

picture has become a complicated mosaic.

Federations themselves have begun to recognize that the annual campaign, as vital as it is, cannot serve as the be-all and end-all of funding. The dramatic increase in endowment funds among Federations bodes well for creative thinking about new approaches. As allocations to agencies have leveled off, the agencies have begun to test the waters of independent fund raising. This activity has set off alarm bells in Federations, which are concerned about the need to protect the annual campaign.

This is an appropriate time to face the issue of multiple campaign activity. It is possible that we can now explore a third source of financing of the Jewish communal enterprise, in addition to annual campaign and endowment funds. Instead of the current helter-skelter approach in many communities, a carefully planned and designed set of activities for agencies to raise funds might prove to be an answer. Federation can offer its expertise to agencies in developing appropriate programs that will strengthen the community's financial capacity. Collaboration rather than competition could avoid the dangers of confusing donors and supporters.

Pressed by fiscal demands, some Federations are considering new budgeting devices as a way out of the financial dilemma. These new approaches raise the basic issue of the social contract. The agencies represent the community expression of caring; they must be part of the communal enterprise, not simply service-delivery mechanisms. If there are changing priorities emerging in Jewish life, they should be addressed through the commu-

nity planning process where changes can be made on a rational and planned basis. This will strengthen the system and not alienate vital segments of the community.

CONCLUSION

Pluralism in Jewish life is our strength and a source of strengthened commitment. There are so many different ways in which our people can express their membership in the Jewish community, and all can lead to constructive involvement. There is no one answer to strength and continuity. Our "father's house" has many rooms, and we can dwell in them together.

In the final analysis, we must enter the twenty-first century with a mobilization of the wisdom and know-how acquired in the twentieth century. The past century has tested the capacity of the Jewish community of North America, and it has measured up to the challenges. We have every confidence that we can move forward toward the fulfillment of the prophet Joel's promise of the future, building the kind of community in which "your old people shall dream dreams and your young people shall see visions."

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INTERAGENCY AND MULTIDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION A Win-Win Strategy

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Intra- and interinstitutional collaboration is of great importance in an era of shrinking resources. Social workers and educators bring different and complementary skills to Jewish family education, and a team effort would enhance such programs. The outcome of such a collaborative effort is a strengthening of our agencies, disciplines, and in turn the Jewish family.

The unique challenge to all concerned with the future of American Judaism and of the American Jewish family is how to best join our professional resources to provide a broad menu of creative, welcoming, informative, and helpful services to our community. Our clear mandate for the twenty-first century is to address the ways in which such collaboration can enhance our ability to serve the Jewish community and the Jewish family.

The challenge of how to intensify the Jewish identity, behavior, education, and continuity of children, adults, and families does not involve only one profession or one institution within the Jewish community. It requires all of us. Those now working in the field of Jewish family education have come from many disciplines, including social work, education, communal service, and the rabbinate.

Some of our institutional settings such as synagogues already include within them a wide range of professionals. In such settings, there are natural capacities to meet with colleagues with diverse skills and perspectives. In other more homogeneous settings such as day schools, where everyone has had similar training, we must intentionally create opportunities to meet with prospective partners in other institutions.

We should not minimize the difficulties of either intra- or inter-institutional professional collaboration. We each have professional orientations and languages that give us a particular focus. In addition, our institutions

have their own missions and interests. Sometimes we find ourselves guarding that turf. Sometimes we compete for limited dollars. In an era of shrinking resources, we all struggle with smaller staffs, fewer dollars, and greater demands.

All the more important, then, that we as professionals find ways in which to join with one another to advance the work that is to be done.

This article focuses on inter-disciplinary collaboration between educators and social workers as a model for discussing collaboration in general. It examines the Jewish Family Service agency—not a traditional educational setting, but one with a long record of working with the Jewish family in variety of modalities—and how its staff of social workers and family educators work as partners in the field of Jewish family education. The article explores commonalities and differences among educators and social workers linked to training and mandate and what we bring to planning for the Jewish family. Collaboration itself is an area that requires "capacity building"—building the capacity both of individual professionals to understand one another's work and of institutions to create and share common goals. Therefore, the article also looks at training issues—not only how to work together but how to develop a common language with which to build programs and create services to serve our families.

