



The Jewish Board  
Health and Human Services for All New Yorkers

# COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT 2023



# OUR MISSION

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**To empower New Yorkers by providing integrated mental health and social services with compassion and expertise.**

# OUR VISION

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**To transform lives and communities through clinical and operational excellence.**





**In 2024, The Jewish Board will turn 150.** In 1874, the year our predecessor organization, United Hebrew Charities was founded, Ulysses S. Grant was president, the Bronx became part of New York City, and the Brooklyn Bridge was still nine years away from completion. Our longevity and durability as an institution is a monumental achievement and a testament to our ability to adapt our services to meet both the challenges of the times and the evolving needs of New Yorkers.

The past year has been about preparing The Jewish Board for a bold and dynamic future. We clarified our organization’s mission, created a new vision to inspire us, and designed a strategic plan to guide us there. As distinct from previous eras when mental health treatments were inconsistent and largely informed by individual biases over science, in 2023, we have access to proven methods that help people meet their mental health challenges. The Jewish Board’s pioneering social work residency program, which trains new social workers in the latest evidence-based models, allows us to widely deliver proven and successful methods of care. I’m excited and proud that we are setting the standard for our field.

“ **The past year has been about preparing The Jewish Board for a bold and dynamic future.** ”

Transforming our outpatient therapy clinics for the 21st century is another way The Jewish Board is innovating. With 85% of those we serve now preferring to receive their counseling online, we’re reimagining the virtual experience as a core part of our clinical operating model. Alongside this, we continue to diversify our services to address the needs of communities across the city. For example, in response to the ongoing opioid crisis, we recently opened our first substance use clinic in Brooklyn—and more will follow. In Queens, we are partnering with UJA-Federation of New York to provide free Narcan kits to the Bukharian Jewish community, which is also challenged by opioid overdose.

As we get ready to celebrate this milestone in our history, I find myself thinking how our founding coincided with the “Gilded Age” – a time of immense economic progress and wealth but also of great challenges as New York City’s immigrant population soared, income inequality surged, and racial strife persevered. History certainly does seem to be repeating itself. Now, as then, it’s our privilege and responsibility to care for the vulnerable among us. Whether as a friend, supporter, or partner of The Jewish Board, you’ve played a part in our great New York story, and you have our gratitude.

Jeff Brenner  
CEO



# SIX GENERATIONS OF COMPASSION AND EXPERTISE

The Jewish Board has served six generations of New Yorkers with compassion and expertise. Originally founded to serve the Jewish community, we were critical in providing early protections for neglected children, reconciling estranged families, and advancing the emerging field of social work.

Today, our services have evolved to serve all New Yorkers: people of every religion, ethnicity, cultural background, gender identification, ability, and age who may need mental health counseling or supportive housing. We do this as an organization rooted in Jewish values that are relatable and accessible to all New Yorkers.

We serve a diverse population through programs such as:

- A citywide network of counseling centers and community-based mental health supports
- Residences for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities
- Housing for adults with mental illness
- A range of services for the Jewish community



**2,200**

employees, including social workers, therapists, direct care workers, nurses, and residential staff

**45,000**

people served each year

**150**

programs across 5 boroughs

84%

would recommend our services to a member of their own family

94%

of youth who live in one of our residences feel safe and secure

86%

feel our services are leading them to better health and wellness



1,978

people live in a Jewish Board residence each night

12,249

people served each year through our mental health counseling centers



95%

recommend our Jewish Community Services programs

85%

of clients prefer to receive services by telehealth



# INNOVATING IN THE FIELD

## Social Work Residency Program

**2023 marked the inauguration of our Social Work Residency, a pioneering three-year program that gives newly graduated social workers hands-on, intensive experience tailored to their interests.**

Recognizing the challenges that new social workers have in gaining significant clinical experience, we created a unique curriculum combining practical experience in a community-based outpatient clinic with training in evidence-based models and professional mentorship. Our 25 residents receive a competitive salary, healthcare, and other benefits, including financial and other assistance for licensure exam fees—all while gaining deep experience, peer support, and professional supervision.

