



Jewish Association for Developmental Disabilities

OUTREACH NEWS

March 2008

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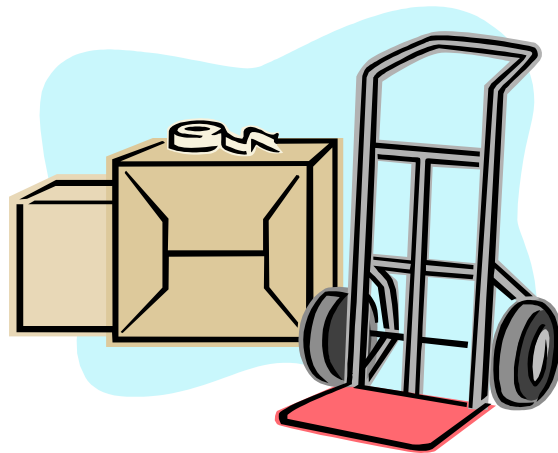
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WELCOME TO OUR NEW HOME



AS MANY OF YOU MIGHT ALREADY KNOW, WE HAVE MOVED OUR OFFICES FROM THE FOURTH FLOOR TO THE SECOND FLOOR. (WE ARE STILL IN THE SAME BUILDING) WE WELCOME YOU TO COME BY AND VISIT. WE WOULD LOVE TO SHOW YOU AROUND.

HOW TO REACH US

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Carolyn Dawson.....		19
Flowers By J-ADD.....		17

Executive Director's Message

Friends:

As I write for this edition of "outreach" I am proud to report that already in 2008 we have seen our agency grow in many ways. I realize that it is not often that one gets to see the fruits of one's labors and I would like to share the fruits that we have reaped so far this year at J-ADD with you.

Through the generosity of Mrs. Lola Gordon, we have been given a large annuity that has resulted in naming our home in Washington Township as the "Gordon House". We have received our sixth consecutive grant from the Daniel Jordon Fiddle Foundation to manage our resource hotline, we have been given State approval to open yet another apartment, and we are in the midst of developing a flower business to employ our consumers. Our respite services have grown to support an additional 30 families, and not less importantly, we have completed our move into a larger office space. Each of these items is the fruition of a collaborative effort put forth by both our board members, our community partners in the public and private sectors and our wonderful staff. And these are just the big changes.....

On a daily level we continue to help our consumers plan for, and lead lives that are independent, productive, meaningful, and quality laden.

John

President's Message

A PURIM HAPPENING - FEEL THE GLOW
You had to be there to appreciate fully the warmth and love radiating from our Purim party. Our Purim party is decidedly a step down from the level of our Chanukah celebration. It is more intimate, less structured, and is just for us - that is, our Group Homes. We are welcomed into Temple Beth Shalom of Teaneck, who assist us in our preparations along with our devoted "Party Planners" consisting of Lauren Glubo and our Events Committee. With a small, but wonderful, three-piece band, we sing, dance and have fun. Some costumes (John and I both looked great - see our picture in this bulletin). But what made the indefinable difference was the love and respect among our group home consumers - each one helping and encouraging the other, dancing and singing with one another, across the spectrum of their different ages and abilities. Kind of nice, and in an unforced environment.

And that is what we are all about - fostering respect and friendship amount our consumers. It is the respect, and the self-worth that is felt among each of our consumers as they pursue their activities, in work and in play, that now radiates out to the larger community. As John, our Executive Director explains in his column, we are reaching into the general population in business ventures, and are fostering greater communication across the "divide", with confidence that our consumers will meet the task.

With the help of all of us, our goals will be achieved, and we will all be better persons for the time we give, and the assistance we render to our consumer population.

Thank you for your continued support.

Michael

RESPITE SERVICES

J-ADD's Respite program provides relief for caregivers attending to family members with developmental disabilities in their own homes. These family members must be registered with the New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) in order to be eligible for our services. For more information about eligibility requirements, please contact the Division of Developmental Disabilities at 973-977-4004.

J-ADD is currently seeking to identify additional respite staff members to work with children and adults with developmental disabilities who receive services from our agency.