SOCIAL WORKERS, EDUCATORS, AND JEWISH FAMILIES

Social workers and educators are natural partners in the field of Jewish family education. The main difference between them lies in their starting focus: Whereas Jewish family educators start with the "J" and see "Jewish" as their focus, Jewish Family Service workers start with the "F" and see "family" as theirs. The educational goal of educators, whether in synagogues or in schools, is an increase in the Jewishness of families. In contrast, the social work goal of a Jewish Family Service program is to meet the needs of the family—but, except for specifically designated programs, not necessarily to address the *Jewishness* of Jewish families.

Table 1 was developed at a think tank meeting of Bureau of Jewish Education community educators and Jewish Family Service family life education specialists at the 1996 Whizin Institute on "Reaching and Teaching the Jewish Family" in Los Angeles. It illustrates the skills different disciplines bring to the collaborative table and the complementary skills required to ensure that the collaboration will be successful.

Despite the different starting places, there are several synergies between the attributes of Jewish community educators and of Jewish Family Service professionals. The discussion of similarities at that think tank led to recommendations of partnered programs around interfaith issues, Jewish Lamaze and Jewish parenting, single-parent issues, and the Jewish life cycle.

We are, however, at the very beginning of understanding one another's institutions and vocabulary. Because of its complexity, it is important to understand the scope of Jewish Family Service programs in order to know how and where Jewish family education fits into its mandate.

Most Jewish Family Service agencies receive funding from United Way, government, and foundation grants, as well as from Jewish community sources. Therefore, those services that receive funding from non-Jewish sources must be nonsectarian, open to everyone who

applies and is qualified to receive the services. The receipt of nonsectarian funding differentiates JFS agencies from many potential partners, particularly synagogues, JCCs, and Bureau of Jewish Education.

FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION (FLE), JEWISH FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION (JFLE), AND JEWISH FAMILY EDUCATION (JFE): SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

Family Life Education (FLE) programs address issues of family life: Parenting, coping with change and loss, and managing stress. These programs are often funded by non-Jewish sources and are therefore open to everyone. They usually do not have a Jewish context or Jewish content, although Jewish or religious issues sometimes arise in discussion. Their focus is on *enhancing the quality of family life and providing families with skills for daily life*.

Jewish Family Life Education (JFLE) programs, in contrast, address *Jewishly related family issues*. Some JFLE programs provide the setting for Jews coping with similar issues to come together for support and education. Although the *context* of the group is Jewish, the content may or may not be. An example of this type of program is a separation and divorce program for Jewish participants. Offering this program in a Jewish agency can provide a greater level of comfort and familiarity for single Jews than a similar group in another, non-Jewish setting, such as a community center or YMCA.

Other JFLE programs may include Jewish content: for example, "How to Raise a Jewish Child" or a premarital program that uses Jewish texts to help explore issues of mutual respect, communication, sexuality, and intimacy in marriage. Even divorce and separation groups sometimes deal specifically with the changing responsibilities for Jewish ritual. Who lights the Shabbat candles in Dad's home? Who says Kiddush in Mom's? And what does Judaism say about the nature of the family? The focus of JFLE programs is on the *Jewish life of the family*.

Table 1. Collaboration in Jewish Family Education

| What Educators Bring to Collaboration with Jewish Family Service Agencies | What Jewish Family Service Workers Bring to Collaboration with Educators |
|--|--|
| Educational know-how and an educator's mind-set toward new learning | Understanding of family dynamics, social issues, and life-cycle issues and/or interpersonal and intra-personal issues |
| Judaic knowledge and a wide range of Judaic dimensions and disciplines | Experience with group dynamics |
| Direct contact and familiarity with congregations and families | A very broad understanding of diversity |
| | The ability to see people in the broad context of family, social, and professional environments; the understanding of systems, including family systems and the implications of change within a family |
| Awareness of communal needs outside of the Jewish Family Service sphere | The understanding of when an issue of family identity or life cycle touches deeper levels of feelings that may require other forms of help, i.e. a therapeutic intervention |
| Wide access to people and academic institutions in the community | An ability to enter the world of others in a nonjudgmental way; an ability to help people make changes |
| Experience with institutional collaboration | A knowledge of community resources |
| | Experience with advocacy for clients |
| What Jewish Family Service Workers Need From Educators to Collaborate in Jewish Family Education | What Educators Need from Jewish Family Service Workers for Collaboration |
| Teaching methods and classroom techniques, especially with children | Clinical and developmental know-how regarding individuals, families, and groups |
| Judaic knowledge and resources | Experience with group process and skills as potential facilitators |
| A place for Jewish Family Service clients to affiliate, i.e. schools, synagogues, and JCCs | Sensitivity to ethnic and cultural aspects of Jewish identity |
| Families—a "captive audience" available in a school or synagogue setting | The social workers' systems approach and knowledge of Jewish community sociology and demography |
| | Knowledge of what to do if someone is in emotional trouble |
| | The JFS worker's inside-outside participant/observer perspective |
| | Network of national collaboration; grants know-how |
| | Experience in volunteer training and coordination |

