



Spring 2024

Newsletter Sponsored by the Barbara and Mel Sapsowitz Memorial Fund

Visiting a Person with Dementia

by **Lorrie Loughney, NCG, MPA, Coordinator of Older Adult Services**

A person who has dementia, especially in the more advanced stages, experiences life differently than a person who does not have this diagnosis. One of the most difficult aspects of dementia is that it locks the person into an internal world, which increases their isolation, frustration, and loneliness. Your loved one or friend may not be able to connect your name and your face, because their memory of you is from many years ago.

This makes it more challenging for those who want to visit and support their family members and friends who have dementia but feel hesitant to brave the awkwardness of not being able to carry on a natural, normal conversation.

Although a person who has dementia often cannot come out into the world which everyone else experiences, the good news is that we can go into theirs.

Here are a few ways to have a meaningful visit that benefits both you and your loved one.

Use the Senses

Use what is readily available and describe things you see with phrases such as "Oh look! There's a cardinal. It's so pretty against the snow!" "Feel this blanket! It's so soft" or "The lunch (lotion, flowers) smells delicious."

Or you can bring in something to focus on: Items such as a photo album, a treat for them to taste (checking with dietary restrictions first), a doll, stuffed animal, or blanket that is soft and cuddly, or even music that they recognize – (a CD if there is a player, or from your phone).

You can do something simple like play a game – toss a balloon or beach ball – If they can play cards or do a craft, you can join them.

Often a person with dementia retains a sense of humor; You can tell a joke, relate a ridiculous incident, or make a funny remark so you can laugh together.

People may appreciate reading together from a Psalm or other passage. Or you can share a poem or other story.

Emotional Responses

Sometimes a person has difficulty retrieving words or putting together sentences. Together, you can respond to the emotions that are in their non-verbal communication. It's possible to respond vaguely, but still appropriately. Phrases include "Oh my! That must have been ... "..."frustrating," "..."must have made you proud" "That is so funny!".

Share stories about your life.

Discuss big events going on – birthdays, weddings – bring photos if you have them. Talk about little things – something that happened on the way to visit or an odd encounter while you were doing errands – running into people that they might know.

(Continued on page 4)



A Message from the Executive Director

by Sheila Nudelman Abdo, ACSW, LCSW, JFS NEPA Executive Director



How we define success matters. Each client who seeks help from JFS comes to us with a precipitating problem. Whether it is the teenager who is struggling with self-esteem and peer relationships, a spouse dealing with family alcoholism or a couple experiencing financial insecurity, each one of them has specific goals for positive outcomes. Successful human service organizations analyze and gather data, while combining it with professional social work practices and processes to achieve client treatment goals.

Organizations use data when it comes to decision making but we cannot use data alone. Data can be interpreted differently and may not give us all the answers.

JFS reviews all its programs and services as well as our financial data when reviewing our successes and challenges. However, I see data as just another tool and that the most important data to me is based on the number ONE. One person. One success. One positive outcome. Not that qualitative data does not drive decisions, but so do individual outcomes.

Let me share a little more about this. Using our data as a map is informative, but we can't just use data and let numbers and queries take over. The power of helping one person cannot be overlooked. That is why we are here and that is what we build our agency mission upon. Data driven has its purpose and value for sure, but we cannot minimize the human factor and connection. Each person and each successful outcome are the data that fuels our energy as a human service organization and reminds us why we have been here for over 100 years.

Those who come to our door seeking assistance will be guided to get the help they need. Clients will receive the same professional help regardless of financial status or inability to pay. No one is turned away.

Yes, we are data-driven but we are also human driven. You are much more than a number at Jewish Family Service. Thanking each and every one of you.



When life's challenges overwhelm you.

JFS is here to help.



Helping the Community with
 Mental Health Counseling
 Older Adult Services
 Guardianship
 Food Insecurity

President's Message

by Dr. Dan Ginsberg, JFS Board President

I am honored to serve as JFS Board president and be able to carry on the work of past presidents and board members to ensure that the Jewish Family Service of Northeastern Pennsylvania continues to grow and prosper.

JFS's mission, purpose, and core values bring together so much of what is important to me both personally and professionally. I feel fortunate to know and work with JFS's dedicated and hard-working staff, board, donors, volunteers, and partners in building and strengthening our impact.