We turn to our respite recipients and readers to help us recruit potential staff members. These positions are ideal part-time opportunities for those interested in working in the field of disabilities. The flexible hours make it a great opportunity for college students.

For more information, please contact our office at 201-457-0058 X 12. Resumes can be faxed to 201-457-0025



For the sixth year in a row, J-ADD has received a grant from the Daniel Jordan Fiddle Foundation helping us to continue to expand our Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Family Support Hotline.

ASD is a neurological, life-span disorder that is manifested by a wide variety of ways that may affect an individual's social, behavioral, or cognitive functioning.

The Daniel Jordan Fiddle Foundation Family Support Hotline provides personalized services and individual attention to families who have an adolescent or adult family member with ASD. The Hotline has developed a Resource Guide which has a listing of community resources, such as schools, camps, recreational programs, social skills programs, support services and counseling services, as well as legal and advocacy organizations. The Hotline and Resource Guide are free of charge and can be accessed by calling 201-457-0058 ext. 15.

J-ADD is proud of its partnership with The Daniel Jordan Fiddle Foundation. The Foundation was established to provide grants and programs that enrich the lives of adolescents and adults with ASD. Through the Foundation's grants programs, the individuality of every person with ASD is honored. The Hotline is supervised by Dr. Efrat Sobolofsky and has been very successful in connecting families to the community supports and resources that they need.

The Daniel Jordan Fiddle Foundation recognizes the unique challenges that having a family member with ASD presents to the entire family. Through the grant to J-ADD, the Foundation hopes to help many more families and encourages the community to use these valuable resources.

*The J-ADD Daniel Jordan Fiddle Foundation Hotline
Can be reached at 201-457-0058, ext. 15*



CLOSING THOUGHTS FROM J-ADD'S INTERNS

I can honestly say that the person I am today is definitely not the same as the one who first walked into J-ADD's office in September. Not only have I gained the skills to become a more effective social worker, I have also learned a great deal about working with others who come from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Having worked with individuals with developmental disabilities in the past, I thought I had all the knowledge and experience needed to work with our residents at the group homes. However, the fact that the homes were Kosher posed an obstacle for me since I had never experienced the Kosher lifestyle before. Yet, with each passing week, I was quickly educated on the Kosher rules and introduced to the Jewish holidays. This newfound knowledge greatly helped in interacting with both the Fair Lawn group home residents and their family members. Every week during my visits to the group home, I make an effort to sit and talk with each of the residents and also to initiate a group activity such as drawing, cooking, baking, or taking pictures. As the week of my termination with the residents draws closer, I am reminded of all the goals that I had set for myself in the beginning of the year. It is both rewarding and satisfying to have met most, if not all, of my goals for the Fair Lawn group home. My last day at this internship will be a bittersweet moment but it will nonetheless be the beginning of the end of my journey as a social worker intern.

Sung Kim

Working for J-ADD this year has taught me a great deal about myself, the agency, and the consumers. I have learned that I am patient, empathetic, and a great advocate for my clients. This has been my first experience working with individuals with developmental disabilities. I had been told by friends that have worked with this population before, that at times it could get very tiring, and some people have a tendency to lose their patience. This may have made me a little nervous, but I told myself before coming into this field placement that any job is going to be tiring and test your patience, so why should this job be any different than any other job?

The bonds that I have built with the consumers and staff will be something that I will remember and take with me forever as I start my career as a social worker. One of my memories will be of a night right before Chanukah. The staff, the men, and I were making latkes from scratch. We were all helping, smiling, making a mess in the kitchen, and enjoying a little learning about Chanukah as well.

Besides learning about all of the consumers that I have worked with, they have taught me so much more on an individual level. I have learned that my role as an advocate for them is extremely important. There are times that the consumers may feel like they need a new piece of furniture, assistance with finding a job, or help with relationships inside or outside the home. They might like to do more recreation, but are not sure how to approach staff about it. When this occurs, through conversation they will explain to me what they are feeling. I will see how important some of these things they are asking for are to them, and will approach the staff and talk to them about it. Without advocating for my clients it is possible that they may not get all that they need or want, because they may not possess the skills to communicate it to staff. As the social work intern at the home I dedicate a certain amount of time to talk to each and every client, and to see how I can help make their lives more fulfilling and enjoyable.

