



Jewish Family Services

OF NORTHEASTERN NEW YORK

a toolkit

Congratulations!

MARK AND JANE
LEVINE

— AND —

Congratulations!

JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES ON



FROM THE MASSRY FAMILY



ABOUT JFS

Jewish Family Services of Northeastern New York has been providing a continuum of support, services and resources for individuals and families of all ages since 1854. JFS is proud to serve people of all backgrounds, while also having a unique ability and responsibility to meet the particular needs of the Jewish community.

Our programs and services range from counseling to guidance for those aging in place to assistance for those facing food or financial insecurity, and so much more. JFS's expert staff is available in person, by telephone and virtually.

This Toolkit is meant to be a conversation starter, not a definitive or exhaustive guide. Please reach out to JFS and one of our skilled staff members will help you with your needs or find you the right resources.



MISSION

To enrich the lives of individuals and families from all backgrounds and strengthen the community by providing compassionate, collaborative human services, guided by Jewish values.

VISION

A resilient community where everyone, at all stages of life, is supported and empowered to care for themselves and each other.

JFS IS HERE FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Promoting Mental Health & Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Individual, family and group counseling*• Community and school-based programs• Pastoral Care <p>*Major insurance plans accepted</p>
Accessing Basic Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Healthcare and benefits advocacy• Grocery shopping and delivery• Kosher home delivered meals• Emergency financial assistance• Housing guidance
Aging Well and Safely	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information and assistance• Geriatric care management• Home safety assessments and modifications• Private transportation• Friendly visitation and homebound activities• Educational, wellness and social programs• Holocaust survivor assistance

THE COMMUNITY TURNS TO JFS

JFS provides **over 25,000 supportive interactions** with community members who come to us with a range of concerns. Most of our work is behind the scenes, intentionally, so that when people are feeling vulnerable, they feel comfortable calling us.

JFS is cultivating resilience for people of all backgrounds right here in our community: Jewish and not, from older to younger, to people with means or without. JFS clients are your family, your friends and your neighbors. **We have proudly served our community since 1854: serving all generations for generations.**





HERE ARE QUESTIONS WE GET EVERY DAY!

- ? Can you help me apply for Medicare, Social Security, Medicaid, and subsidized housing?
- ? I just had surgery and can't grocery shop. Can you shop and deliver groceries to me?
- ? My daughter is experiencing bullying at school. Do you have a counselor that she can see?
- ? My college kid is feeling isolated with all the antisemitic rhetoric on his campus and he doesn't feel comfortable talking to the counselor on campus. Do you offer virtual counseling?
- ? My friend needs help sorting through his insurance paperwork and could really use someone to help and talk to about the changes in his life. Can JFS help?
- ? My grandmother lives alone and could really use a friendly visitor: someone to talk with, play cards with, whatever? Do you offer this service?
- ? I am a Holocaust survivor from the Former Soviet Union, and I want to connect to other survivors and need help completing paperwork. Can JFS help?
- ? My kids are worried that I keep tripping on things in my home, but I love my home. Could JFS provide guidance to help make my home safer?
- ? I live in Florida, can you help my aging mom look into options as we figure out whether it is safe for her to stay in her home?
- ? I can no longer cook. Can you deliver meals?
- ? My grandmother is in an assisted living facility in the area, do you have a rabbi who can visit with her?
- ? I'm looking for a place where I can really hone my clinical skills with a hands-on supervisor. Does JFS have graduate level internship opportunities?
- ? I need a ride to a doctor's appointment, do you have someone who can take me there?


The answer to all of these questions is a resounding YES!



THE TOOLKIT

Welcome to the JFS Toolkit. This resource was designed with you in mind. It includes commonly asked questions, checklists, and ways that we can best support you in navigating everyday life circumstances.

Please contact us if you have questions or need additional support.

 518-482-8856

 info@jfsnyny.org

 www.jfsnyny.org

JFS could not do what we do without the incredible support of individuals, foundations, governmental and nonprofit partners. Please scan to learn more.



LEAVING YOUR HOME IN AN EMERGENCY

When there's an emergency and you have to leave your home in a hurry, it's important to have a plan, know where critical documents and passwords are, and what to bring with you.