Jewish Family Education (JFE) programs are usually offered, not by Jewish Family Service agencies, but rather by Jewish educators in school or synagogue settings. The JFE focus is on imparting Jewish content and on increasing Jewish behavior and Jewish observance. Programs may be multi-generational (parents and children together) or designed

for either parents or children, but the context of these educational programs is always the family. The focus of JFE programs is on the Jewish education of the family.

Jewish Family Life Education and Jewish Family Education, although similar in some ways, are very different from one another. Jewish Family Life Education (JFLE) programs begin with a life situation or experience; for example, adolescence or bereavement. These programs address behavior and values and may include some Jewish educational component. However, they are driven by the norms and values of social work. Although their desired outcomes may include imparting Jewish skills, behaviors, and values as tools for growing, learning, and coping, their primary intention is to understand the feelings and issues that arise as families or individuals cope with change.

Jewish Family Education (JFE), on the other hand, is driven by the norms and values of education. It begins with a Jewish experience—for example, *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*—and then deals with what a family needs to know Jewishly, as well as what might be family and developmental issues. Although dealing with the individual family's values may be a significant piece of the program, the bottom-line intention is that the family will acquire tangible Jewish knowledge. For example, whereas a JFLE program beginning with issues of adolescent development might use the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* experience as an example of a life-cycle milestone, a JFE program beginning with a focus on the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* might also introduce issues of adolescent development.

JFE and JFLE, similar in their goals of affecting behavior and creating and maintaining healthy Jewish families, differ in their emphases. These differences are clarified by the following examples using an education model, a social work model, and a combination of educational and social work models. In these examples, the participants are young teenagers and their parents.

1. *Social Work Model—Family Life Educa-*

tion program (FLE): This program offers parents or parents and teens an opportunity to explore adolescence as a gateway to adulthood and presents information about adolescent development within the family. Participants explore areas of growing independence during the teen years and the symbols of such independence; for example, driver's licenses, later curfews). Participants learn how to discuss these issues at home and analyze what would encourage and what might impede negotiations around adolescent independence (good grades? proven responsiveness to existing rules of curfew? attentiveness to family responsibilities?) Families leave the program with information and strategies for negotiating with adolescents in their own families.

2. *Education Model—Jewish Family Education (JFE):* Synagogues and schools often sponsor programs for *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* families. In a JFE approach, a year-long series of programs is offered for parents and *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* age students to enable them to learn together as families about the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* ceremony, and the Torah and Haftarah portions each child will be learning. They learn ways of maximizing family involvement with the child in Jewish learning. The JFE program also incorporates issues of adolescent development and family life passages to help parents and children develop a fuller understanding of what the family may experience during this period. The goal of such a program is to enable the pre-*Bar/Bat Mitzvah* family to experience this significant Jewish life-cycle passage more richly and knowledgeably.

3. *Social Worker/Educator Model—Jewish Family Life Education (JFLE):* A Jewish Family Life Education approach focuses on a particular kind of family—separated, divorced, or remarried—and examines their particular concerns. One such program in Los Angeles is "Celebration and Negotiation: How to Keep the

Battle Off the *Bima* (pulpit)." In conducting this program, the Jewish Family Service social worker must be knowledgeable about the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* service, but has as another primary task that of helping families resolve conflicts over who will attend, how honors will be dispersed between the two families, who will pay for what, how reception seating will be arranged, and how invitations will be worded while still keeping the *simcha* (celebration) central to the day.

Each of these programs represents a different approach. In Examples 2 and 3, the collaborative effort of a team of educators and social workers would be salutary. All team members would benefit from their combined expertise—the educators in Jewish content, teaching know-how, and programming expertise and the social workers in group process facilitation, the understanding of family systems, and sensitivity to issues of family diversity.