Lastly, I want to thank the staff for taking me under their wing, showing me the ropes, and letting me be part of the New Bridge family. The dedication that the staff has shown me towards their jobs is remarkable, and a work ethic that I will strive for in the future.

Etan Pomerantz



Sung



Etan & Naomi

Working for J-ADD, I feel like a partner with an experienced team of dedicated individuals, where I have learned about professional tools and techniques used to empower people with disabilities and maximize their potential. This gift is truly invaluable and will aid in my future career as a social worker.

I was recently asked to make a home visit with one of our families. The single mother, a recent immigrant, was sitting in her two bedroom complex with her son with Autism who was frantically jumping up and down by her side. There was no room for him to play or run which it seemed like he needed so badly. There were piles of books on Autism, random papers, stacks of mail, bags of untouched mail, and clutter everywhere. We were talking about what it was like raising a child with developmental disabilities and she said, "It is hard but at the end of the day, he's my special boy and I love him." I was moved by the mother's love for her child despite the difficulties. It was obvious that she looked forward to having better accommodations for her son but she was grateful for each voucher check she receives from J-ADD in the mail. I asked her what she uses the money for and she said "to pay the babysitter, I need to go food shopping and I cannot take 'Jake' with me."

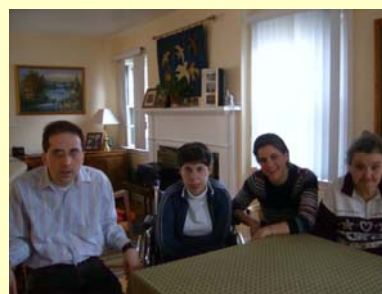
As a social work student, a common theme throughout my schooling is to work "where the client is at." I have internalized this principle and tried implementing it in the Fisher Home, one of the two group homes I visit once a week. I was conducting an activity for the five consumers around the table that entailed holding a marker and drawing a picture. I had forgotten that one of the consumers has difficulty moving his hand in such fine movements. For a few moments, I did not know what to do. Then an insight came to me, instead of having the consumer, "Tod," move his hands and draw, he held the marker in his hand and it was I, who moved the blank white paper around. When we were done drawing, I looked at "Tod"'s paper and showed him his artwork. His pride shined as he gazed at his beautiful work of art!

Like a beautiful tapestry on one side, the other side is full of little pieces and knots. Similarly, the group homes run so efficiently, the day programs and workshops are taken care of. Everything looks so smooth. Yet the "inside scoop" is that there are a select group of individuals working tirelessly on the other side, to tie up the loose ends and knots. In conclusion, the world that goes on behind the scenes is truly a remarkable one, filled with hard work, dedication, and loads of love that is obvious in everything J-ADD does.

Penina Feuerstein



Penina with Residents



Penina with Residents

When I started my social work student internship at J-ADD this past year, I did not know what to expect. I was not familiar with the agency and I had little experience working with individuals with developmental disabilities.

After a few weeks of 'on the job' field work, it became apparent to me that being an advocate for the consumers and enabling them to recognize their own strengths was something that I was eager and happy to do. In addition to professional satisfaction, I feel fortunate to have developed a sense of pride and caring on a personal level as well.

My experience with the J-ADD family has been multifaceted. On Mondays, I start the week working in the office with the fellow interns, supervisors, administrators and staff members. On Tuesdays and Fridays I see a total of twelve consumers in three different locations – the Leonia group home, the Daughters of Miriam Nursing Home in Clifton, and the "Flowers by JADD" program at the JCC of Tenafly.

It is inspirational when a J-ADD consumer finds the words to bring a big smile to a very lonely nursing home resident. It is exciting to facilitate group home activities such as baking, sewing and creative art projects and share the consumers' well-deserved pride.

These are a few of the memories that will follow me for many years. What will stay with me always are the connections of the heart.

Naomi Blum-Westrich



WELCOME HOME

Supportive Apartment Relocates

In December of 2007, the supportive apartment that had been in Englewood since 2002 was relocated to Walraven Drive in Teaneck. This new location puts the two individuals residing there closer to a lot more in the community. Marc and Naftali have settled in to their new apartment and are enjoying their new surroundings.