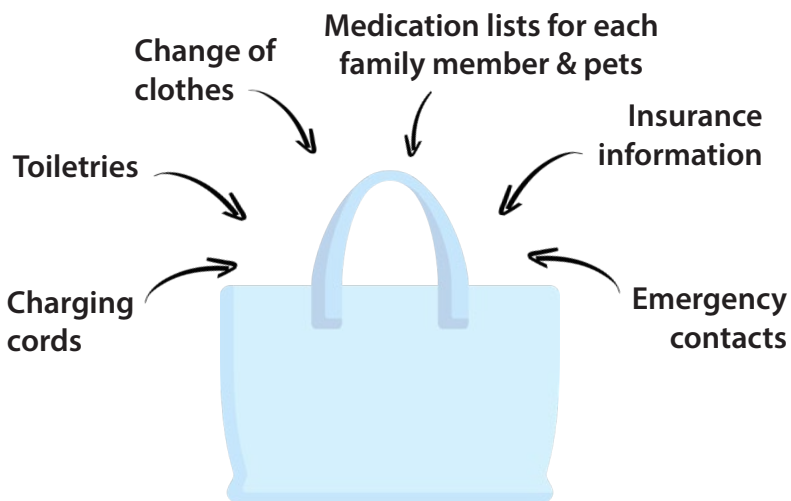
- ☐ Keep your birth certificate, Social Security card, and passport in a secure, consistent location.
- ☐ Bring cash and debit or credit cards.
- ☐ Have all needed account passwords handy or memorized. Share them someone you trust if you cannot access them.
- ☐ Bring your phone, laptop and chargers.
- ☐ Have contact information for your family members and at least one reliable neighbor.
- ☐ Keep the account numbers and customer service contact information for your utilities handy, including (but probably not only): water, gas and electric, cable TV and internet providers.
- ☐ Arrange to have your mail held by the US Postal Service and newspaper deliveries. These can be done online.
- ☐ Have a list of all your medications and dosage levels in case you can't bring the bottles with you.
- ☐ Have a plan for pet care.



If you must leave your home...

- ☐ Prepare a “Go Bag”.
- ☐ Fill a cooler with food, including healthy, nonperishable snacks and water.
- ☐ Bring your medications.
- ☐ Pack appropriate clothing.
- ☐ Take phones, tablets, laptops and chargers for each item.
- ☐ Bring activities for children.

WHAT’S IN YOUR “GO BAG”?



WEATHER EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Weather emergencies are becoming more frequent and varied, from floods and fires, to snowstorms, and even tornadoes. It's best practice to have emergency supplies stocked in case one of these unexpected weather situations occurs.

- ☐ Flashlight and extra batteries.
- ☐ Candles and matches.
- ☐ Cell phone, a solar charger and a fully charged external battery and cable.
- ☐ Battery or solar powered radio.
- ☐ Canned and shelf- stable food, manual can opener, and plenty of bottled water.
- ☐ Pet food, water, and supplies for all pets.
- ☐ First aid kit.
- ☐ Extra blankets.
- ☐ Cash, including small bills.
- ☐ List of emergency contacts such as family, neighbors, physicians kept in safe but accessible, consistent place.
- ☐ Health insurance information.
- ☐ Cooler to keep necessary items cold.
- ☐ List of nearby hotels in case you need to leave suddenly.
- ☐ Books, games, puzzles, or other activities.



Have a plan to take the following actions:

- ☐ Know, in advance, where the heating and cooling stations are in your area - places like malls, markets, community centers, etc.
- ☐ Fill your bathtub with water if you think there's a chance you will not have access to water. Use to flush toilets, give to pets, wash dishes, etc. If your water comes from a well, do this if you lose power.
- ☐ Familiarize yourself with evacuation routes.
- ☐ Arrange a meeting point for your family if you must leave your house in an emergency.
- ☐ Install a generator or know who in your neighborhood has one in case you need to recharge your phone.
- ☐ If you have pets, plan for them as well. Keep carriers, leashes and collars accessible and always have enough food, medication and water.



HOME SAFETY TIPS

Did you know that 60% of falls occur in the home? Most of us want to stay in our own homes or apartments, if given the choice. But is your home safe for you as you age? There are simple changes you can make to your environment to make it safer.

Tripping Hazards Assessment

- ☐ Remove throw rugs, or secure them with special carpet tape.
- ☐ Create a safe path to the bathroom from your bed or front door (remove shoes, boxes and items from hallway and exits).
- ☐ Keep chairs pushed into the table/island.
- ☐ Have a nightlight in your bathroom and hallways for nighttime.