This ground-breaking program—the only of its kind in New York—benefits emerging social workers. At the same time, it enables The Jewish Board to populate our own staff of social workers with the next generation of well-qualified professionals, helping us meet an ongoing mental health crisis in the face of a critical shortage of practitioners.



## Social Work Residency Program

### **CHRISTINA FAVARO** Social Work Residency Class of 2026

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A year as an AmeriCorps teacher in New York City helped put Christina Favaro on the path to The Jewish Board. After researching ways of parlaying

her interests in child-parent therapy, she enrolled in New York University's master of social work program.

"The residency will help me achieve two of my long-term goals: getting my LCSW and my dream of being a certified play therapist," she said. "But what's most appealing is having peer support with other residents."

"It can be isolating to jump into the social work field with only two years of training and being on your own to figure it out. There will be multiple avenues and places to go for support and this will help me fill in the gaps in my ongoing experiences and next steps."



### **LAURIE SPRAYREGEN** Trustee - Vice President Supporting the Social Work Residency

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A Jewish Board trustee for 30 years, Laurie Sprayregen was an early funder of the new social work residency program.

"I wanted to support this residency because a program like this gives social workers the experience and support they need and brings incredibly skilled talent to The Jewish Board. And now, we can finally talk about mental health and help people who may be at risk of becoming untethered in their lives, because that possibility is everywhere for everyone."

This program does what The Jewish Board has always done best: meeting people at the level they need. Only now it's not just for our clients, it's for the social workers, too, who are working with the most vulnerable New Yorkers. The work they do has kept me motivated all these years. It really affects our communities."

# RESPONDING TO A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS

## Working With Ukrainian Refugees

**While the war in Ukraine has reverberated throughout the world, it has hit close to home for one social worker at The Jewish Board.**

A native of Kyiv, Viktoriya Anthony has been living in the United States for nearly 20 years and has always kept close ties to family back home. At the start of the war, her sister and niece were killed by Russian artillery while fleeing the fighting.

This unspeakable tragedy moved Viktoriya to join The Jewish Board and serve her community here in New York City.

“The Ukrainian people arriving here are experiencing a range of complex and individual traumas from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder to loss and bereavement issues. They miss their families, friends and their homes. They are navigating entirely new lives.”

“I work with a broad spectrum of people with complex and individual traumas. Some have developed severe anxiety or phobias, and others have depression and cannot concentrate, making it harder to prioritize their goals and see the future.”

“Being able to receive services for free from someone who speaks Ukrainian and who understands their culture is a very important part of their recovery. And for those who need further help, I’ve been able to refer them to one of The Jewish Board’s network of mental health clinics. They are all very appreciative of services they could not otherwise access.”



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**I can already see the massive improvement in the kids I’m working with. There are still challenges: isolation remains a big issue. Spread across the city, Ukrainian adolescents rarely have access to kids with similar experiences. I will keep working to bring them together.**

– Viktoriya Anthony, LMSW



## Responding To A Mental Health Crisis



### Hibuki: Hugging As Therapy

Working in partnership with the Hebrew Charter Schools this fall, our social workers were trained to help children with war trauma, using an unexpected tool: a plush toy dog. Called Hibuki—Hebrew for “hug,”—it is a therapy developed in Israel to help kids cope with conflict-related PTSD. Hibuki’s relatable and expressive face and

huggable form helps kids connect with emotions they otherwise cannot articulate. Last year it was introduced in Ukraine and now, we are bringing Hibuki to New York City to help children with war trauma and other significant mental health issues.

# LIVING OUR VALUES

## Values Ambassadors

This year, we launched a program to honor Jewish Board employees who exemplify our core values. Each month, staff nominate colleagues and a panel selects the Values Ambassador, who is then recognized to the entire agency.

**Treat Every  
Person With  
Dignity**

**Embrace  
Each Other's  
Differences**

**Strive To Be  
Outstanding**

**Engage  
Individuals And  
Families As  
Partners**

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Our values guide how we approach our work and the relationships we have with each other, our clients, and the communities we serve. Recognizing these Values Ambassadors is a purposeful way to celebrate staff who represent the best of our agency's culture.