Flower sales at the JCC continue on Fridays

Get double the value for your money!!

When you buy quality flowers from Flowers by J-ADD, not only will you be able to enjoy your flowers but you can also derive pleasure from the knowledge that your purchase will ensure the continued employment of individuals with disabilities.

All you need to do is pre-order any one of the bouquets advertised by calling us at 201-457-0058 by Tuesday for Friday pick-up at one of our convenient curbside stands (JCC on the Palisades, UJANNJ.)



Home Beautification Projects Continue

The 1st floor kitchen at Fair Lawn was completely redone in the fall. The 2nd floor kitchen in the same home was done in February. Volunteers from Bonim completed that project. Once again, we thank Bonim for continuing to help make the homes beautiful!

New Faces

Ai'mee Thomas-Bowman joined the J-ADD team as the manager of the Leonia Home in January. Ai'mee has an extensive background in the social services field and we welcome her to the agency.

J-ADD Accepts Gift from Mrs. Gordon to Rename Senior Home "Gordon House"

What more appropriate time than at our annual Chanukah Party to rededicate our senior group home as "GORDON HOUSE". Mrs. Lola Gordon was thanked for her generous donation to the J-ADD family which made this possible at the Chanukah party. Chanukah (Hebrew for "dedication") is the annual festival of the Jewish people celebrated on eight successive days. It begins on the 25th day of Kislev, the third month of the Jewish calendar, and usually occurs in December in the Gregorian calendar. Hanukkah is also known by other names: Festival of Lights, Feast of Dedication, and Feast of the Maccabees. Hanukkah commemorates the rededication of the Temple of Jerusalem by Judah the Maccabee in 165 BC. Rededication was necessary because Antiochus king of Syria and overlord of Palestine had desecrated the temple. When Judah Maccabee recaptured Jerusalem three years later, he had the temple purged and a new altar put up in place of the desecrated one. According to tradition, only a one-day supply of non-desecrated olive oil could be found for the rededication, but that small quantity burned miraculously for eight days. Jews commemorate this event by lighting candles for the eight nights of Hanukkah.



*Mrs. Gordon being presented with flowers after the Senior Home
Is renamed The Gordon House*

Purim Party

Some of J-ADD's best dressed men and women and the occasional royalty, and Dracula were seen around the Beth Shalom Social Hall Tuesday march 18th, as more than 50 people celebrated J-ADD's annual Purim Party.

The Jewish holiday of Purim celebrates the salvation of the Jewish people by Esther, as told in the biblical book of the same name. In the book, Esther courageously persuades her king, Ahasuerus, to prevent his arrogant adviser Haman from exterminating the Jewish people.

Party goes, on Tuesday the 18th dined on Chinese food and ate traditional Hamantashen, three-pronged cookies said to resemble Haman's hat. Many were seen to let their hair down and dance to traditional Jewish music and some not so traditional rock and roll.

"It's almost like the Mardi Gras where all our consumers get to have a great time," said Lauren Glubo, a coordinator for the event, which has been cosponsored by the Sisterhood at Temple Beth Shalom Synagogue for the past 10 years.



*We would like to hear from you regarding your opinions and what articles you would like to see in
future issues. Please call 201-457-0058, ext. 10*

Editor: Ina Friedman

ANNUAL YOM HASHOAH COMMEMORATION MAY 1, 2008

The Holocaust Memorial Committee of UJA Federation of Northern New Jersey announces that the 65th Anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising and the Annual Holocaust Commemoration will take place on Thursday, May 1, 2008, at Temple Sholom, 385 Howland Avenue, River Edge, NJ at 7 PM. The media exhibit will be open for viewing at 6:15 PM. The facility is handicap accessible.

Our distinguished keynote speaker will be Julius Berman, Chairman of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany. The community speaker will be New Milford High School teacher Colleen Tambuscio who has implemented a Holocaust education program that includes a student trip to Eastern Europe. Temple Sholom clergy will participate in the program, which will include a children's candle lighting procession. The moving stories of six Holocaust survivors will be told as each light a candle in memory of the Six Million Jews. Other speakers will include a child of survivors and a Yiddish reading.