Our job as a board is to advise, govern, formulate, and oversee policy and procedures, serve on committees, adopt the annual budget, communicate and promote JFS's mission, activities, services, events, and programs to the community, provide financial support and management, and most importantly make sure that we have adequate resources in order to achieve the goals, and objectives of JFS.

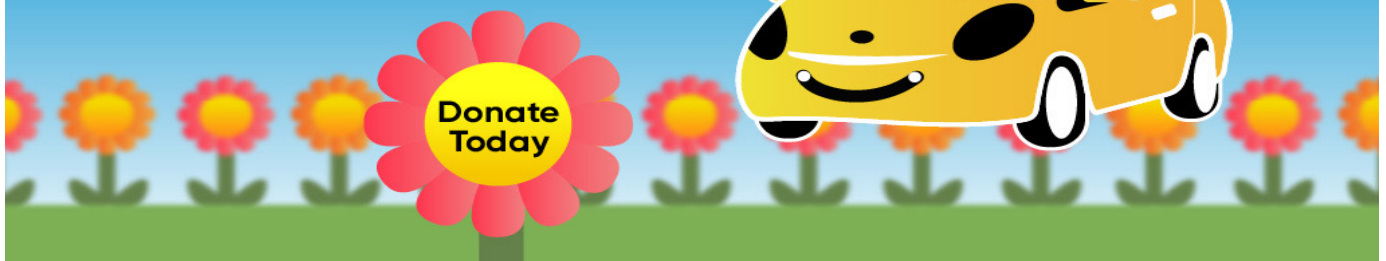
Jewish Family Service helps those facing daily challenges, life transitions, new hardships, and unexpected challenges.

JFS is transforming lives with respect, compassion, and sensitivity. We help people of all religions and ethnic origins meet their full potential by restoring their well-being, cultivating self-sufficiency, and strengthening family life.

We constantly strive to meet the needs of our clients while showing respect for their beliefs, choices, values, and differences. We are guided by the Jewish traditions of healing the world (tikkun) with loving kindness (chesed) through just and charitable deeds (tzedakah).



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Call 877-537-4227 or donate online jfsnepa.careasy.org.

(Continued from page 1)**Reminisce, or ask for their opinions.**

It is not helpful to ask them if they remember certain things, because often they might not, which leaves them feeling more left out. But you can talk about what you remember. Use phrases like "Can you believe that...?" "You always give such good advice...what do you think I should do?" "I remember you made the best..." "I remember you were always so kind to everyone" "This reminds me of the time..." "I remember last time you were telling me about..."

When it's time to Leave

When you leave, it's better to not simply say, "Goodbye". Say things such as "I have to get going" or "I'll see you (soon, tomorrow, next week, etc.)."

It's helpful to explain your need to leave with something that makes sense to them: Tell them "I have to get to my appointment" "I need to pick up the kids from school." Or "I've got to get to the grocery store to get things for dinner,"

Timing is a tricky thing for visiting.

Try to find out when your person naps, has meals, activities, or therapy. It's helpful to time your visit so that when you leave you can redirect them to something that they need to do, such as a meal or activity.

Bring yourself.

The most important thing is that you offer is you. Even if the person with dementia doesn't remember you, or remember that you visit, even though you were just there yesterday, making the most of the immediate moment is a respite from your person's isolation and a gift to you both. Even if they don't know who you are, it's important that you know who they are, and they will remember how you make them feel.

**Jewish Family Service Board of Directors for 2023/24**

From Left to Right seated: Vice President Dr. Margaret Sheldon, Secretary Susan Blum Connors, President Dr. Daniel Ginsberg, Natalie Gelb, Daniel A. Bubnis.

From Left to Right standing: Dr. Nancy Willis, Leah Laury, Gary Beckhorn, Treasurer Louis Nivert, Michael Mardo, Jamy Rosenstein, Dovid Yehudah Fink, Elliot Schoenberg, Dale K. Miller, and Vice President Nancy Johnson.



JFS Recieves Community Needs Grant

Jewish Family Service of Northeastern Pennsylvania was one of the recipients of the 2023 Spring Community Needs Grant from the Scranton Area Community Foundation. The grant in the amount of \$5,000 will assist with General Operating Support for JFS programs and services.