Both the JFE and JFLE programs described here have a great deal in common. Families are not the "subject" of the program, but are active participants. Both programs have built-in mechanisms to encourage families to explore values, make decisions, and effect change. And both underscore the importance of family. The difference lies in the goals: for JFE, to impart Jewish knowledge in the context of the family; for JFLE, to impart skills in coping as a family within a Jewish context.

The curriculum of the Jewish Family Life Education program, in particular, could be expanded to incorporate Jewish texts as examples for decision making, parenting, and responsibility toward children. A partnered leadership of social worker, Jewish educator, and, in some instances, rabbi, could expand how these programs address the needs of families within a Jewishly grounded curriculum.

**SOCIAL WORKERS AND JEWISH
FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION:
CAPACITY BUILDING**

Any program that proposes to train Jewish

Family Service workers in Jewish Family Education/Jewish Family Life Education must address many issues of Jewish knowledge.

Personal Issues around Jewish Identity

Personal journeys are a crucial part of our Jewish identities. Social workers specialize in journeys—in helping people tell and understand their stories. As most of them have chosen the field of social work, not necessarily Jewish social work, helping them relate their Jewish journeys to their professional work is part of "capacity building."

Social workers entering the field of Jewish Family Life education are often concerned about the weaknesses of their Jewish backgrounds. During a focus group discussion on working with interfaith families, several social workers in my agency expressed concern about their own lack of Jewish education. They worried that they would not have the appropriate background or knowledge to be helpful to their clients. Sometimes these issues overwhelm a social worker's sense of professional competence, highlighting what they don't know *as Jews*, rather than what they *do know* as clinicians. These feelings are shared by many members of the community. Many American Jews are highly capable, successful, and educated in the secular world, but still see themselves as children Jewishly; and this sense of childishness results in embarrassment and ultimately a great reluctance to be involved in Jewish life for fear that their lack of competency will be exposed.

How do we address the diverse levels of Jewish knowledge and experience of our workers? The reality is that many Jewish Family Service workers come from richly textured and knowledgeable Jewish backgrounds; that many, although lacking the teaching tools of Judaism, have experience in the practice of Judaism; and that many would (and do) eagerly participate in Jewishly based programs as long as they do not need to be the Jewish expert. Some staff members are personally observant; others are culturally or politically identified but non-religious. In fact, the range of Jewish knowledge and commitment among

Jewish Family Service staff varies as greatly as the level of group process skills and interest in working with adults and families varies among our educators.

As is discussed in the section on staffing, not all Jewish Family Service workers are suited to the work of Jewish Family Education. Our training programs give us an opportunity not only to train our staff but also to assess the interest, willingness, and ability of individual staff members to work in this methodology. We must remember to be above-board with our training goals: If we are training social workers to work with issues of Jewish content and Jewish identity, then we must say so and indicate in what settings these new skills might be used. Doing so not only defines the nature of the training goals but also helps workers conceptualize program goals, thereby giving them a greater sense of ownership in the Jewish programming in which they will be involved.

Professional Issues and Personal Values

In social work practice, a core issue is when and under what circumstances it is appropriate for social workers to be involved in value-laden and Jewish outcome-related work. Although quite comfortable with the value of preserving the family, clinical social workers are trained to avoid making judgments about the attitudes and behaviors of individuals and families. At times, this neutral stance may seem at odds with programs advocating for specific Jewish outcomes.

One goal of in-house training programs is to help social work staff explore both their training and attitudes regarding this stance and to help them envision professionally appropriate ways to move into Jewish advocacy programs. Respect for social work training, coupled with the opportunity for JFS professionals to participate in both defining and expanding the boundaries of Jewish programming within JFS, is crucial in that it enables the social work staff to become full partners in what for many is a new professional modality.

JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES AND JEWISH FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION: INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES INVOLVED IN COLLABORATION

Settings

In some clinical settings social worker *advocacy* for Jewish identification, growth, and outcome is not considered professionally acceptable. For example, if an interfaith couple comes to our agency for marital therapy, a clinical social worker providing therapy will raise issues of religious identification and other possible tension points in the relationship. The therapist will provide information and resources as appropriate, but must accept the clients' decisions regarding religious identification, whatever they are. The therapist's mandate is to be certain that they are *informed* decisions. Informed decisions may or may not result in positive Jewish choices, just as they may not result in positive choices for other aspects of the couple's relationship. The focus of the work in the clinical setting is on the health of the family and encouraging as much understanding and communication between spouses as is possible to help clarify their decision-making.