Home Items/Spaces

- ☐ Fire extinguisher (check the expiration date and replace if expired or take it to a professional to recharge if appropriate).
- ☐ Stock flashlights and extra batteries, candles, and emergency battery chargers for power outages.
- ☐ Working and charged phone.
- ☐ Charged backup external charger.
- ☐ Assess placement of furniture and move small tables, planters, or items that may impede access.
- ☐ Set up your kitchen and laundry room to provide easy access and avoid too much bending and lifting.

Visibility

- ☐ House number should be visible from the street (for emergency vehicles to find you).
- ☐ Steps should be clearly marked and visible (basement steps or steps in darker areas should have bright, reflective tape).
- ☐ Steps outside should be lit so that they are visible in the dark.

Emergency Lists by Bed and Kitchen

- ☐ Professionals (doctors, plumbers, electricians, etc.)
- ☐ Family, neighbors and friends
- ☐ Medications (update monthly with names and dosage)

Physical Support

- ☐ Install sturdy banisters, railings and grab bars (suction cup grab bars are not recommended).
- ☐ Railing extended by a professional along inside and outside stairs for extra safety and security.
- ☐ Railings installed in the hallways if you need extra support.

Smoke, Fire & Heating Safety

- ☐ Have your heating system and chimneys checked and cleaned every year.
- ☐ Install a carbon monoxide detector.
- ☐ Keep flammable materials at least three feet away from heating equipment.
- ☐ Always turn space heaters off when you leave the room or go to bed.

TOOLS & RESOURCES

- The National Council on Aging has an excellent resource to make your home safer as you age.
- Consider a medical alert system that you wear 24 hours a day, in case of an emergency, a fall when you can't get up or may be hurt, or if you fear a stranger in or near your home.
- Request a home safety evaluation from JFS's certified Home Safety Specialists.



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Securing the Future for JFS

JFS invites you secure our legacy as the community's trusted resource.

If You:

- Value a strong community,
- Understand our neighbors' needs, and
- Feel a responsibility to ensure JFS will always be there to meet our community's challenges.

Please consider making a legacy gift to JFS.

Please contact us at 518-516-1101 or donate@jfsneny.org to talk about your plans.

If you have already named JFS as a beneficiary in your will, trust, life insurance or other legacy plans, please let us know.



Scan to learn more
about legacy giving:



END OF LIFE PLANNING

Just like with every other aspect of life, there are many details to think about when considering end-of-life. While this is something most people put off talking about, we all hope to have peace of mind when our time comes.

Here are some questions to ask and discuss with your loved ones to “know before you go” regardless of your age and health status.

? What is the difference between hospice and palliative care?

Learn what you need to know and communicate your wishes with those who may be involved in your care. Both aim to improve the quality of life for those with serious illness, there are key differences:

- **Hospice care** focuses on end-of-life care, including for those with end-stage dementia, with a specialized Hospice-assigned medical treatment team providing guidance and oversight.
 - A spouse/adult children/friends/paid caregivers provide the majority of the hands-on care and medication administration. Hospice provides counseling support for both the dying person and the caregivers.
 - Hospice care can be extended or even canceled if the prognosis changes. Some long-term care facilities allow Hospice to provide care. Others have their own end-of-life care programs.
- **Palliative care** is appropriate for any stage of life where there is a chronic illness. Patients stay with their own medical team and together they make decisions about how the patient wants to live, extra measures to ensure comfort, and whether or not treatment is pursued.

? Have you assigned a Health Care Proxy? Are your Advance Directives up to date?

A health care proxy is someone you legally assign to voice your health care preferences when you are no longer able to do so (see Advance Directives list).



? **Do you have a preferred member of the clergy?**

Contact them. They can provide emotional support to you and your family when there is a terminal illness. If you do not have a preferred clergy member, the JFS Chaplain can offer the same support.

? **Do you have an updated Last Will and Testament?**

? **Do you have or want to create an Ethical Will?**

This is a self-written document in which you communicate your life lessons, values and experiences that you want to share with your family and future generations.

? **Have you pre-planned your funeral?**

You can discuss the details with your clergy, your family and the funeral home if it's done in advance. Speak to the administrator to learn what is available to you and your loved ones to ensure your wishes are carried out.

Questions to consider:

- Do you want a traditional burial or cremation?
- Do you qualify for a military burial?
- Do you want a graveside service, or will it be in your house of worship or at the funeral home?
- Have you pre-purchased a burial plot?
- Is there a long-standing family plot in the local cemetery or is there an out-of-town family plot?
- Who is writing the obituary and what do you want to include?
- Is there something specific you want on your gravestone?

