

pated in the authorship of *Shalom Bayit* (Russ et al., 1993), a publication that provides the national Jewish community with an understanding of domestic violence and child abuse as it relates to Jewish families.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAMS IN THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

Domestic violence programs exist nationwide, ranging from small grassroots networks to sophisticated, comprehensive programs. There are also many Jewish programs nationwide that offer a variety of services to battered women and their children. The range of services offered by these Jewish programs vary dramatically from state to state. Most programs are under the auspices of Jewish Family Service and are located in areas with large Jewish populations. JFS agencies that offer extensive programming in this area include JFCS, Minneapolis; JBFCS, New York; JFS of Atlantic County, New Jersey; JFS, San Francisco; JFS, Atlanta, and JFS, Detroit. In Canada, JF&CS of Toronto advertises its services to battered women and their children in separate brochures in English, Hebrew, and Russian. However, there exist almost no specifically Jewish programs in rural areas.

Specialized JFS programs range from a part-time staff person to full-service domestic violence programs that include counseling centers, emergency shelters, and transitional housing programs. There are several 24-hour crisis lines that can refer Jewish women to programs across the nation. Funding for sectarian programs is difficult to obtain and usually comes from individual donations and Jewish grant-making organizations. Funding for programs under the auspices of Jewish agencies that offer multicultural, nonsectarian services have had greater success in obtaining government and private foundation monies. The nonsectarian programs tend to be larger and to offer a wider range of services; they are usually located in large cities.

Domestic violence programs (as all social service programs) are chronically underfunded and unable to serve everyone in need. They are subject to the availability of funds, which can change dramatically from year to year. We opened Tamar House with a two-year grant from the State of California encouraging the establishment of new shelters. As the two years are coming to an end, funding may not continue at its present level, and we, along with other programs, will be seeking other forms of support for the program.

Staff members of Jewish agencies need to educate themselves about domestic violence as it exists in the Jewish community and to encourage their respective agencies to reach out to Jewish women experiencing violence. They need to build networks and relationships with domestic violence programs that can provide the full range of services that women and their children need. Agency staff should also offer to participate on multicultural panels and to offer in-service training to battered women's programs designed to sensitize them to the special needs of Jewish battered women.

Finally, to maximize the use of already existing service providers, Jewish agencies should consider the establishment of a national network. This network would greatly increase our ability to share programs and to make accessible quality comprehensive services for the women and children we are all committed to serve.

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LEONARD'S LEGACY Innovative Ventures in Serving Jews with Disabilities

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Innovative and creative service strategies are needed to respond to an aging cohort of disabled adults at a time when public and Federation resources are severely limited. Such strategies should be guided by concepts of choice and inclusion.

Because this special issue of the *Journal* is commemorating twenty-five years of leadership by the Association of Jewish Family and Children's Agencies, we begin by recognizing the pioneering role that the AJFCA and its member agencies have played in initiating and supporting intellectual exchanges about services to people with disabilities among service providers of all sizes throughout North America. In February 1995, the four co-authors of this article met at a historic enclave sponsored by AJFCA entitled "Serving the Needs of the Developmentally Disabled: New Challenges for the Jewish Community." The first major conference of Jewish agency providers of service to the developmentally disabled in North America, it sought to address the full range of issues relating to serving Jews with special needs.

The keynote speaker and scholar-in-residence of the conference was Jack Yates, Director of Staff Development of the Southeast region of Massachusetts and a protege of Wolf Wolfensberger, a recognized leader in the field of serving persons with disabilities. During his presentation, Yates reflected on the death and life of an individual who was a

human being first and a person with a disability second. Mr. Yates recalled the rabbi who delivered the eulogy for "Leonard," a young, intellectually disabled man from Sharon, Massachusetts; the eulogy focused on Leonard's "contribution and dedication and on his calling to assert the rights of persons with disabilities into which he had been cast in his life." The rabbi spoke of Leonard's attendance at Sabbath services and his steady service to the Jewish Community Center and its activities, and he described Leonard not only as a good man but as a good Jew. Leonard's fidelity to his Jewishness, the rabbi said, was manifest in his service as an activist for justice. Mr. Yates asserted his belief that the essence of being a member of a "chosen people" is not that Jews may have been chosen by G-d, but that Jews have indeed been chosen by history to play roles of moral responsibility for justice and for community.