Similarly, a program on "How to Parent Your Preschooler" should deal with the role of ritual in transmitting family values. Rituals include everything from bedtime and dinner rituals to life-cycle and holiday celebrations. In such a setting, a Jewish family discussing their enjoyment of celebrating Christmas may well set off some feelings within the Jewish social worker, but it would not be appropriate for the social worker to express personal feelings in this setting. It is important that our agencies do not "bait and switch"—that is, offer parenting programs that are actually intended to be programs to promote Jewish identity.

In contrast to the above parenting program, a Jewish Family Service class on "How to Raise a Jewish Child" has the clear goal of reinforcing Jewish identity and participation. First, families attending such a program un-

derstand its purpose and stance. Second, the person facilitating such a program is seen not simply as a facilitator but as a role model—someone who *advocates* for the outcome of establishing a Jewish home. A discussion within this context of what it means for parents to celebrate Christmas would be central to the purpose of the program. And although the social worker's stance would not be judgmental in terms of "you're a good parent or a bad parent," he or she would be expected to identify issues of conflicting values and the implications of these choices in terms of the family's stated goal of raising a Jewish child.

There is a difference between the work social workers do behind closed clinical doors with individuals, couples, and families, and the work they do in group programs specifically labeled as Jewish Family Life Education. Where they offer these programs often helps define the nature of the program. For example, programs held in synagogues, Jewish Community Centers, and Jewish schools—in other words, in Jewish membership organizations—have a clear-cut mandate for Jewish advocacy. In this instance, there are two clients: the sponsoring institution and the program participants. A social worker facilitating a program commissioned by one of these institutions and advertised as addressing Jewish issues is "starting where the client is," and the Jewish outcome goals are an open part of the agenda.

When Jewish Family Service social workers and educators work together, it is important to think through the goals of their programs and choose environments appropriate to those goals. Overtly Jewish settings may provide "freeing" options not available in clinical offices.

Staffing

Not all social workers want to do or are suited for JFLE/JFE work for either personal or professional reasons, and staffing patterns vary by agency. In some agencies, such as Jewish Family Service in Albany, New York, staff members are hired with the expectation that they will participate in Jewish Family

Life Education programming. Albany's primary program—a supplemental school program for parents and children offered in several congregations throughout the city—is staffed by a Jewish Family Service worker with an M.A. in education. Other Jewish Family Service agencies hire non-social workers to do their Jewish Family Life Education programs. In Minneapolis, the JFLE Director has workers on staff with strong Jewish backgrounds. However, the Director does not use clinical staff by themselves for JFLE projects, but teams them with either educators or social workers/educators. In Philadelphia, the JFLE Director hires outside consultants from a variety of professions for special projects, such as their synagogue-based *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* project.

At Jewish Family Service in MetroWest, New Jersey, a "menu" of Jewish Family Life Education programs to be offered at synagogues was passed around for sign-up, and clinical social workers were asked if they were comfortable doing this work and what they would like to do if they received proper training. The agency expectation was that, with appropriate training, all workers could and would work in this milieu. Sometimes Board members at MetroWest are trained as co-facilitators for JFLE programs. The executive director finds that this adds to the "culture of the institution." Working in teams results in what he describes as "a positive sense of contagion—the more people participate, the more others want to as well!" However, he adds that it is important to have clarity regarding roles: "The most appropriate Jewish Family Life Education person may not always be a clinician."

Jewish Family Service of Central Maryland has different staffing requirements for different programs. Their Jewish Family Life Institute provides programs designated specifically for Jewish participants. Only Jewish staff (social workers and educators) are hired for these programs. Part-time or contract workers must attend an orientation where they agree to incorporate Jewish content components into their programs and to observe *kashrut* if food is served at the events.

Funding

Jewish Family Service agencies are increasingly becoming fee-for-service agencies. As both Jewish community and United Way monies shrink and grants become more competitive and difficult to obtain, significant portions of JFS budgets must come from fees. All Jewish Family Service agencies provide sliding scales for clinical services. In many agencies, Jewish Family Life education programs are loss leaders; that is, although there may be a fee for programs, they rarely cover the agency's expenses for providing them. However, these programs do benefit the agency by providing visibility for its other services.

The reality is that professional collaboration—using two staff members instead of one—usually costs more. Fortunately, the current trend among Jewish funding sources (foundations and Federations) is to encourage interagency or synagogue/agency collaboration. However, an important part of partnered planning is to look at where the continuing dollars will be coming from and to clarify from the outset what each agency's financial needs will be.