? **Are the beneficiaries on your financial accounts and your life insurance up to date?**

? **Who will care for your pets?**



ADVANCE DIRECTIVES

Discuss your end-of-life care wishes and desires with your family or decision makers. If they don't know, they may not act as you would have wanted. Here are some documents we recommend you complete.

Healthcare

- NYS Health Care Proxy: this is needed when you are not able to express your own healthcare wishes. It does NOT need an attorney to complete but does require two witnesses.
- NYS Living Will: simple form expressing your wish for healthcare requiring two witnesses.
- DNR (Do Not Resuscitate): this will direct physicians and medical staff for in-patient care as to your wishes. Non-hospital DNR Form - to not be resuscitated at your home.
- MOLST (Medical Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatments): This bright pink form is used to guide your medical team and Health Care Proxy as you get closer to the end of life. (Some states may use a different color and refer to it as a POLST – Physician's Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment.)

Finances and Personal Effects

NYS Power of Attorney: an important legal document to identify a person to represent your wishes when you are unable. It is helpful to be completed with the assistance of an attorney as it deals with your finances and estate matter.



- **Legal Will / Last Will and Testament:** an opportunity for you to decide what happens to your property, belongings and finances after death. You can also direct how and by whom your children should be cared for if they are minors Use an attorney. Get your affairs in order at an early age and revisit the document every few years to ensure your designations have not changed.

Most importantly, **speak to your loved ones about your wishes** and take the necessary steps, including speaking with an attorney, financial advisor, and your medical team to help make decisions easier when the time comes.

The following resource may be helpful as you decide what to include:

Advance Care Planning and Health Care Decisions: Tips for Caregivers and Families, available online through the National Institute on Aging.



PLANNING FOR LONG-TERM CARE

Everyone should be as active as possible: whether it's pickleball games, the gym or classes or playing with children, being active can keep us healthy. Staying strong is key but sometimes a change in our health renders us unable to direct and be in control of our daily lives. It's good to do the work, and plan, just in case — no matter your age.

? Where do you picture yourself living?

- Do you want to Age in Place? This can be in your current home, or a different home, but still in your community. Perhaps downsizing to an apartment or smaller, one floor home, will meet your needs.
- Discuss with your family/friends what you would like for yourself and what is meaningful to you. For example: would you prefer to live near family or stay in the area in which you reside now (if different)?
- Is it your preference to live among others who are of similar ages? There are options such as a NNORC, a neighborhood naturally occurring retirement community, senior specific apartments, Independent Living and Assisted Living facilities.

? Do you need to contact an attorney that specializes in elder law or a realtor to explore a variety of living options?

There are private and non-profit resources available. Contact JFS for guidance and trusted referrals.

? When was the last time you updated the beneficiaries on your investment accounts? Your life insurance? Are there grandchildren or additional charitable organizations to add to your Will since it was last updated?

? How will you pay for your care as you age? Will it be out-of-pocket or will you qualify for Medicaid in the future?

Be aware of the laws/rules for Medicaid. An attorney or a JFS care manager can help you understand.

? Have you provided detailed information for the executor of your Will? Who has the original document or do your loved ones know where it's filed?

? Where are your accounts and passwords kept, and who are your advisors? Provide contact information for your relatives or friends, including addresses, phone numbers and email addresses.

? Are family members named on your checking accounts? And if you have a safe deposit box, are they aware of it?

Are your Advance Directives up to date (see the list on Advance Directives for all the options)?

Most importantly, discuss your end-of-life care wishes and desires with your family or decision makers to ensure your wishes are honored.

? Have you considered pre-planning your funeral?

This is a true gift for your family who will be distraught after your death. If they can call the funeral home and be told that everything is pre-arranged and paid for, it will decrease the level of stress. See the list on End-of-Life Planning.

? Did you call Jewish Family Services?

Our Care Managers can discuss your specific situation, provide a Home Safety Assessment and refer you to resources in the region.



MORE ON LONG-TERM CARE PLANNING

CONSIDERATIONS

- Be aware of how much home assistance services will cost and if you qualify for any home care services.
- Know how much money you can safely spend each month. Do you have a budget?
- Check local resources for housing guides, including your county.
- Learn the difference between independent living, assisted living and long term, skilled nursing facilities, also known as “nursing homes”, and NNORCs and villages.

