



# JFSA

annual report 2007

we are the frontline





# jewish family service agency

305-1985 W. Broadway, Vancouver, BC V6J 4Y3 tel. 604.257.5151 fax. 604.257.5148 www.jfsa.ca

Founded in 1936, Jewish Family Service Agency is a social service organization committed to Jewish values, ethics and community. We provide resources and opportunities to strengthen and enhance the quality of life for individuals and families.

This annual report covers the activities for the fiscal year, **September 1, 2006 to August 31, 2007**.

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# executive message

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JFSA is our community's frontline social service agency. Our work serves as a vital safety net for Greater Vancouver's Jewish community, providing security, dignity, and support to our most vulnerable members. The Talmud tells us that a measure of a community's worth lies in its treatment of the elderly, the widowed and the orphaned. We are proud of the work we do to support those in need.

This past year JFSA helped sustain thousands of individuals who walk a fine line between hope and despair. Our programs are indeed lifelines to those in need. By providing housing, employment, counselling, financial aid, food, and home care support, we keep our entire community vibrant, accessible and strong.

As affordable housing becomes more scarce, and welfare and minimum wage rates remain low, we are witnessing an increasing demand for our support. This past year, we were able to respond to the frontline issues facing our community through the generous support of our donors and funders. We will continue to battle the poverty line, the unemployment line, and all lines that harm and exclude the most marginalized members of our community. We are the frontline for our community, and the dedication of our staff and board, combined with the generosity of support of the community at large, helps empower and inspire us as we hold the line against increasing poverty, isolation, and despair.



Rick Kohn and Joseph Kahn-Tietz

“*The measure of a community's worth lies in its treatment of the elderly, the widowed and the orphaned.*”

The Talmud

# basic resource services

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JFSA is committed to providing essential resource services, such as housing, food, clothing and medical support, to those in need in our community. BC continues to have the highest levels of poverty, number of working poor and percentage of children living below the poverty line of any province in Canada.

These realities are reflected in the Jewish community, due to our pervasive lack of affordable housing, adequate working wages, and the low level of welfare benefits that do not reflect the real cost of living in our province.

Our capacity to assist the most marginalized members of our community with food, clothing, housing and medical support remains strong, even with the increasing need, due to the support of funders and donors. Our programs also serve to increase inclusion in the Jewish community. This year we were able to provide direct financial aid and food assistance to almost 900 individuals and 400 families throughout the community; within these families were almost 90 children.

## **Food Service Programs**

- Jewish Food Bank
- Holiday/Prison Hampers
- Food Vouchers
- Emergency Food Distribution
- Project Isaiah

## **Pro Bono and In-Kind Services**

- Pro-Bono Legal Clinic
- Pro-Bono Dental Service

## **Inclusion Programs**

- Tickets to Inclusion
- Camp subsidies
- JCC subsidies/Lepovsky Fund
- High Holiday tickets

## **Financial Assistance**

- Direct Aid
- Holocaust Emergency Assistance Fund
- Seniors Medical Fund
- JFSA Medical Care Fund
- Maot Chittim (Passover Food)

### **Community Partners/Funders**

Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver through the Combined Jewish Appeal, The Diamond Foundation, The Snider Foundation, Jewish Women International, B'nai Brith Non-Sectarian Community Food Bank, Mazon Canada, Peretz Institute, all Greater Vancouver synagogues, The Western Canada Society to Access Justice, The Rabbinical Association of Vancouver, Jewish Community Centre of Greater Vancouver, The Minerva Foundation, Jewish Community Foundation - Women's Endowment Fund, United Way, Vancity, Camp Miriam, Camp Hatikvah, various arts and cultural venues, Kids Up Front, Quest Outreach Society, various dentists within the Jewish Community, Reach Dental Clinic.



# employment services

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This year JFSA Employment Services provided newcomers and other Greater Vancouver residents with a range of programs and resources to assist with employment, career development, and retraining. JFSA staff worked with individuals both locally and internationally, in person, by phone and electronically, providing a multitude of services.

We are in the process of integrating a new model of service delivery to build on what we have accomplished. We will include a resource centre environment and a comprehensive inclusive approach, to foster an atmosphere of self help and cooperative learning with the goal of maximizing the potential of all individuals in our community.



## **Services provided include:**

- Assessment and action planning
- Employment counselling
- Information and referral
- Job search skills training
- Job coaching
- Orientation to the Canadian job market
- Assistance with resume writing
- Career Planning
- Online job postings
- Network building skills

## **Community Partners/Funders**

Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver through the Combined Jewish Appeal, Direct Access Gaming, Yad b'Yad - The Coalition on Poverty, Vancity.



# seniors outreach services

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The JFSA Seniors Department provides assessments, accurate and timely information, and access and referral to health and social services to improve the lives of seniors. We work directly with seniors to adapt our programs to meet changing needs, such as ESL classes, medical equipment, financial aid, and transportation.

