



# SHERUT

## Kindness becomes powerful when it's shared. *At JCFS, volunteers turn compassion into real-world impact.*

### The Benefits of Volunteering with JCFS Winnipeg

Volunteering with JCFS is a meaningful way to give back—while gaining something in return. JCFS offers opportunities for people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds to get involved in ways that fit their interests and schedules. Volunteers share their expertise as guest presenters, support conversation and language circles with newcomers, serve as friendly visitors to reduce isolation, help with food security initiatives such as food drives or community cooking nights, assist at events, or provide transportation and practical support. There are so many opportunities!

Beyond the impact on others, volunteering offers proven health and mental well-being benefits. Statistics Canada reports that people who volunteer are significantly more likely to rate their mental health as excellent or very good compared to non-volunteers, reflecting lower stress levels, reduced isolation, and stronger feelings of purpose and belonging.

Volunteering together also strengthens families. Studies

show that children and youth who volunteer with parents or caregivers are more likely to develop empathy, social responsibility, and long-term civic engagement, while families report stronger connections and shared meaning through giving back.

One recent example highlights the power of volunteer involvement. A retired teacher volunteered with a JCFS conversation circle, meeting with newcomers to practice English and build confidence. What began as language support quickly became a trusted connection—helping participants navigate daily life, reduce isolation, and feel more at home in Winnipeg. This teacher decided to stay-on as a friendly visitor for JCFS!

**Come  
volunteer  
with us!**

As one non-Jewish volunteer shared, *"I wanted to show up in a real way for the Jewish community. Volunteering at JCFS gave me a chance to build relationships, learn, and stand in solidarity through action."*

At JCFS, volunteers are valued partners in strengthening community. To learn more, connect with us at **204-477-7430** or e-mail us at [jcfs@jcsfwinnipeg.org](mailto:jcfs@jcsfwinnipeg.org)

**פסח**  
**PASSOVER**  
**ASSISTANCE**  
**MA'OT CHITIM**

*"LET ALL WHO ARE HUNGRY, COME AND EAT."  
(Haggadah)*

**Donate today and help everyone enjoy Passover!**  
Please call 204.477.7430 or visit [www.jcfswinnipeg.org](http://www.jcfswinnipeg.org)

## A Message from Our Executive Director & CEO



As Passover approaches, we reflect on the timeless messages of freedom, resilience, and responsibility to one another. The last few years have been a stark reminder of Jewish resilience as the Passover Haggadah reminds us in the *Ve-hi sheh'amdah*: "... in every single generation people rise up to destroy us – BUT THE HOLY ONE SAVES US FROM THEIR HANDS."

Our connection to the Exodus is our perennial gift of freedom... "In every generation, each person must see themselves as if they personally went out of Egypt."

In true Jewish fashion, we are never an island. We sing "*Dayenu*" in the plural not singular, because we are nothing if we fail to consider the whole community.

These powerful and timeless teachings are a call to action. We are asked to recognize both the hopes and the struggles within our community. We must not only to remember the journey from slavery to freedom over 3,000 years ago, but to recognize the struggles that enslave others around us today. We are called upon to remove our blinders and open our eyes and hearts to those trapped by poverty, loneliness, trauma, illness, addiction, and more, to respond with compassion and action.

In our community, many continue to face financial pressures and even poverty, social isolation, physical and mental health challenges. At Jewish Child and Family Service Winnipeg, we see these realities every day, and witness extraordinary strength.

Through the dedication of our staff, the compassion of our volunteers, and the generosity of our supporters, JCFS continues to provide vital care for seniors, support for newcomers building new lives, and compassionate mental health services, empowering addiction supports, and more, for those who need it most. Our community is their community.

Whether delivering Passover food care packages, offering counselling, assisting families in crisis, or helping newcomers find connection and stability, our JCFS community continues to stand beside those who need support.

Our work is only possible because of the incredible people who make up JCFS, our staff, the Board, volunteers, donors, and partners like you, who demonstrate every day that compassion and resilience can transform lives.

This Passover, may we be reminded that resilience grows through community. Together, we continue the sacred work of supporting and uplifting one another. Together we are stronger.

Chag Pesach Sameach from all of us at JCFS Winnipeg.

**Al Benarroch**  
President & CEO

## A Message from Our Chair



Passover gathers us, around the Seder table, around memory, and around the understanding that our lives are bound to one another. It asks us to remember who we are, where we came from, and what it means to care for our people.

For many families, it is the most anticipated time of year: a table set with intention, children asking questions, the familiar taste of tradition, and moments of laughter that connect us to generations before us. Passover reminds us that freedom is not only a story from the past but something we nurture today through compassion, solidarity, and care.

At Jewish Child and Family Service Winnipeg, that care takes many forms. In the weeks leading up to the holiday, Passover baskets are prepared and delivered to more than 170 families. JCFS also provides financial assistance so individuals can attend a community Seder, ensuring everyone can celebrate with dignity and belonging.

Throughout the year, JCFS responds to the evolving needs of our community. Our Settlement and Integration Program now includes an Israeli Newcomer Support Worker helping families navigate housing, employment, and life in Winnipeg. JCFS partnered with local synagogues to host Serenity Shabbat, raising awareness about addiction and encouraging open conversations about mental health and recovery. Our Older Adult Services Team continues to support seniors with care and connection, while our Child Welfare Team works tirelessly to help families grow, heal, and thrive.

This year, Passover carries an added layer of emotion. Many in our community live with constant worry for loved ones in Israel. I know this feeling personally — mornings begin with checking messages, evenings stretch late waiting for news. It is exhausting, and it becomes part of daily life.