These are overwhelming questions. Remember that you can work with the the team at JFS to help you with your planning!

DEFINITIONS

Independent living is a housing option for older adults who are active and healthy, but want to avoid the responsibilities of home ownership.

Assisted Living is an option for older adults who need some help with daily activities but still want to maintain a level of independence while living in a residential setting.

Skilled Nursing Facilities are medical facilities where residents have an individual plan of care, including input from nursing staff, dietary professionals, recreational, physical and occupational therapists and a physician.

GOING TO THE DOCTOR

When you visit your medical providers, it's important to be prepared and organized. Sometimes it's helpful to bring a friend, family member, or a professional Health Care Advocate to take notes so that you can concentrate on your interaction with the medical team.

- ☐ Bring your photo identification and your insurance cards.
- ☐ Take a current list of medications, vitamins, supplements and the dose of each.
- ☐ Have a list of your previous diagnoses and surgeries and their dates if this is a first visit. You will need to provide a medical history (you will usually be asked to complete this step online prior to your appointment).
- ☐ Prepare a description of the reason for your visit along with a list of questions and concerns.
- ☐ Be honest when answering the questions that are asked of you. It's important for the physician to know how much alcohol you drink, your non-prescribed medication intake, whether you smoke (even occasionally), your diet and your exercise routines.
- ☐ Know your preferred hospital and inform your providers.
- ☐ Request an interpreter if English is not your preferred language. If you can, arrange this in advance of your appointment.
- ☐ Bring the name and address of your preferred pharmacy.
- ☐ Keep a journal of your medical history, including the most recent symptoms and any reactions to past medication.
- ☐ Consider bringing a copy of any recent test results or x-rays for your physician to review, especially if they were completed through a different medical provider or health care system that is not connected to a shared portal.
- ☐ Be sure to have hearing aids and glasses "in and on" during your medical appointment.



PACKING FOR THE HOSPITAL

- ☐ Bring a photo ID and insurance cards for admission and entrust them to someone for safekeeping.
- ☐ Bring a list of medications and doses or the original bottles, then have someone take them home.
- ☐ List of allergies or sensitivities to medicines.
- ☐ Phone and a charger to contact family and friends.
- ☐ Emergency contacts, including a list of physicians.
- ☐ Health Care Proxy - a copy is good enough.
- ☐ MOLST (Medical Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment) form if you have one.
- ☐ Comfortable clothing, or robe, if you can wear your own.
- ☐ Toiletries such as toothbrush, toothpaste, comb and brush, deodorant, lotion.
- ☐ Non-perishable snacks (you may be on a restricted diet at the hospital, but your visitors may enjoy them!)
- ☐ Eyeglasses, dentures and/or hearing aids labeled with your name and phone number.
- ☐ Headphones, earbuds, or earplugs to block hospital noise.
- ☐ Book or magazines.
- ☐ Paper and pen.
- ☐ Leave valuables and jewelry at home. Hospitals are busy places; it's easy to have someone misplace an item that's meaningful to you.



WHEN TO SEEK COUNSELING

If you or someone you know is struggling with any of the following signs, it may be time to consider seeking counseling to better manage emotions, improve coping strategies, and build resilience through difficult times.

The experienced counselors at JFS are here to help you navigate life's most challenging moments. Below are some examples of situations where our team can offer support, helping you manage stress, improve mental well-being, and regain balance.

ADULTS

- ☐ Trauma or Traumatic Events
- ☐ Loss of a Loved One
- ☐ Life-Changing Health Diagnoses for You or a Loved One
- ☐ Stress and Anxiety Impacting Sleep, Work, and Daily Life
- ☐ Marriage or Relationship Concerns
- ☐ Empty Nest Adjustment
- ☐ LGBTQIA Matters
- ☐ Parenting Challenges
- ☐ Sandwich Generation Stress
- ☐ Concerns for Child's Safety and Well-Being
- ☐ Ongoing Feelings of Depression, Fatigue, and Hopelessness
- ☐ Postpartum Depression
- ☐ Thoughts of Suicide or Self-Harm

If you or someone you know is experiencing thoughts of suicide or self-harm, seek immediate help. Call or text 988, visit 988lifeline.org or go to the nearest Emergency Room.