Pictured in photo from left to right: Frank Caputo, Scranton Area Community Foundation Grants and Communication Coordinator; Sheila Nudelman Abdo, ACSW, LCSW, JFS Executive Director; Heather Greene, MPA, JFS Business Manager; Arthur E. Levandoski, JFS Marketing & Development; and Laura Ducceschi, MBA, MA, President / CEO of the Scranton Area Community Foundation.

The Scranton Area Community Foundation has been working to enhance the quality of life for people across the Northeastern Pennsylvania region over the past 66 years, serving the community as a steward, a grantmaker, a charitable resource, and a catalyst for change and growth. The Scranton Area Community Foundation is a public 501c3 community foundation with assets of more than \$50 million and more than 215 charitable funds. More information about the Scranton Area Community Foundation can be found at www.safdn.org.

SCRANTON AREA
Community FOUNDATION

Jewish Family Service of Northeastern Pennsylvania is extremely grateful to the families and individuals who participate in our Tribute Card and Tree of Life Programs. It is a wonderful way to honor and recognize people in your life, and, at the same time, help Jewish Family Service. This listing includes gifts received January 15, 2023 through February 29, 2024. Please accept our apology if we have missed you. Occasionally mistakes get past us. If your name is not listed, please contact us so we can properly acknowledge all efforts.

For a more permanent recognition, a silver, bronze or gold leaf can be purchased and displayed on the "Tree of Life" which is located in the entranceway of the Myer Davidow Wing of the Jewish Community Center. More information can be obtained regarding a contribution by calling the Jewish Family Service office at 570-344-1186.

GENERAL FUND IN MEMORY

Essie Weisberger & Family

In memory of

Dr. Stephen J. Weissberger

Deirdre Spelman

Karen Marcus & Family

In memory of

Allana Wagner Arnovitz

Alan Smertz & Family

Dr. and Mrs. Jack Henzes & Family

In memory of Jack Henzes

Alan Smertz

Don and Stephanie Minkoff & Family

In memory of

Chelsea Rose Minkoff

Marie & Floyd Bourassa

Collette Jesikiewicz

JFS Staff

Susan Blum Connor & Mayor

James Connors

In memory of Fern Kaplan Blum

Larry & Sheila Abdo

Mary "Mimi" Hoffman

Bill & Nancy Johnson

Lorrie Loughney

Don & Stephanie Minkoff

Deirdre "Cookie" Spelman

Connors & Coyne Families

In memory of Fern Kaplan Blum

Sheila & Larry Abdo

Chuck Weisberger & Family

In memory of Rachel Weisberger

Rochelle Myers

Deirdre Holly Spelman

Ellen and Allen Fingeret & Family

In memory of Rachel Weisberger

Rochelle Myers

Deirdre Holly Spelman

Leslie Manning & Family

In memory of Lee Manning

Marlene Lieber

Marshall Kornblatt

In memory of Lillian Kornblatt

Alan & Arlene Wasser

Abby Smith & Family

In memory of Herbie Smith

Don Minkoff

Bill & Nancy Johnson

Deirdre "Cookie" Spelman

Ninotchka Hoover

In memory of

John "Herbie" Spager

Alan Smertz & Family

Carol Kadish & Family

In memory of Mary A. Ziman

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Lisa Starr & Family

In memory of Samuel Starr

Jacques Deutsch

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Michael Mardo & Iris Liebman

Rosalind Marks

Robert & Faye Rosenberg

Saul & Sharon Levy

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Atty. Donald & Joyce Douglass

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Joe, Ruthie, Max, Allison

& Neil Hollander

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Leonora Delvecchio

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James Newman

Jayne Perilstein

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Miriam Steckel Family

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Paul & Tom/Northeast Imports

Joseph & Kathryn Dunstone

Renee Schectman

Paul & Lisa Bartoletti

Ken & Dale Miller

Timothy Dougherty

Dr. Robert & Deborah Simon

Sheila & Larry Abdo,

Susan & Joseph Kamerling,

Irv Nudelman & Family

In memory of

Shirley R. Nudelman

Barry Propper

Colette Jesikiewicz

Gary & Marian Beckhorn

Heather Greene

Seth Gross & Sheryl Gross

Elayne Phillips

Susie & James Connors

Lisa & Ed Eichen

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 Cindy & Alan Smith
 Julie & Brian Weisberg
 Gwen & Mike Lopez
 Gail Edelson, MD
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 Marcy Taylor
 Barbara & Wesley Keller
 Marilyn Deustch
 Daniel Bubnis & Dr. Timothy Legg
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 Barbara and Louis Nivert & Family
 The Regan Family/Phil & Kathy
 Winowich
 Childrens Hospital of Philadelphia
 PACU Sunshine Club
 Morey & Sondra Myers
 Jennifer & Scott Inglis
 Lisa Starr