For additional information can be obtained by contacting Dr. Wallace Greene at (201) 488-6800, x. 207. For directions call (201) 891-4466.

The Jewish Association for Developmental Disabilities

Cordially invites you to join us for our

22nd ANNUAL MEETING

Monday, May 5, 2008 at 7:00 PM

J.C.C. of Paramus

E. 304 Midland Avenue - Paramus, New Jersey 07652

Awards:

Volunteer of the Year

Susan Thaler

Humanitarian Award

Peter K. Seldin

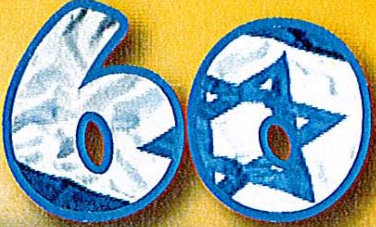
Life Achievement Award

Charles P. Berkowitz, MSW

Dessert Reception

UJA COMMUNITY CELEBRATION
Bergen Performing Arts Center
Thursday May 8, 2008 - 8pm
Outdoor street festival at 6pm

Israel

at 



Noa

Joshua Nelson
& the Kosher Gospel Singers



Pharaoh's Daughter
with special guests

Chairperson: Angelica Berrie
Produced by Michael Dorf



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Orchestra: \$60
Mezzanine: \$30
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For Tickets, call Center Box Office at 201-227-1030, or visit www.bergenpac.org

OF INTEREST.....

AN INTERESTING "NIGHTLINE" REPORT ON ASPERGER'S SYNDROME CAN A PERSON WITH ASPERGER'S SYNDROME SURVIVE THE CHALLENGES OF MIDDLE SCHOOL

ABC News and "Nightline" reported extensively on Autism and how the fasted growing developmental disability impacts the more than one million people living with Autism and the people close to them. The ABC news team of correspondent John Donovan and producer Caren Zucker looked at Asperger's Syndrome, a specific form of autism in a report called Echoes of Autism: Different in the Middle.

Different in the Middle explored the experiences of kids in middle school who must navigate a teenage world while also confronting the social challenges of living with Asperger's Syndrome. As Daniel Corcoran, a 21-year-old with Asperger's Syndrome, puts it this way, "Middle school...the nightmarish days." His mother, Karrie Olick, remembers those painful days this way, "It doesn't feel so good as a parent when your kid comes home and says so-and-so 'called me a retard'."

Jed Baker is a psychologist who teaches social skills to kids who, like Daniel, have Asperger's Syndrome says, "In some areas, there have been reports that 90% of kids with Asperger's are getting bullied on a daily basis." But over time, Daniel has learned that he just needs to continue trying to figure out how to live with Asperger's, accept himself for who he is, and hope that others will also love him.

THE SPECIAL ED ADVOCATE

After high school, more students with disabilities are continuing their education at two and four year colleges, and attending vocational and career schools. If one of your goals is further education, you need to plan ahead.

Where do you begin? Which school will support your success? Is financial aid available?

For juniors and seniors, now is the time to learn all you can about colleges, vocational and career schools. Visit campuses. Get a head start on college applications.

This time of year also marks the beginning of the college financial aid season.

A good place for loads of resources, in-depth information guides, and good advice about planning for the transition to further education is in the Special Ed Advocate, March 4, 2008, Issue: 425.

Log on to newsletter@wrightslaw.com to receive e-mails from The Special Ed Advocate. They will link you to the above newsletter@ : <http://www.wrightslaw.com/nltr/08/nl.0304.htm>

A NEW APPROACH FOR ADULTS WITH AUTISM

With the focus on the record number of American children diagnosed with autism, Temple University researchers have turned their attention to a neglected group—teenagers and adults with the disorder.

Born prior to federal mandates in the late '80s and early '90s for full and early intervention programs for children with autism, many in this group did not benefit from now-standard individualized and intensive treatments. With little use of or expertise with assistive technologies—such as language keyboards or computers—non-verbal teens and adults had very few ways to communicate. And because people with autism tend to test very low on standard IQ tests, people did not presume they had intellect.