Our Home Support service provides assistance to all seniors in need, regardless of income. We also work with other Jewish and non-Jewish agencies to increase community participation in lunch programs, exercise classes, and outings. Outreach continues to expand, with service available in Vancouver (including the West End and Downtown), the North Shore, and Richmond. This year outreach work began in Burnaby and Coquitlam. Burquest Community Association generously provides office space and administrative support to this work.

JFSA brings compassion and dedication to our work, as well as expertise in the field of aging. We frequently assist seniors and their families with difficult transitions and changes inherent in the aging process. Volunteers are also an essential part of the success of our services. We recruit and support volunteers to assist seniors with delivery of Kosher Meals on Wheels, lunch programs, and more. There are more than 30 volunteers within the department.

## **Community Partners/Funders**

Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver through the Combined Jewish Appeal, The Diamond Foundation, The Snider Foundation, Al Polsky Golf Tournament, City of Vancouver, Vancouver Coastal Health, Shalom BC, United Way, Temple Sholom, Burquest Community Association, B'nai Brith & Maple Crest Housing Societies, Chabad of Richmond



## **This year, the team of 7 part-time staff and 30 volunteers:**

- Worked with more than 600 seniors and their families
- Delivered more than 1500 Kosher Meals on Wheels
- Provided 4000 hours of Home Support to more than 80 seniors
- Coordinated a weekly lunch at Temple Sholom, and a monthly lunch at Har El on the North Shore
- Developed a community kitchen in Richmond
- Continued to facilitate ESL conversational groups in 4 locations with a team of trained volunteers





# resettlement & integration services

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During the past year, JFSA provided Resettlement and Integration Services to 600 recently arrived Jewish immigrants from many countries - including Israel, the former Soviet Union and South America.

We continue to play an essential role in welcoming, integrating and assisting families through a range of services: information, orientation, advocacy, referrals to community and government programs, and extensive integration support. Pre-migration assistance was also provided to many families from Israel and South America. Our resettlement and integration programs are designed to ease the adaptation to a new culture, and to initiate and strengthen the connection between the Jewish newcomer and the Vancouver Jewish Community.

The Jewish Integration Council continues to be active in welcoming new immigrants to Vancouver. This past year, 20 volunteers, mostly former immigrants, were actively involved in delivering Welcome Baskets, planning and organizing Jewish cultural and social events, some of which were held in collaboration with Shalom BC. The program committee organized Chanukah, Purim, and Shavuot holiday celebrations and a Summer Picnic event.

## Community Partners/Funders

Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver through the Combined Jewish Appeal, Jewish Immigrant Aid Services of Canada, BC Settlement Integration Program, Shalom BC, all Greater Vancouver synagogues, Jewish Community Centre of Greater Vancouver, Jewish Community Foundation, United Way of the Lower Mainland. Seed to Table project partners are JCC "Madrichim" leadership development program, JCC summer camp, "Spare Time Fun Centre" after school program, and Magee High School, and is funded by Vancity, United Way and the Vancouver Foundation.