Ken and Dale Miller & Family
In memory of Alfred Miller
 Bill & Nancy Johnson
 Don & Stephanie Minkoff

Louis Suravitz
In memory of Gladys Suravitz
 Lorrie Loughney

Don & Stephanie Minkoff
Yahrzeit- 1 Year
In memory of Chelsea Rose Minkoff
 Heather Greene

DR. STEPHEN I. ROSENTHAL
HEALTHY FAMILY FUND

In memory of
Sara Rosenthal Yahrzeit
 Betsy Rosenthal

ANNUAL CAMPAIGN IN MEMORY

In memory of Laurence Davidow
 Gloria Davidow

In memory of Laurence Davidow
 Gloria Davidow

In memory of Sylvia Eisenberg
 Alan Levy

COMPLETE & SPEEDY RECOVERY

Joe Kamerling
 Sheila & Larry Abdo

IN HONOR OF

In honor of Audrey Kaufman
95th birthday
 Bill & Nancy Johnson

In honor of Dr. Daniel Ginsberg
Board President
 Seth & Sheryl Gross

In honor of Sheila Nudelman Abdo
 Atty. Rick Bishop
 Leah Laury

In honor of Harris Cutler and his
inspirational work
 The Deutsch Family

In honor of
Attorney Morey & Sondra Myers
 Richard Eckersly, CPA

In honor of Don Minkoff and his
dedication
 Rabbi Marjorie Berman
 & Rabbi Daniel Swartz

In honor of Harris & Janice Cutler
Birth of grandchild
 Seth & Cheryl Gross

In honor of Dale & Ken Miller
Birth of granddaughter
 Bill & Nancy Johnson

In honor of Dr. Daniel &
Sandra Ginsberg
Birth of great grand-daughter
 Ed & Ann Monsky

In honor of Seth & Cheryl Gross
Birth of great grandson
 Ed & Ann Monsky

In honor of Natalie Gelb
 Laurie Cadden
 Michael Gelb
 Myer Moskovitz
 Renee Schectman
 Deirdre Spelman

In honor of Leah Kaplan
"Another trip around the sun!"
 Mary Ann Connolly

MAE S. GELB FOOD PANTRY

Chuck Weisberger & Family
In memory of Rachel Weisberger
 Paula Wasser

Sheila & Larry Abdo
In memory of Shirley R. Nudelman
 Eric & Taryn Blomain
 Joseph & Deborah Hureau

SHERI & BARRY
FINKELSTEIN FUND

Gus Fahey
 Jerome and Polly Finkelstein
 Laura Scheck Zuckman

TREE OF LIFE

Lisa Starr & Family
In memory of Samuel Starr
"Bronze Leaf"
 Dr. Alan Friedman



JFS Board Spotlight

Daniel J. Bubnis

Daniel Bubnis joined JFS in 2022 on the request of now JFS president Dr. Dan Ginsberg. Commensurate with his life-long love of Judaism, he is currently a student at the Pluralistic Rabbinical Seminary which is a non-traditional hybrid program for non-traditional students who wish to become a Rabbi. He anticipates being ordained this coming December 2024. Outside of Temple, he is employed as a Medical Reviewer for health and fitness articles at Healthline, Medical News Today, and Greatist.com.

Daniel's greatest personal accomplishment was being a first-generation college graduate in his immediate family. Not only did he finish undergraduate studies with honors (BA-Sociology), but he went on to graduate school and once again graduated with honors (MS-Exercise Science and Wellness). He also holds certifications in the discipline of health and fitness (ACSM-Certified Personal Trainer; NASM-Certified Personal Trainer, Corrective Exercise Specialist).

His greatest professional accomplishment is manifested in the thousands of lives he's touched through his work at Healthline and Medical News Today. Through his efforts, he has helped countless individuals enhance their physical and psychological well-being.