– Donna Smith, Chief People Officer



## Regina Lashley

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Strives to be outstanding and create a “win-win” world

Regina Lashley has spent one-third of her three decades in social services at The Jewish Board, first as a case assistant, then as a case associate, progressing to her current role as residence manager at our Bronx REAL House in Westchester Square, a supportive housing program for adults living with ongoing mental illness. Regina was cited as someone who strives to be outstanding for her commitment to ensuring the well-being of clients who are under our care.

Her ten years at The Jewish Board have been buoyed by professional training and supportive supervisors. When not working at Bronx REAL, Regina works with people experiencing homelessness, organizes clothing drives, and networks with like-minded women. “It’s a complete package of what’s important to me.”

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**It’s really understanding where clients are coming from and knowing every one is different. We need each other to hold one another up—it fosters community, love and peace.**



# ADDRESSING INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

## The Lev Initiative



**In partnership with UJA-Federation of New York, our Jewish Community Services program launched the Lev Initiative in 2023 to provide holistic and integrated support for Jewish families experiencing domestic or Intimate Partner Violence (IPV). IPV can take on many forms: financial, psychological, verbal, physical, and isolation.**

Unfortunately, IPV remains a societal issue that remains underreported and stigmatized, including within New York City's Jewish community, which has historically lacked services that specifically address the cultural and spiritual needs of Jewish women experiencing violence at home.

The Lev Initiative is helping to change that, offering Jewish families access to services including crisis support, psychotherapy, emergency housing, and linkages to other critical supports. Through these holistic services, families can transition to safety and rebuild their lives.

## Ivanna and Jacob: Hope for the Future

When Ivanna, 35, found her way to The Jewish Board, she had just spent the evening huddled in the corner of her home, protecting her 11-year-old son from their intoxicated and dangerous abuser—a heartbreakingly common occurrence in their household.

Speaking only Ukrainian, she was isolated until her local Jewish community center referred her to a social worker from Lev, who immediately assembled an outreach team, including a translator.

Communicating in her native language, Ivanna could detail her experience, have her needs assessed, and finally get the social support and counseling they needed.

The Lev team was able to place Ivanna and Jacob in one of our domestic violence safe houses where they could regain their footing and begin their recovery. When they were ready, Lev helped them find transitional housing, giving them privacy and independence as they worked toward a longer-term housing solution. And, after finding a home, they continued to receive support and education through our program located in the Brooklyn Family Justice Center. All along the way, Ivanna and Jacob had access to translation services, which helped keep them from being isolated and allowed them settle in their new lives.

We are incredibly proud of The Jewish Board staff who made this outcome possible. They ensured that Ivanna no longer needs to shelter her son from abuse—and that we can be a shelter for her.

**“ I was terrified until you came along and treated me with such respect and care. I don’t even know how to express how much I appreciate everything that The Jewish Board did for me. You gave me hope for the future and the ability to work on my goals and provide for my child.**

— Ivanna, Lev Initiative client



# IN SCHOOLS, AT HOME, AND IN COMMUNITIES

Supporting Kids and Their Families Across New York City





**Our work with kids and families is rooted in our commitment to providing the highest quality mental health care. In 2023, we launched several new evidence-based programs for youth and continued to build on the programs already employing these clinical practices.**

### **Youth ACT: Collaborating for Care**

One size does not fit all when it comes to working with youth, and some kids have mental health needs that aren't met in traditional outpatient settings. In May 2023, The Jewish Board launched its Youth ACT (Assertive Community Treatment) program to support young people ages 10 to 21 in community settings. Currently operating in the Bronx and Staten Island, Youth ACT helps kids stay in school—and with their families—so they can achieve success in education and vocation.

Our services are delivered at home via family peer support specialists, licensed mental health professionals, and clinical support specialists. All team members are skilled in evidence-based therapeutic interventions especially designed to support young people's emotional and developmental challenges.

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**A family is their own expert in their lives and their goals, so each family takes a collaborative role in deciding what services they want.**

— Renee Jones, LCSW  
Senior Director, Youth ACT



## A New Model for Youth Residences

The Jewish Board's housing program for youth in foster care is being enhanced through expanding new models of care that give young people more options and opportunities. Thanks to new funding from the New York City Administration for Children's Services, The Jewish Board is opening four six-bed residences in the Bronx: two will serve 14 to 17-year-old youth and two will house young adults ages 17 to 21.