To those who carry this worry, please know you are not alone. If you need support, conversation, or company for the holiday, reach out. JCFS is here. Community means walking through these chapters together.

The story of Passover reminds us that freedom was never achieved alone. It was built through shared responsibility, courage, and care for the vulnerable. That same spirit lives in our community today. Every act of kindness, every hour of service, every contribution that helps someone feel less alone strengthens Jewish life in Winnipeg.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, thank you to our dedicated staff, volunteers, donors, and partners who carry this work forward. Through your compassion and commitment, you ensure that support, dignity, and belonging remain real for so many.

Wishing you and your families a meaningful Passover filled with strength, connection, and hope.

Chag Pesach Sameach.

**Elena Grinshteyn**  
Chair, Jewish Child and Family Service's Board of Directors



JEWISH CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICE  
Strengthening Lives in Keeping with Jewish Values

JCFS is located on Treaty 1 Territory, the ancestral lands of the Anishinaabe, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, Dene People, and the homeland of the Métis Peoples.

We respect the spirit and intent of these treaties, and remain committed to working with Indigenous and Métis partners in the spirit of truth, reconciliation, and collaboration.



# JCFS: Bringing Color to Winter Blues!



The JCFS yearly fundraiser Comedy For A Cause in support of the Settlement and Integration Program was a huge success!



Thanks to the Jewish Foundation of Manitoba, we hosted an incredible Jewish Wellness Book Club for a second consecutive year.



Childwelfare Booth - Domestic Violence Month Our incredible Child Welfare Staff, along with Jay Rodgers, CEO (General Authority), and Thomas Ens, Program and Leading Practice Specialist (General Authority). This team is committed to supporting victims of domestic violence, along with providing vital public outreach on this topic.

JCFS brings colour to the winter blues by filling the season with connection, warmth, and meaningful moments. Throughout the winter months, our team has been busy creating programs and experiences that uplift, support, and brighten our community, proving that even in the coldest season, there is so much warmth to be found when we come together.

**These winter moments highlight the power of community connection when cold days meet warm hearts.**

LIMITED EDITION PASSOVER TRIBUTE CARDS

## Another meaningful way to support JCFS: send a Passover greeting card.

**Call or visit:**

- 204.477.7430
- [www.jcfswinnipeg.org](http://www.jcfswinnipeg.org)

**Scan the QR code or go to:**

[bit.ly/4cWg1TZ](https://bit.ly/4cWg1TZ)

*Get a printed pack of 3 beautiful designs or call our office if you want to order a personalized e-card. Order them today!*

#JCFSCARES



An "EXCEL"ent advanced Program for our JCFS Newcomers presented by Ori Rahima.



Women's Philanthropy dropping off a very generous donation to our JCFS Pantry.

## Community Program Supports Newcomer Seniors in Strengthening Mental Well-Being

Our JCFS mental health initiative successfully completed its third cycle of "Health and Harmony" group sessions designed specifically for newcomer seniors, helping them adjust to their new environment while supporting their emotional well-being. The program was facilitated by OAS department social worker Margarita Iskijaev, BSW, MSW, RSW, with valuable support from our Settlement and Integration worker Anna Schoichet. Together, our collaboration created a warm, welcoming, and culturally sensitive space for older newcomers to connect and grow.

Across all three circles, the program reached about 35 participants, with 8 newcomers taking part in the final group. Each 90-minute session focused on key themes such as emotional awareness, healthy living, stress management, and creative expression.

Participants engaged in activities including interactive



icebreakers, the "Tree of Life" creative project, educational discussions on the relationship between physical and psychological health, breathing and relaxation techniques, and elements of art therapy. These sessions were designed not only to teach helpful coping strategies but also to support cultural adjustment, emotional expression, and social bonding.

Feedback from participants highlighted improved mood, a stronger sense of belonging, and reduced feelings of isolation. Many newcomers expressed that the group helped them feel more at home, offering a safe place to share experiences and connect with others facing similar transitions.

The program's growing impact demonstrates the importance of community-based mental-health initiatives in helping newcomer seniors build resilience, confidence, and meaningful social connections in their new surroundings.

— Margarita Iskijaev, BSW, MSW, RSW

# Off We Grow!

*At JCFS, we always love talented individuals that make a difference in our community!*



Let us introduce Sherry Phillips! Sherry is thrilled to join the JFS team in Older Adult Services. She recently earned her Master of Social Work from the University of Manitoba, where her academic interests and practicum experience centered on aging and older adults. She brings valuable hands-on experience supporting older adults through her field placements at Deer Lodge Centre, Extencicare Oakview Place, and most recently at Victoria Hospital.

Sherry feels honored to step into this role and looks forward to supporting and advocating alongside older adults living in the community.



Meet Mishelle Osmanov, our incredible Israeli worker whose experience, compassion, and dedication shine through in everything she does. With a strong background in community support and hands-on work with families, Mishelle brings a unique blend of professionalism, warmth, and cultural insight to JCFS. She connects with clients in a way that makes them feel seen, supported, and understood, and her ability to navigate complex situations with calm and care is truly remarkable.

We're so grateful to have Mishelle on our team, strengthening our community one relationship at a time.



Please join us in congratulating Daniel Gall on his new role as Child Protection Worker with the Child Welfare Team! Daniel joined the team in March. Daniel previously served as a Support Worker supporting clients in the Mental Health and Addictions and Child Welfare teams. Known for his patience, kindness, and diligence, we are excited to see him grow in this role. Welcome, Daniel!

## JCFS Generously Funded by:



**And the support of people like YOU!  
Community for Community.  
Thank YOU!**

# THIS IS US! OUR JCFS FAMILY, AND YOURS TOO!



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