

August 11, 2014

Dear Friend and Supporter:

I have been in my position at Jewish Family Service Calgary (JFSC) for over a year and what I have learned over that year has opened my eyes to levels of poverty, need and loneliness that I never knew existed in our community. At JFSC we see over 1,000 people and families a year that are living their lives in a manner that I would never have imagined in the days when I was a lay leader in our community. Please allow me this opportunity to give you a brief glimpse of what we deal with every day at JFSC.

There are over 450 older adults living in south west Calgary who live in isolation. We serve and support all of them. Over 80 of these older adults are Jewish and they live their lives with no supports, families or friends. One woman from our community that I visited could barely talk as she hadn't used her voice in over a week. She has no one to call, talk to or even say a brief hello to. It was a cold winter this past year so she couldn't get out. JFSC's weekly delivery of food, friendship, conversation and caring were all that this person had as a contact to the world around her. JFSC has helped her and hundreds of others to live better lives with the dignity and respect our older community members deserve.

I have seen individuals and families living on the streets or in their cars. JFSC has helped these people gain temporary shelter, access food at Miriam's well and get ready, willing and able to obtain some kind of employment. For some of these folks all they wanted from us was help to fix their car, because their car was their home. There are many families in our community that live in extreme poverty and in many cases JFSC literally saves the lives of many of these Jewish Community members.

I have seen levels of domestic violence that affect couples, extended families and their children. Statistics show that incidents of domestic abuse in the Jewish community take an average of three months longer to disclose than the average three months for incidents reported by people who are abused in the general community. By the time we see the people affected by domestic abuse the abuse has consumed and destroyed their lives. JFSC helps to help these people put their lives back together to make new beginnings towards living their lives without fear and with purpose towards personally defined success.

We have also seen a substantial rise in the number of people who are suffering from mental health issues. The JFSC counselling department has a two month waiting list and is seeing children and adults, with an increasing number of Jewish children seeking our services. A few years ago we would never have imagined an eight year old suffering from anxiety and depression...not in our community. Unfortunately we see many of these children. We provide counselling support to people aged eight to ninety. We are here for them when they need us and for many, the recovery to a more normal and vibrant life is the result of the service and support that these people receive from JFSC. These are just a few areas where JFSC makes a positive difference in the lives of people and families and our community.

In the past year we have had the added stresses of the June 2013 flood and we are still seeing the residual negative impact the flood has had on Calgary and the Jewish Community is no exception.

We must continue the great work done by JFSC and we must meet the needs of all who turn to JFSC for help. It is very difficult to make this request for money and support when so much of our resources are needed to support Israel. But it would be even more difficult to not be able to serve our community's most needy members. We see people when their pride no longer matters to them. We see them when they have "hit bottom" and have no other choice but to reach out for help. In many cases we are the last resort for people to be able to start directions that could lead them to a better more meaningful life.

So, just as these people rely on JFSC for regaining their dignity and self-respect, JFSC relies on you and your support to be able to meet the needs of our community's most vulnerable people. That's what the Torah tells us to do over and over again. Just because you don't see or recognize these folks does not mean that they do not exist. They hide under the umbrella of shame, embarrassment and mental anguish. Your support of JFSC will help us to achieve JFSC's mission of

strengthening our community by providing social services to individuals and families based on the Jewish values of compassion, social justice and improving the world.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and we look forward to your support.

Yours truly,



Marty Hornstein
 Executive Director

Please use the form below for your donation and send it to:
 Jewish Family Service Calgary
 #420 – 5920 1A St SW
 Calgary AB
 T2H 0G3

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**Please return this form with your donation.
 Tax receipts are issued twice yearly.**

Many thanks for being a Friend of Jewish Family Service Calgary!