The new residences are family style and prioritize community integration and practical skills that help set up young people for success as they move into adulthood.

But it's also about helping the youth who live with us find things they're interested in and cultivating those interests. Just like a family.

"We can help them find the milestones and achievements they can attain, that better their lives, and that no one can take away from them," says Jill Benson, The Jewish Board's Executive Program Director of Youth and Family Services, who is overseeing the expansion and program design.

One house in each age group will also be dedicated to LGBTQ residents, a need Benson says is responsive to the increased challenges LGBTQ youth are experiencing. "Many are homeless, have some layers of trauma and are in need of housing and caretaking. These homes will be there to support them and serve them."

**“ Life skills, such as learning to shop for groceries and pick up prescriptions, attending school, and navigating city public transit are life skills many of us take for granted, but are major milestones for youth who haven't had the opportunity to learn these tasks from adults in their lives.**

— Jill Benson, LCSW, Executive Program Director of Youth and Family Services

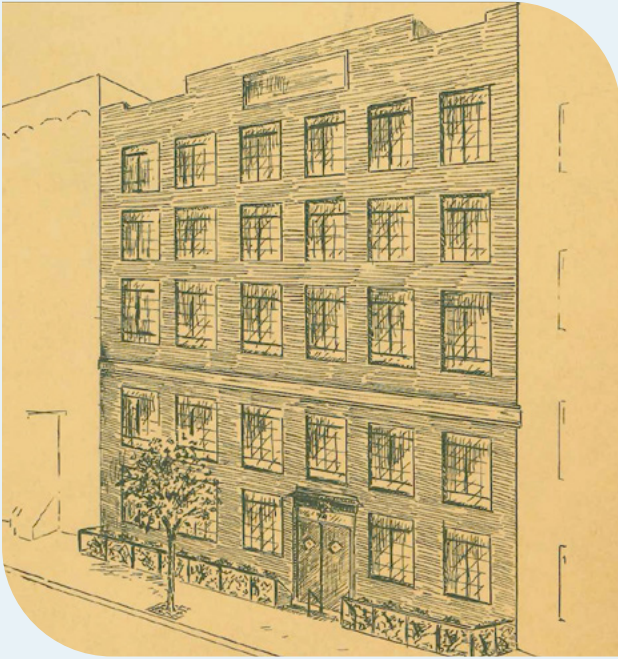


## A First Apartment – With Support

As part of our commitment to support youth who are aging out of the foster care system, we are launching a Supervised Independent Living Program (“SILP”), a network of nine apartments that can house 12 residents aged 18 and older. SILP residents can stay for up to a year in a shared or single apartment.

The transitional housing program will include “adulting” lessons in home maintenance, meal preparation, financial literacy, and time management, and completes the continuum of care for young people coming into Jewish Board residences. The goal: to mimic the experience of a first apartment, but with a supportive check in.





## Kaplan House: “My Friends, My Fathers, My Brothers”

When Phil Smythe arrived at The Jewish Board’s Rita J. and Stanley H. Kaplan House as a 14-year-old, he was coming from a single-parent home and had never had a father present in his life. From the moment he walked in the door to the time he left the housing program two years later, he was mentored and supported by men who, he says, “became my friends, my fathers and my brothers.”

Smythe returned to high school and attained his bachelor’s degree and two master’s degrees. “I own my own home and, importantly, live in a very social community, all because of the care I received there.”

Smythe is not only an alumnus but is part of The Jewish Board’s donor community working to rejuvenate Kaplan House so future generations of young men can, as he did, live in a place where they feel valued and respected. The project has special meaning to him, but he says it goes deeper. “They don’t give up on you when you leave that building; you’re part of the family. Now, it’s time to give back to that house.”

“ They took me into their arms and I went from being a terror of a child to a grown-up man who got married, had children, and grandchildren. I don’t know what would have happened to me if I didn’t live there: it was a spoke in my life’s wheel.

— Phil Smythe

# KEEPING KIDS AND THEIR FAMILIES TOGETHER

## Providing the Right Help



Through our citywide Preventive Services program, The Jewish Board helps more than 900 families stay safe and together each year, reducing the risk of child removal from the home.