The fact that Leonard "had not lived to see the achievement of justice and community," he asserted, "did not diminish his contribution, and the fact that we may not live to see those achievements does not diminish the worth of his example to us. In the words of

Ethics of Our Fathers, "It is not your duty to complete the task, but neither are you free to desist from it" (*Pirke Avot* 2:21)."

The following three case examples illustrate some of the many efforts in the field of disabilities of Jewish Family Service (JFS) agencies that Leonard did not live to see. Yet, they serve as his legacy and our collective hope for the future.

I. CENTRAL MARYLAND'S EXPERIENCES WITH INCREASING SERVICES IN THE FACE OF DIMINISHING RESOURCES

JFS of Central Maryland focuses its services for people with disabilities and their families on developing individualized options for supported independent living.

Residential Care

In Maryland, government funding for community-based services for people with mental retardation and other developmental disabilities peaked in the mid-1980s. Since then, the competition for entry into the publicly funded residential service system has become intense, and resources have become tighter. As of this writing, the only way to receive public funding for residential services is to demonstrate that the disabled individual is homeless or in immediate physical danger due to disability. This is rarely the case within the Jewish community, and family members who have cared for disabled children and siblings through a long lifetime need help to be able to think differently and act decisively to help ensure a future of inclusion and dignity for their family member.

Traditionally, residential services were designed around a home or particular service model to meet the needs of a group of people who share a disability label. This "one size fits all" approach to residential programming is difficult and expensive for many people with disabilities. When meals, social and recreational activities, and staffing patterns are dictated by the needs of the group, noncompliance and emotional and behavioral problems

can be exacerbated. And while group homes may be the preference of many families who perceive security and stability in them, they are a prohibitively expensive option for most people, for which public funding is received in only the most dire situations of extreme crisis and severe disability.

Personal Futures Planning

After meeting with parents and involved facility members, JFS engages the disabled individual and members of her or his support system in a Personal Futures Planning Process. Based on the work of John O'Brien and colleagues at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, and widely used nationally, Personal Futures Planning helps the disabled person and those most intimately involved in that person's life to envision a life plan and outline a way to reach it. A Personal Futures Plan builds on the strengths and informed preferences of the disabled individual and the natural supports available through the family, Jewish community, generic social and medical services, and specialized disability-related funding.

Most of the people with whom we work have clear ideas and preferences about where they wish to live, with whom, and the extent and type of family, community, and religious involvement they would like. Some disabled individuals have little experience with choice-making and need a great deal of family and staff assistance to come up with a realistic plan. And like all of us, disabled individuals often have to make difficult compromises to live within financial restrictions and the limitations imposed by access to transportation, work or day programs, and the availability of affordable housing or roommates who share important lifestyle preferences, such as observing *kashrut*. But our experience has demonstrated that supports and services are most successful when disabled adults have an integral role in designing their services, and when their control is maximized.

After the development of the Personal Futures Plan, JFS staff work to secure staffing and other resources and to help find

housemates when possible. Consistent with our commitment to choice, disabled individuals screen their own direct support staff. Each service plan is documented along with all associated costs, and as many costs as possible are offset by public and other funding sources. Without Federation subsidy available for direct service, we work directly with families to contribute to the cost of services that are not otherwise supported. Sometimes, these costs can be lowered by living with another person with whom services can be shared. Other families begin by having direct supports in the family home, and postpone apartment living (and its associated costs) as long as possible.

Illustrations of Successes

We have helped community members to obtain some very creative and successful living arrangements in this manner. In her Personal Futures Plan, a young woman with cerebral palsy, cognitive limitations, and a severe visual impairment clearly expressed her desire to live close to her volunteer job with a nondisabled housemate. The agency helped her find people to share her apartment who would offer her some personal assistance services in lieu of paying rent. State funding helps with services while her family has helped finance the larger apartment needed.

Another creative living situation involves one person with state funding (a gentleman with a mental illness, a developmental disability, and a significant sensory impairment) and another man who has Down's syndrome and no state funding. By pooling resources, both men have created a viable household and provide each other with valued friendship.