CHILDREN, YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS

- ☐ School Attendance Concerns or Avoidance
- ☐ Sudden Changes in Behavior (Eating or Sleeping Habits)
- ☐ Loss of a Loved One
- ☐ Acting Out Behavior at Home, School or with Peers
- ☐ LGBTQIA Matters
- ☐ Social Challenges: Making Friends, Social Anxiety, or Isolation
- ☐ Bullying or Peer Conflict
- ☐ Anxiety Over Social Media, Cyberbullying or Unrealistic Comparisons
- ☐ Trauma Around School Shootings, Violence or Natural Disasters
- ☐ Safety Concerns

Fears related to safety such as anxiety over school shootings or community violence should be addressed.

If you or a loved one is facing any of these challenges, or if you simply feel like you need someone to talk to, remember that reaching out for help is the best step.

The experienced mental health professionals at JFS can provide the support, strategies, and tools needed to improve your well-being, get you back on track and help you navigate life's difficulties with compassion and expertise.

SCAN THE QR CODE

Learn more about JFS counseling.





Caring for Our Community

Congratulations to Jewish Family Services of Northeastern New York as it commemorates 170 years of service in the Capital Region.

Since 1854, JFS has focused on providing services to strengthen individual, family, and community life.

Both JFS and St. Peter's Health Partners share a long tradition of caring for those most in need.

St. Peter's offers a wide range of health services as well as food assistance, prescription assistance and more.



Scan the QR code
to learn more.



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The **Albany Med Health System** provides more advanced specialty care in our communities than anyone else.

We are proud to partner with the **Jewish Family Services of Northeastern New York** to provide care and support for individuals and families in need across northeastern New York.



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Congratulations

MARK & JANE

for this well-deserved honor for their
service to the community for more than
40 years!





Mazel Tov!

We are delighted to serve
our community at the JFS
Generations Celebration!

THANK YOU!

JFS for the Anshel Weiss Community Builders Award.

We are fortunate to have served the Jewish
community through our work.

Congratulations to 170 years!

Jane & Mark Levine



CONGRATULATIONS

JFS for serving our community
for 170 years!

John Nigro

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170 Years of JFS

Thank you for all you do!





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HAPPY 170TH ANNIVERSARY TO JFS

& CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE HONOREES!



HARRIS A. SANDERS, ARCHITECTS, P.C.

HATS OFF

to JFS for 170 years of building a
stronger community!





**Building a
stronger
community,
together.**



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MOLLI PHOTO

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Congrats!

to JFS for 170 years
of extraordinary care
and leadership!



Congratulations on 170 Years
TO
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Northeastern New York
FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT



Unity House is dedicated to
enhancing the quality of life for :

- People living in poverty
- Adults with mental illness
- Victims of domestic violence
- Children with developmental delays and their families
- People living with HIV/AIDS
- And others whose needs can effectively be met
by Unity House services and philosophy.

518.274.2607
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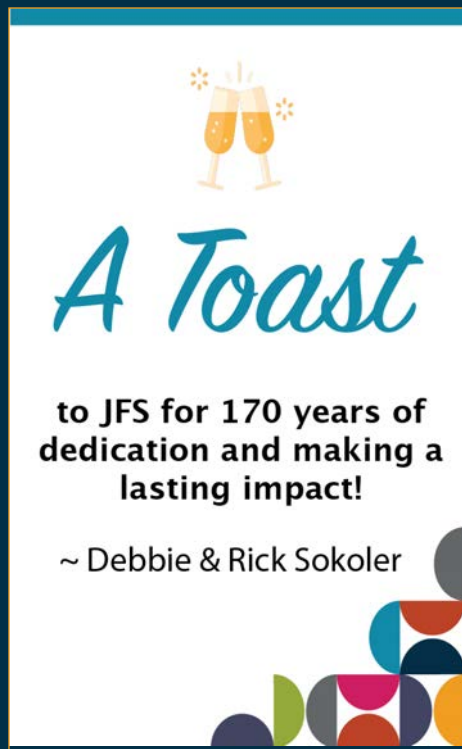
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Mazel Tov!

Together we are
building extraordinary
living legacies and
strengthening
communities one smile
at a time!





GET THE INFO

Scan the QR codes below for more information and resources on the JFS website!

JFS Main Website

Explore the website for helpful resources, information about our programs and partners, calendar of activities, JFS staff and more.



Donations

Your support increases JFS's community impact. Please consider making a donation to support our programs -- now and into the future.



184 Washington Ave. Extension
Albany, NY 12203

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Thank You
to JFS for all you do in our region

Neil Golub
Family Foundation