Jewish Content and Jewish Learning

As noted earlier, Jewish Family Service workers come from diverse personal and professional backgrounds. Many Jewish Family Service workers already have strong Jewish backgrounds, and many are themselves educators.

There are a variety of ways in which new Jewish learning and knowledge can be introduced in Jewish Family Service agencies. Guidelines for helping social workers gain Jewish learning are not very different from guidelines for helping families enter Jewish Family Education. The information itself must be provocative, informative, and interactive. It must respond not just to what the trainers want to teach but to what learners want to learn. And the learning experience must help move participants to positive anticipation of the next learning session.

Ten years ago, as a result of a Board retreat staffed by Dr. Norman Linzer, past dean and

currently the Samuel J. and Jean Sable Professor of Jewish Family Social Work at the Wurzweiler School of Social Work of Yeshiva University, New York, Jewish Family Service of Central Maryland instituted a "J in JFS" Committee. The retreat, which used case studies to explore issues presenting potential conflicts between Jewish values and social work values for the professional staff, provided a context within which to continue exploring these issues—not just whom they serve but how they serve. This staff-led committee, co-facilitated by an Orthodox social worker and a religiously liberal social worker, working in conjunction with rabbis and educators in the community, provides seminars, staff retreats, printed materials, and the opportunity for case presentations that address challenges for Jewish programming and Jewish social work. It also provides training in Jewish holidays, traditions, and culture for the largely non-Jewish case management staff.

Multi-disciplinary collaboration is a wonderful tool for Jewish learning, if the right person is chosen. At our recent *hanukkat ha bayit* (dedication) of our new office, the rabbi invited to speak explained the *Sh'ma* in the *mezuzah*—teaching paragraph by paragraph, relating it to the work of clinical social workers through the words of "hearing," "loving," and "teaching." His explanation was so accessible, so in tune with the staff members assembled, that he was welcomed back at staff meetings to do ongoing teaching—this time, on Jewish family issues in the Torah. This rabbi has also been actively involved in bringing a group of rabbis together each summer to study family dynamics and crisis intervention with a social worker/psychologist team. Once you have studied with someone whom you respect and who respects you in return, once you've built a trusting personal and collegial relationship, collaboration is not only a natural but an obvious outcome.

From Jewish learning that is skillfully provided, we can well anticipate a change by social workers, especially increased interest in exploring how Jewish materials and ideas can be used within Jewish Family Service. Training, then, helps build a core of Jewish

Family Service staff members who are able to become active partners in JFE and JFLE programs.

Training and Collaboration

Social workers have a keen sense of their own professional abilities and an equally keen sense of what others have to offer. Educators and rabbis, natural partners for Jewish Family Life Education, are also natural partners for Jewish learning. Many Jewish Family Service agencies have a close relationship with the Board of Rabbis in their communities; many have specific rabbis with whom they have close working relationships and use those rabbis to offer staff development sessions around such issues as mourning and loss, ethical dilemmas, pregnancy and child-rearing.

Relationships are reciprocal. As Rabbi Ed Feinstein of Valley Beth Shalom in Encino, California, has observed, "The lines between rabbis and social workers blur. People come to rabbis with counseling issues; they come to social workers with Jewish issues. Rabbis need more pastoral skills—social workers can help us with that. Social workers need more *neschama* (Jewish soul) because people come to social workers with Jewish questions when they're too threatened by coming to the rabbi. We can help social workers with that." Similarly, Jewish educators have knowledge and expertise to share, coupled with a desire to learn more about family systems and group dynamics. Opportunities abound.

CASE STUDY: JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE OF LOS ANGELES AND INTERFAITH FAMILIES

In 1994, the Board of Directors of JFS/LA established a lay/professional task force to explore how to address the agency issues raised by working with interfaith families: particularly how prepared [trained] were JFS workers to deal with interfaith family issues and what were the workers' needs for training.

Focus-group discussions within the agency, bringing together staff from the Departments

of Adult and Children's Services, Senior Services, and Immigration and Resettlement, as well as separate focus groups of agency social work managers and clinical supervisors, in one case, and, in another case, social work managers, rabbis, and educators, explored interdisciplinary collaboration.