Through this planning process, we have also helped a third man find a Boarding situation in the home of a widower who rents out rooms and is paid to provide limited support and training. This situation has allowed the disabled individual to stay within the Orthodox community and be close to the community institutions that are critical to him. As one who has never identified himself as a person with a disability, he is now able to receive supports without what he would con-

sider to be the stigma of being in a residential program.

The Future

The approach presented above is slowly gaining ground in the Central Maryland community as one of the new, flexible, and creative options needed to respond to an aging cohort of disabled adults and severely limited public and Federation resources. Much work is needed with families to help them become full partners in helping their family members move into a secure future of choice and inclusion. Baltimore JFS currently serves about twenty individuals in this manner, and we predict significant growth in this area over the next year.

II. PROGRAMS FOR SENIORS WITH DISABILITIES

The Case of Miriam Home and Services, a Para-Public Montreal Jewish Agency

Over the past twenty years, Miriam Home and Services' vocational programs have developed a full gamut of day services for its adult population. Regardless of intellectual, physical, or behavioral needs, clients are provided work opportunities in a supported employment program, an enclave employment program, and a sheltered workshop, and activities are provided in an Adult Community Training Program.

Equal access to services and better health care had increased our clients' life expectancy to mirror that of the general population. However, the agency did not fully appreciate this changing dynamic until about five years ago, when we reviewed our client population and discovered the obvious: More than 65 percent of our client-workers were over 35 years old and a third of that group was over 50 years old! It was also noted that the general interest and ability to work of the older group were on the wane.

The initial data clearly underlined the need for retirement programming for disabled senior adults. We thus initiated a planning process to determine our values and vision,

the target population, the available resources in the community, program development needs, and potential partnerships.

Development Phase: How the Program Evolved

In 1993, after researching and assessing the needs of older disabled adults, the Seniors Retirement Program was developed and its mission articulated: to promote the social inclusion of seniors (aged 50 + years old) in existing community day programs. We tested the willingness of such community centers to accept and serve our clients, and four clients were referred to the appropriate centers. However, the process of inclusion was slow, and the centers that did accept our clients gave only limited service.

After months of trying to make the system work for our clients, we decided that it was not realistic to integrate our seniors totally into community programs on a five day per week basis. Based on this experience the agency negotiated an agreement with a non-Jewish senior drop-in center, the New Hope Center, whereby they would give us free space for two days a week in return for our operating a program for our clients and some of their members. The program began in the spring of 1993, and within a few months we were serving ten people and the demands were ever increasing!

Our goals for 1994 were to continue the development of the program and to move the activities into the Jewish community. Miriam Home approached another Jewish agency that provides work opportunities to people with intellectual disabilities, Jewish Vocational Services. There we found a group of future retirees who were also fearful of retirement and needed to prepare for it. By the spring we together identified a total of twenty-two people who required either a seniors or pre-retirement program. Miriam Home then approached other Jewish agencies and, with the support of Jewish Vocational Services and the Golden Age Association, a Jewish senior center, presented the identified needs and specific program proposals to the Montreal Jewish Fed-

eration.

As a result of this meeting the Golden Age Association approved a three-month pilot project, the "Pre-retirement Leisure Education Program" and Federation supported the notion of including a Supported Retirement Program in the heart of the community. Within three months Federation found space in a Jewish seniors' housing project for the Supported Retirement Program.

By the fall of 1994, Miriam Home and Services had successfully completed its pre-retirement pilot project and received approval to continue offering it at the Golden Age Association. We also relocated our part time seniors' retirement program from the New Hope Center to the Jewish housing project in the heart of the community. The program immediately increased from two to five days a week.

Toward True Partnerships—A Joint Venture Emerges

By 1995, the desirability of consolidating the two programs—the pre-retirement planning program and the supported retirement program—became clear. Both programs have since operated continuously throughout the year, providing services to twenty-two people with the help of six volunteers who ran various activities, such as a knitting circle, cooking club, and community coffee activity.

After operating the Supported Retirement Program on a full-time basis for six months, we became aware that the program was actually providing services to two distinct groups of participants. The first group comprised high-functioning intellectually challenged people, who with minimal support could conduct themselves through the rigors of daily living and be easily integrated into community programs. The second group was made up of people who for reasons of health or behavior problems could not be integrated into other day programs and required constant supervision. With this realization, we conceptualized two programs that would best respond to the needs of seniors.