It requires faith on the part of the families to allow social workers to come into their homes and work with them on everything from averting mental health crises and case management to attending parenting classes and navigating complex administrative services.

When Amber became a new mom and a single parent, she understood that her history of depression and childhood trauma could influence the way she was going to parent. That became clear when, as she was experiencing depression, the city's Administration for Children's Services made a call to her home.

"I didn't have a good support system and I felt more on my own, and I needed to seek help when ACS came into our lives. I was in a very depressed state."

Once connected to Ryan, a Jewish Board social worker overseeing our Staten Island Family Services program, Amber benefited from counseling and was able to set goals for herself and her daughter. She was able to graduate from school with a degree as a medical assistant. She also kept her home—and her family.

"Working with Ryan was great and really comfortable. Whenever I needed her, she was always there, even when I was in a bad situation with my relationship and my family. She definitely helped me with my goals."

"I always took care of people and never took care of myself. I don't feel that people should be ashamed of needing help. And you can even be a better you with the right help."





# COMING TOGETHER FOR CAUSE AND COMMUNITY

## Adult Residential Summer Excursion

Every year, our Adult and Family Residential Services division organizes a summer excursion outside of the city where staff and residents come together for a day of swimming, food, fun, games, and dancing.

Residents played basketball, tennis, and ping pong, went for a swim, performed in a talent show, and enjoyed a barbecue and sweet summer treats, all while a DJ spun their favorite tunes





## Spring Benefit

The Jewish Board welcomed 350 guests to the Rainbow Room at Rockefeller Center for our annual Spring Benefit, where we honored the extraordinary contributions of Trustee Lynn Korda Kroll. Through this event alone, we were able to raise more than \$1.1 million towards providing mental health services for New Yorkers.



## Cycle of Support

Our annual bike ride flew past our fundraising goal, raising upwards of \$850,000, making this year's Cycle of Support the most successful ride yet. Along with 400 registered riders, Jewish Board staff and volunteers celebrated 15 years of riding to support mental health programs.



# BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Our Board of Trustees is essential to The Jewish Board's success, helping us build on our legacy of 150 years of caring for our fellow New Yorkers. As key decision makers, our Trustees are integral to The Jewish Board's fundraising, strategic planning, and advocacy efforts—assuring that we can deliver on our mission and vision well into the future.

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\*Denotes a member of the Executive Committee

# FINANCIALS

One of the four key pillars of our new Strategic Plan is financial sustainability. In 2023, The Jewish Board remained focused on cost reduction and revenue optimization. We achieved a balanced budget while also raising the salaries of our frontline staff.

SOURCE OF REVENUE	REVENUE AMOUNT
Medicaid	\$ 89,320,764
Private Insurance and Direct Payments	\$ 8,281,426
New York City and County Funding	\$ 92,329,868
New York State Funding	\$ 2,854,003
Federal Funding	\$ 25,329,588
Donations and Donated Services	\$ 13,574,699
Other (Includes \$10M ppp loan proceeds)	\$ 3,176,435
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 234,866,783</b>

EXPENSES BY DIVISION	EXPENSE AMOUNT
Youth and Family Services	\$ 42,731,691
Community Behavioral Health	\$ 49,842,777
Adult and Family Residential	\$ 48,383,336
Jewish Services	\$ 36,523,319
Site Maintenance	\$ 5,019,694
Administrative and Other	\$ 48,369,409
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 230,870,226</b>





# A CHAMPION For All New Yorkers

The Jewish Board is extremely proud to be one of more than 100 beneficiary agencies in UJA-Federation of New York network. We couldn't provide the breadth and depth of quality mental health care, housing, and services to the Jewish community without their support. We are grateful to them for being a champion for all New Yorkers.

Join us in making an impact in communities across our city:  
[JEWISHBOARD.ORG/GET-INVOLVED](https://www.jewishboard.org/get-involved)

**The Jewish Board of Family  
and Children's Services**

463 7th Avenue, 18th Floor  
New York, NY 10018

[jewishboard.org](https://www.jewishboard.org)

For 150 years, Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services has been empowering New Yorkers through innovative, high-quality mental health, housing, and social services. With compassion and expertise guiding our work, we serve over 45,000 people of all ages across the five boroughs of New York City.

