corporate sponsors who have continue to support our mission during these unprecedented times.

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Just go online to www.ctjfs.org/supportus
or call 203-921-4161



Be a Friend to Schoke JFS!



During these challenging times of the Coronavirus pandemic, Schoke JFS is counting on our generous donors to continue their support of our Annual Friends Campaign.

Your gift allows us to continue providing programs and services to thousands of people in our community who turn to us in need – especially this year!

To make your tax-deductible donation, please return the enclosed envelope, call our office at 203-921-4161 or donate online at www.ctjfs.org

Thank you for being part of the Schoke JFS Family!

Schoke JFS THANKS

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