Recognizing that our goal of meeting the

needs of disabled older adults would only be enhanced by seeking service partners in the Jewish community, we approached the YM-YWHA (Y), which has a long history of special needs programming, to develop and to offer a half-day seniors program. The program was highly successful and subsequently has since been offered on a continuous basis. We also enlisted the support of a school commission to provide a six-month literacy program.

Happily, this past year two crucial pieces to the program puzzle were finally resolved: finding appropriate space for the Supported Retirement Program and working out the most effective structure with which to staff the programs. The Miriam Home, through the generosity of the community, has purchased and renovated a new building that will house the 40,000 square ft. Lori Black Community Center for people with disabilities. With its opening in 1997, Miriam Home will have achieved a full continuum of programming for older disabled adults.

With regard to staffing, the Miriam Home has now outsourced the management and staffing of the seniors programs to the Y, thereby solidifying a special strategic relationship with a sister agency. This arrangement with the Y is advantageous for the following reasons:

- It is more cost effective.
- It improves the quality of the programs, as the Y is the accepted expert in leisure activities.
- It increases the involvement of the Y in providing services to people with disabilities, therefore increasing their commitment to the population.
- It increases Miriam Home's access to facilities.
- It increases the possibilities for social inclusion of disabled older adults.

Lessons Learned

In 1997 we look forward to the successful implementation of the continuum and the progressive growth of the programs and of our

new partnerships. During the five years of the development process we learned that not being rigid with plans, but rather being open to evolving situations, brings success. We also discovered that such success requires honesty, openness, teamwork, acceptance of change and *chutzpah*.

While appearing at times to be reactive to situations, we were in fact eclectically planful and were always guided by the needs of clients, the realities that presented themselves, and realistic goals. Due to this openness we established positive partnerships with many sister agencies who probably are not aware of how important their support has been in making things happen. This experience has taught us that success is not based on what you can do, but on who you can do it with—PARTNERSHIP!

III. THE EVOLUTION OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR ATLANTA JEWS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

The Atlanta Jewish Federation initiated a long-range planning process in 1987 called the "Year 2000." One of its findings was a great need for developmental disability services. In response to this need, the Atlanta Jewish Federation created a Coordinated Network of Services for Persons With Developmental Disabilities. Through coordination, cooperation, and collaboration among the Jewish agencies in Atlanta and several nonsectarian disability providers, there has been an incredible growth in services to this population. Overall coordination is provided by Jewish Family Services (JFS) as the lead agency. JFS also provides information in response to telephone inquiries about services for persons with developmental disabilities. Counseling is another service available to persons with developmental disabilities; this support is also available for family members who need help with the stress of caring for a disabled family member.

Services Developed

Programs developed through cooperative efforts include an independent living program

acquired from another service provider in Atlanta and a respite program developed as part of a seven-agency cooperative.

In the independent living program, independent living skills are taught by professional consultants in the participant's own apartment or condominium. Participants are assisted in finding an appropriate roommate and living site. This program emphasizes choice and options for service and the need for full community inclusion. The general community benefits when there is true integration of people with disabilities in the community. Elimination of disability ghettos (large clusters of people with disabilities living in one area) is as important to the community as it is to families and participants.

JFS provides two types of respite service: in-home and host-family. The family chooses the option that best meets its needs and then selects a provider from a list of approved JFS providers.

The most recent service initiated by JFS is known as "JETS" Transportation Service, which is a multifaceted service available also to elderly clients of the agency. JFS provides rides to and from work, medical appointments, and social and recreational outings. There is a fee for this service.

JFS also provides program and fiscal resource support to the Atlanta Jewish Community Center and Jewish Educational Service to ensure cooperation, communication, and coordination among the communal agencies in the area of service to people with disabilities. Although JFS has worked closely with Jewish Vocational Service throughout the existence of the Coordinated Network, a recent merger of the two agencies into Jewish Family and Career Services (JF&CS) will strengthen the bond even further.

Other Services

- Support to the Atlanta Jewish Community Center (AJCC): The AJCC sponsors several programs that serve disabled individuals of all age groups. Another service is alternative facility-based respite care. Quality respite care is provided on week-

ends for developmentally disabled children and young adults to give parents time for themselves. One of the newest programs is Unified Sports, in which players with and without disabilities participate. There is also a recreational group for children with developmental disabilities that meets once each month. Other services include cultural arts activities; Camp Barney Medintz; Amit, a Sunday school for children aged 9 to 13 with learning or developmental disabilities; and adult education.