"Knowing that volunteering my time to serve on the JFS board and several committees translates into a stronger JFS, which in turn can serve the community more effectively is truly a great source of happiness to me personally."



"All volunteers must understand the awesome mitzvah they are performing by helping others. Especially through JFS, they are engaging in Tikkun Olam (repairing the world) by helping and caring for those who need help. Each life a volunteer touches shines a bit brighter because they know someone is thinking about them and cares about them in a very special way."

These days Daniel resides in South Abington Township with his husband Dr. Timothy J. Legg, and their four rescue bunnies: Marcus, Sugar, Harley, and Willow.



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Meals prepared at the Jewish Home of Eastern Pennsylvania under Kosher dietary guidelines.

78 Years Later JFS Remains Committed to Helping Holocaust Survivors

The JFS Holocaust Survivors Assistance program started in 1998. It was designed to help elderly survivors of the Holocaust live their remaining years safely, with dignity, and as independently as possible. Jews who resided in European countries that were subject to Nazi rule and control between 1933 and 1945 are eligible. All others affected by Nazi persecution are eligible for services as well.

A survey was conducted by JFS and funded by grants from the Federation and the Foundation for the Jewish Elderly. The result of this survey showed many Holocaust survivors in Scranton, Wilkes-Barre, and the Poconos and many of them had specific problems due to their experiences during and after the Holocaust.

Counseling services were provided to address needs specific to Holocaust survivors and their families. In many instances, the social worker was told this was the first time assistance had been extended to them. Often this was the first time a survivor felt safe enough to share his or her experiences.

Over the years, Emergency Financial Aid totaling over \$200,000 has been distributed through grants received from the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, Inc. The aid was distributed according to specific guidelines which include approval from the Holocaust Survivor Advisory Committee established for this program.

Since the program began over 75 survivors have been assisted locally. Today according to the **Global Demographic Report on Jewish Holocaust Survivors**, there are approximately 245,000 Holocaust Survivors living across more than 90 countries. The report indicates that the median age of survivors is 86 and ages range from 77 years to over 100 years old. The majority of Jewish Holocaust Survivors (95 percent) are "child survivors" who were born between 1928 and 1946. As we get closer to the 2030s there will be very few Holocaust survivors left.

The majority of Holocaust survivors are female (61 percent) and only 39 percent are male. Nearly half of all survivors reside in Israel today.

As these survivors continue to age they will need support more than ever. Holocaust survivors were born into a world of hate, and many are once again seeing that hate reignite in today's world.

Today JFS continues to directly help survivors living locally through counseling and support. It is their strength and perseverance that brings hope to us all.

JFS Planned Giving

Build Something Today, To Support Tomorrow

Planned Giving is a method of charitable giving that involves a consideration of your retirement plan and/or family estate to be distributed to Jewish Family Service upon your passing.

For more information, or if you have designated JFS as a beneficiary please contact:

Sheila Nudelman Abdo, Executive Director (570) 344-1186

Meet the Staff

Kimberly Kramer, LSW JFS Social Worker

After 20 years as a practice manager for a local Scranton neurological medical practice, Kim left her career to follow her passion to work in a field where she could help and support people in our community. Kim returned to school in 2016, receiving a Bachelor of Science degree in human development and family studies with a minor in child maltreatment and advocacy from Pennsylvania State University, after which pursuing a Master of Social Work degree from Marywood University. Kim holds a license in social work (LSW) and is currently working on the requirements to earn her LCSW.



Kim brings to the JFS an approach to social work which is rooted in empathy, respect, and empowerment. Kim has experience working with various social issues such as intimate partner violence, substance abuse, homelessness, complex trauma, grief, and mental health concerns. Kim has a particular interest in empowering transgender and gender-diverse children, teens, young adults, and their families by creating a supportive, affirmative environment where they can feel safe exploring their choices and building community connections and support. Using different evidence-based interventions and community resources, Kim provides an eclectic therapeutic approach tailored to her client's unique needs. Whether conducting assessments, developing treatment plans, or advocating for social change, Kim is committed to promoting social justice and equality.

Community Supporting Food Needs

JFS thanks the members of our community near and far for their continued support of the Mae S. Gelb Kosher Food Pantry. These donations make certain that the pantry is stocked to assist those in the community dealing with food insecurity and in need of kosher food assistance.