On a personal level, many workers revealed stories about their own children and other family members who had intermarried. They spoke of their own need, at various points of their lives, to talk about this with others struggling with similar situations. Most workers commented that they rarely or never had the opportunity to do this in a professional setting. Similar sentiments were expressed by both of the other focus groups. Everyone supported Task Force recommendations that such discussions be integrated into training or consultation programs.

Many social workers voiced concerns about the nonsectarian mandate of the agency, but were also eager to entertain the idea that there are settings where it is appropriate and helpful for Jewish Family Service workers to participate in Jewish advocacy work with interfaith families.

Social workers were reassured to learn that there is a body of knowledge available about how interfaith issues affect the family, and that there are "experts" in the community who can provide staff development in this area. The social workers also requested training in further developing their "Jewish psycho/educational skills." If they could now provide straightforward parenting classes, what additional skills would they need to offer programs on how to raise a Jewish child? How could they be helped to combine materials traditionally used in parenting classes with additional materials expanding the content into Jewish parenting concerns?

The focus group also discussed the nature of social work-educator collaboration: What do we need to know about each other's skills and role boundaries in order to work together effectively? How can we expand our own ability to create and facilitate programs that address the needs of Jewish families by collaborating with colleagues whose skills

complement ours and whose values parallel ours?

The Task Force worked for three years. During that time, many collaborative programs developed among various participants. For example, funding was received for a joint synagogue-JFS program for parents of children who intermarried; one JFS office was asked to co-facilitate a synagogue program addressing issues of interdating; and a multidisciplinary community forum, "Two-Part Harmony," was held to begin delineating ways in which Jewish Family Service, schools, synagogues, and JCCs can work together to train staff and develop programs for addressing the issues of interfaith families.

The agency planning process not only led to program development but also to the ability of staff members to participate in the development and facilitation of these programs.

CONCLUSION

Interdisciplinary collaboration is one of the great resources available to us in the Jewish community. Like many resources, it is often overlooked. Sometimes it has been set aside because of history, personality, or turf. More often, we have not taken the time in our home communities to explore what we have to offer each other *and* what we need from each other. As Jewish professionals, we are also a family. We can learn from one another, strengthen one another, and grow together, respecting our similarities and our differences. The ideal outcome is a strengthening of our agencies, institutions, and disciplines so that, in turn, we can help strengthen the Jewish family—both in its identity as a family and in its identity as a member of the Jewish community.

ONE PEOPLE—MANY HOUSES National Service Delivery Networks for the Jewish Community

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As family members become more dispersed, there is increasing need for national and regional service delivery networks that link vulnerable clients living far from family with an alternative support system in their own community. For these networks to succeed, they must address these challenges: establishing and adhering to uniform standards of practice, fee structures, and subsidization policies; developing national marketing activities; and acquiring agencies when the national sponsoring organization does not have a member in needed service areas.

This article describes the development of national and regional service delivery networks for Jewish communities. A national network is a system of participating agencies set up to provide direct services to a dual client-system, both in the community where the request originates and in the one where the service will be provided. It does more than simply provide access to information.

Service-oriented networks of the type addressed in this article have rarely been discussed in the literature, although several have been in existence for some time. The Elder Support Network described by Goldberg and Saltman (1990) is probably the most successful such program. It functions as a continental delivery system that links isolated frail elderly, who live far from family and friends, with an alternative support system provided by a Jewish family service agency in their community.

In contrast, a review of the literature found several articles examining national information and referral (I&R) networks that provide both basic and specific information about services in one geographical location. Begun as tools to coordinate services as early as the 1870s, almost a century later in the 1960s I&R services were accepted as distinctive interven-

tion strategies. A review of the literature indicates consensus on such I&R functions as information, steering, advice-giving, referral, and follow-up. There is, however, less consensus on other functions, such as support, counseling, advocacy, case finding, or community education (McCaslin, 1981). Further, although I&R systems have been in existence for more than 100 years, major research questions that have not yet been addressed include who are actually the users of I&R services, do I&R services act as expeditors in health and social service systems, and what service roles are most effective for reaching, evaluating, and serving different types of elderly clients.

HISTORY OF NATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY NETWORKS

The need for national or regional networks is a relatively recent one, resulting from the movement to post-industrial economies throughout North America, Europe, and Israel. Multi-generational Jewish families, once tied to a village or city by farm holdings or small businesses, have scattered literally to the four corners of the globe as education and job opportunities have drawn each generation further and further away from the original