But now, thanks to Kristie Koenig, PhD., OTL/R, and her colleague Moya Kinnealey, PhD., OTL/R, that bleak picture may be changing. In interviews with non-verbal teens and adults who have learned to communicate by typing, they realized that in their studies they had neglected the experts—those who had autism themselves.

“Once we break through the physical shell of autism, we begin to understand it from the ‘inside out,’” Koenig said. “When that happens, many behaviors associated with autism begin to make sense as the individual explains his/or her experience.”

Koenig works to understand how sensory disorder issues—an inability to take in information from the senses and then to organize and interpret it, then make a motor response—makes it difficult for people with autism to adapt to their environment. Problems can range from an inability to screen out distracting noise to motor skill issues, such as not being able to sit on a swing and pump their legs at the same time.

When she realized that many of her observations about motor and sensory skills were confirmed in interviews with those affected by autism, she says, “We had to listen.”

Autism is a complex disorder that covers a wide range of behaviors, and is characterized by difficulty in communication and an inability to socialize. Across the broad spectrum of autism, it is estimated that anywhere from 30 to 100 percent have some form of sensory processing disorders.

The interviews reveal that despite the motor, sensory and communication barriers faced by the interviewees, inside they remain alert, intelligent and aware of their condition. The experience taught Koenig to always “presume intellect” in these individuals and to recognize their attempt to communicate this through a variety of behaviors.

Using this inside/out approach, Koenig finds that many of the stimming, or repetitive, behaviors of autism—which can connote mindless activity—may be efforts to self-soothe against overwhelming sensory input. For example, flapping may be a response to intense discomfort, while hands clapped over ears may be an attempt to block a “painful” sound.

Sensory disorders may help explain other behaviors, such as an autistic person’s inability to listen to a conversation and

meet the speakers gaze at the same time. While it may appear rude, the experience of listening and looking may prove too intense. Or, as one interviewee typed: “I can either look at you or I can listen to you.”

While traditional approaches have worked to eradicate or “fix” these behaviors in adolescents and adults, Koenig recommends a “relationship-based” approach that acknowledges the behaviors as coping mechanisms, which, if arbitrarily removed, might be replaced by something more dangerous, such as head banging.

Instead, she suggests trying to adjust the environment to help affected individuals cope or to work on gradually desensitizing them to reduce the impact of the sensory overload. Her goal is to find universal design solutions, which improve the environment not only for those sensory disorders, but for everyone.

“In a classroom, for example, you might replace fluorescent lights that emit a distracting ‘buzz’ with lamps,” she said. “This benefits not only the person with autism, but everyone who uses the space.”

The interviews open a window to the motor barriers of autism. Participants describe being trapped inside a body that can’t “trust” to do what they want or that feels like “cement.” Many of these sensations arise from an inability to be able to plan out actions in the mind and carry them out in the body, which affects large and small motor skills.

“We were amazed by how articulate they were,” Koenig said.

Paul Kotler, 18, a nonverbal student was interviewed in the study. He began receiving intensive occupational therapy on his sensory and motor systems beginning at age 12. Prior to this, he had traditional behavioral and educational programming. The occupational therapy work helped him to start typing about two years later, at 14.

At school, Paul uses a computerized keyboard to communicate with his teachers and fellow classmates.

The most difficult thing about being autistic? “Camouflages intellect” Paul types. When asked if he wants friends, Kotler types slowly, but poignantly: “Camaraderie long awaited.” When asked what people should know about him: “Autism,” he types, “Disguise me.” What he would most like to do is to, “Teach others about autism.”

Koenig emphasizes that while Paul and the other teens and adults who participated in the study are not cured, the ability to communicate brings their treatments to a new level.

“Being able to communicate changes the guesswork in designing intervention goals as the person can tell us what their goals are.”

In the end, she says, working with an autistic teen or adult must be based on trust. “We need to trust the autistic person to let us know: “How is this for you?”

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REFLECTIONS

THE POWER OF WORDS

*A careless word may kindle strife
A cruel word may wreck a life
A bitter word may hate instill
A brutal word may smite and kill
A gracious word may smooth the way
A joyous word may light the day
A timely word may lessen stress
A loving word may heal and bless*