Ann Monsky and Daniel Bubnis (below right) drop off donations to the Mae S. Gelb Kosher Food Pantry from the members of Temple Israel of Scranton. Susan Aufhauser and Matthew Soifer (below left) delivered a significant food donation from Congregation B'nai Harim of the Poconos. The pantry is also continually supported by donations from students from Beth Shalom Academy and Head Pre-K Teacher, Miriam Raven.



Sadness or Depression

By Don Minkoff, LCSW

Recently, I noticed people have been asking me how I have been doing. Often, I am not sure how to respond. It could be "I am doing ok," it could be a gesture like shrugging my shoulders, or a more specific thought and/or feeling. However, in thinking about the responses we do give to the question "how are you doing," in my own unofficial reflective survey, one of the responses that stand out is, "I am feeling depressed." Again, within my unofficial reflective survey, I do not remember the last time I heard, "I am feeling sad," which triggers me to reflect further, "what is the difference between feeling sad and feeling depressed?"

Sadness is a normal feeling we all experience, which is usually triggered by life events: for example, a loss of a job, the break-up of a relationship, the loss of a friendship, making a mistake, school issues, or death.

Some of the symptoms of sadness are: Crying, spending time alone, arguing, feeling more pessimistic, the inability to maintain regular eating and sleeping habits, not wanting to participate in normal life activities such as work, school, family events, recreational activities.

Sadness may be a feeling we do not like to experience. However, sadness is a normal human emotion that we live and function with.

Depression on the other hand is an emotional state within the brain. Depression can be caused by past or current circumstances or by brain functioning. Depression can become overwhelming over time: making it difficult to function in life.

Some of the characteristics of depression are: feeling intense sadness, feeling discouraged, experiencing thoughts of hopelessness and helplessness, experiencing a lack of motivation and loss of interest in activities, low energy, difficulty concentrating, focusing, and/or remembering and intense anger and worrying.

Depression and related thoughts last over a period of time without feeling better. Depression can intensify which can result in a loss of appetite, isolation, disrupted sleep, and thoughts of self-harm, which can result in

suicide attempts and/or self-hurting actions, such as self-cutting or actions without regard to safety. One can self-medicate through the use of alcohol and/or drugs, resulting in the risk of dependency and/or addiction.



Not every person who is depressed experiences all of the symptoms or an intense severity of the symptoms.

To reiterate, being sad can be overwhelming, but there will be moments when one can find joy and respond to others around us. Depression is also overwhelming, making it more difficult to find joy and connect with others around us. Sadness can move into depression, which can mask depressive symptoms until the thoughts and feelings can be overwhelming. Doing an honest inventory of one's thoughts and feelings is a way to address what is going on. Reaching out to supports that you know will be understanding, such as family and/or friends if one finds it this confusing and difficult. Through professional guidance, one can identify sadness or depression and get direction and help, through education, counseling, medication, and referral to other support services, so an individual can get one's life on track.

Once you and/or your supports identify sadness or depression, or it is still difficult to understand what is going on, contacting your physician or counselors, such as the social workers at Jewish Family Service is the next step.

Sources:
choosingtherapy.com
difference.guru
healthline.com
mentalhealthfirtaid.org
psychologytoday.com
screeningmhantional.org



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www.jfsnepa.org

Jewish Family Service of Northeastern Pennsylvania is accredited by the Council on Accreditation, Member of the Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies and is an affiliated organization of the United Way of Lackawanna and Wayne Counties and the Jewish Federation of Northeastern Pennsylvania.

This newsletter is dedicated to the memory of Barbara and Mel Sapsowitz and to the continuation of their caring work within our community.



Jewish Family Service
OF NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Medical Scheduling & Billing Specialist

Jewish Family Service, an established non-profit, is seeking an individual with a certificate in medical billing or relevant experience.

Qualifications

Proficiency in billing software and knowledge of ICD-10 and CPT codes required.
Provider credentialing experience required.
Experience with governmental and commercial insurances.
Knowledge of compliance requirements and billing guidelines.
Experience in determining insurance eligibility and benefit packages for clients.
Experience with explanation of benefits, electronic remittances and fund transfers.
Compiling outcome data and preparing monthly reports required.
Must be organized with attention to detail.
Strong computer skills to include Microsoft Word and Excel.

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Send Resume and Cover Letter to info@jfsnepa.org
EOE

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