- Support to the Jewish Vocational Service: Now part of the expanded JF&CS, the agency provides several services, including vocational counseling and placement for people with disabilities preparing for employment; supported employment, which provides a job coach on a time-limited basis; and disability awareness consultation, a structured training program designed to increase the sensitivity of people in their interactions with persons with disabilities.
- Collaboration with the Jewish Educational Services (JES): JES acts as a referral source for resources in the community for children who learn differently. Parents receive assistance in their quest to obtain an appropriate Jewish education for their children.

THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF TOMORROW

The North American Jewish community possesses a wealth of talent and expertise. The AJFCA family alone comprises over 145 member agencies throughout Canada and the United States. Whereas the contributors to this article all come from "Group A" agencies (agencies in communities with a Jewish population of over 45,000), a survey conducted by AJFCA in 1996 found that successful residential programs have been developed across the continent in communities with as few as 12,000 Jews (Ottawa, Ontario), by generic JFSs such as the ones in Cleveland and Seattle and by specialized agencies, both large (OHEL,

New York City; Jewish Foundation for Group Homes, Washington, D.C.) and small (Shalom House, Plantation, Florida). In fact, in several communities such as Atlanta and Montreal there are both JFS-run programs and privately organized initiatives.

Most of the specialized agencies grew from the concern of Jewish families who have been unable to obtain support from the organized community necessary to meet the needs of their sons and daughters with disabilities. The history of Shalom House in Plantation, Florida is illustrative. Judith Gordon, mother of a 38-year-old daughter with a disability, experienced both the frustrations and the joy in establishing a community residence for five adults in their mid-thirties to mid-forties. Unable to this day to obtain regular assistance from the local Federation or its agencies, this home, like many others, operates on the contributions of family members, client revenue, and, occasionally, donations. Five years in operation, Shalom House residents attend work programs by day and participate in a local temple on Sabbath and holidays. Since most of the families have put into place trust funds, the future needs of the residents of this home are secure. When queried as to what advice she would give other families in need, Gordon indicated that starting off in a JFS partnership would be most useful.

Both the legislative (on the state and federal level) and professional approaches toward serving the population with disabilities call for the least restrictive environments that offer maximum choices and opportunities and thus the most normalizing residential, vocational, and recreational opportunities. For most persons with disabilities, this means community integration in all aspects of life. According to Janice Frey-Angel, Executive Director of the JFCS in Portland, Oregon (Jewish population of 14,000), more time is being spent in committees and at the Board level grappling with ways to be inclusive of Jews with disabilities in the planning and organization of service priorities.

For many communities, it is probably the issue of funding by government instead of by local Federations that has been the foremost determinant of the sectarian or nonsectarian character of our agencies. Communities must make deliberate and planful choices by assuring that Federations and JFSs (as well as other strategic partners) commit themselves to joint planning in order to meet the needs of a frequently-overlooked segment of our community. As an international association, the AJFCA must continue to take the leadership in ensuring the development of continental policies for this population so that uniquely Jewish service issues will be addressed most effectively. These issues, ranging from the more obvious ones as *kashrut* and Sabbath and holiday practices to the more complex ones such as matters relating to sexuality and to moral choices, ought to be addressed continentally from both the Jewish ethical and the social service professional perspectives.

Especially as the population of people with disabilities ages—that is, as the number of disabled persons grows in size and complexity-of-need, as government resources shrink, and as elderly parents find that they are no longer able to manage the caregiving themselves—new and increasingly creative solutions must be sought. As a first step, we must merge our heretofore distinct areas of expertise in serving the elderly, for which Jewish Family Service agencies already have a superb reputation, with our newer efforts in serving people with disabilities.

Effective long-range community planning with our JFSs at the helm must be undertaken without delay in order to maximize our communities' limited fiscal resources. These challenges, effectively converted into opportunities, will allow our agencies to develop strategies that innovatively tap into existing public resources, work with other community providers, and concurrently build up equity through careful and creative trusts and estate planning with the families of our clientele.