## Other programs include:

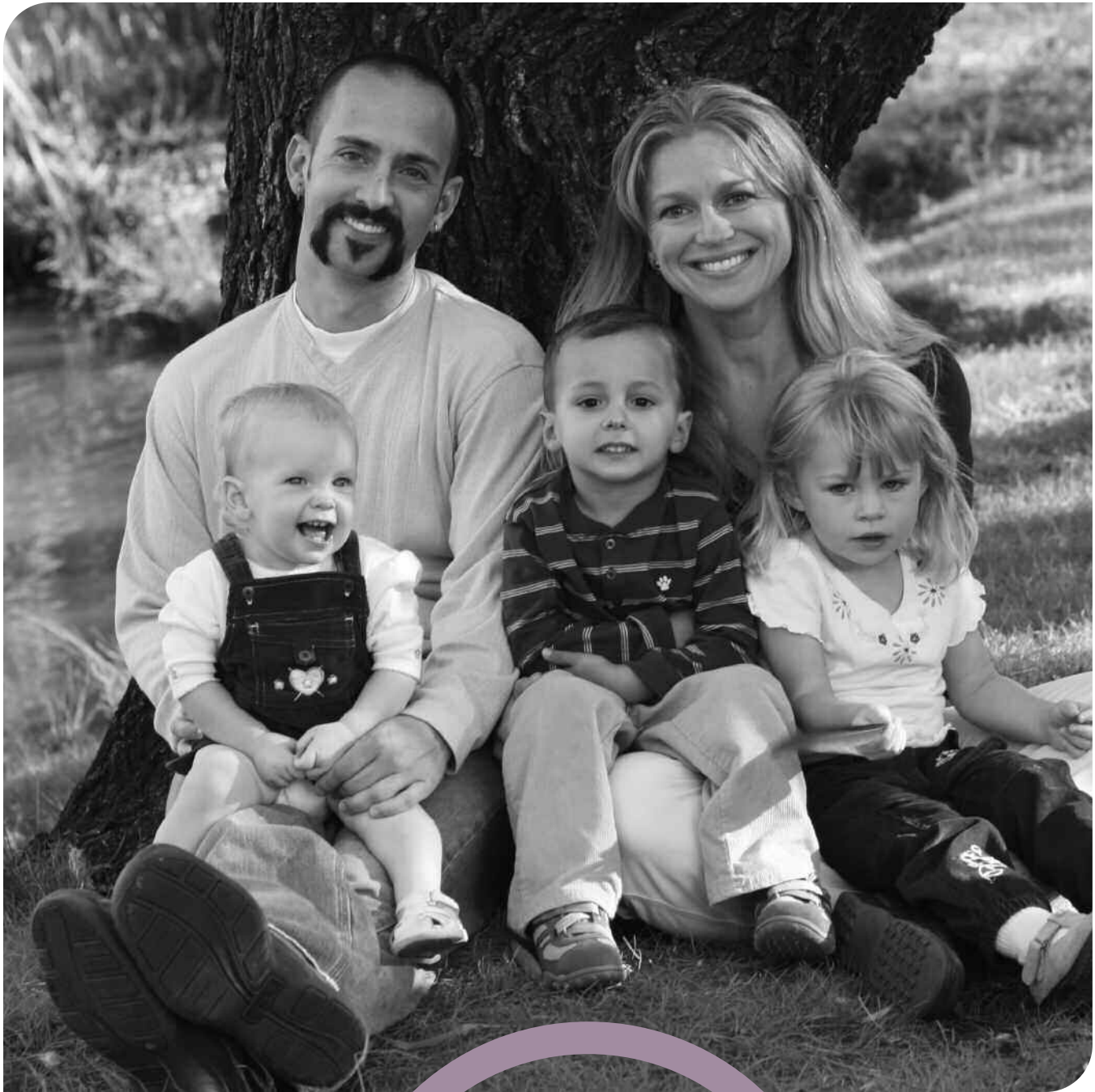
### • Seed to Table Garden Project

This project offers immigrant youth and other children opportunities to develop a community garden, grow produce, participate in harvest celebrations and learn about social responsibility.

### • The Vancouver Association of Russian Jewry (VERA/VARJ)

VERA successfully launched with the support from the World Congress of Russian Jewry. Under the leadership of JFSA, Rabbi Wosk and Rabbi Baitelman, the association engaged former Russian immigrants and recent arrivals, in a variety of projects with the objective to build leadership through outreach, education and programming.

- Quarterly Russian language bus tours
- Support groups for Israeli newcomers
- Walking tours of the historical Jewish community (with the Jewish Historical Society)
- Speaker's Bureau Series in Russian and Hebrew



# special needs services

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Whether visible or hidden, acquired or life-long, disability is part of our life and affects all of us. The work of JFSA's Special Needs Department promotes and supports initiatives that help to create an accessible and inclusive Jewish community.

The Very Important Partners (VIP) program taps the energy and talents of a group of adults living with special needs to provide valuable community services, including Books to Go, Comfort Kits, and Canes Enable. This year we hired an artist to help support the Canes Enable project, and create a social enterprise venture. These projects serve to enrich our community and empower individuals to live their lives more fully as contributing citizens. There is a growing need in our community to support more individuals living with disabilities, and to provide them with job readiness programs.

The department continues to respond to a steady stream of requests for information, referral and advocacy. We are supported by a new committee, the Special Needs Action Committee (SNAC), whose purpose is to raise awareness of disability issues and support the active participation of people living with disabilities in the Jewish community.

## Other programs and events include:

- An ongoing monthly support group provides education and resources to parents who have children living with diverse special needs.
- CONNECTIONS, the third annual event was held on March 29, 2007. JFSA co-sponsored a film screening with the Vancouver International Jewish Film Festival. The double bill brought together two of Canada's acclaimed documentary filmmakers, Marianne Kaplan (*The Boy Inside*) and Bonnie Sherr Klein (*Shameless*), whose latest films poignantly address different aspects of living with disabilities. This networking event showcased the contributions of people who live with disabilities.
- Two educational workshops were presented to King David High School and Vancouver Talmud Torah. They were designed to raise awareness about the need to create accessible and inclusive communities.

### Community Partners/Funders

Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver through the Combined Jewish Appeal, Isaac Waldman Jewish Public Library, Jewish Community Centre of Greater Vancouver, Louis Brier Home and Hospital, Keitha Coates (Crate Ideas), Dan-D-Market, Kosher Food Warehouse, Omnitsky Kosher BC, Chevra Kaddisha (Jewish Burial Society), Leon Broitman, Kerrisdale Pharmacy, Morry Gaerber (Eddie's Hang-up Display Ltd.) and Yaffa House.



# counselling services

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JFSA's Counselling Department provides a variety of services for the community. We have delivered more than 1800 hours of professional counselling and therapy this year to individuals, couples and families, through our fee-for-service program.

We continue to operate our established community development and outreach programs:

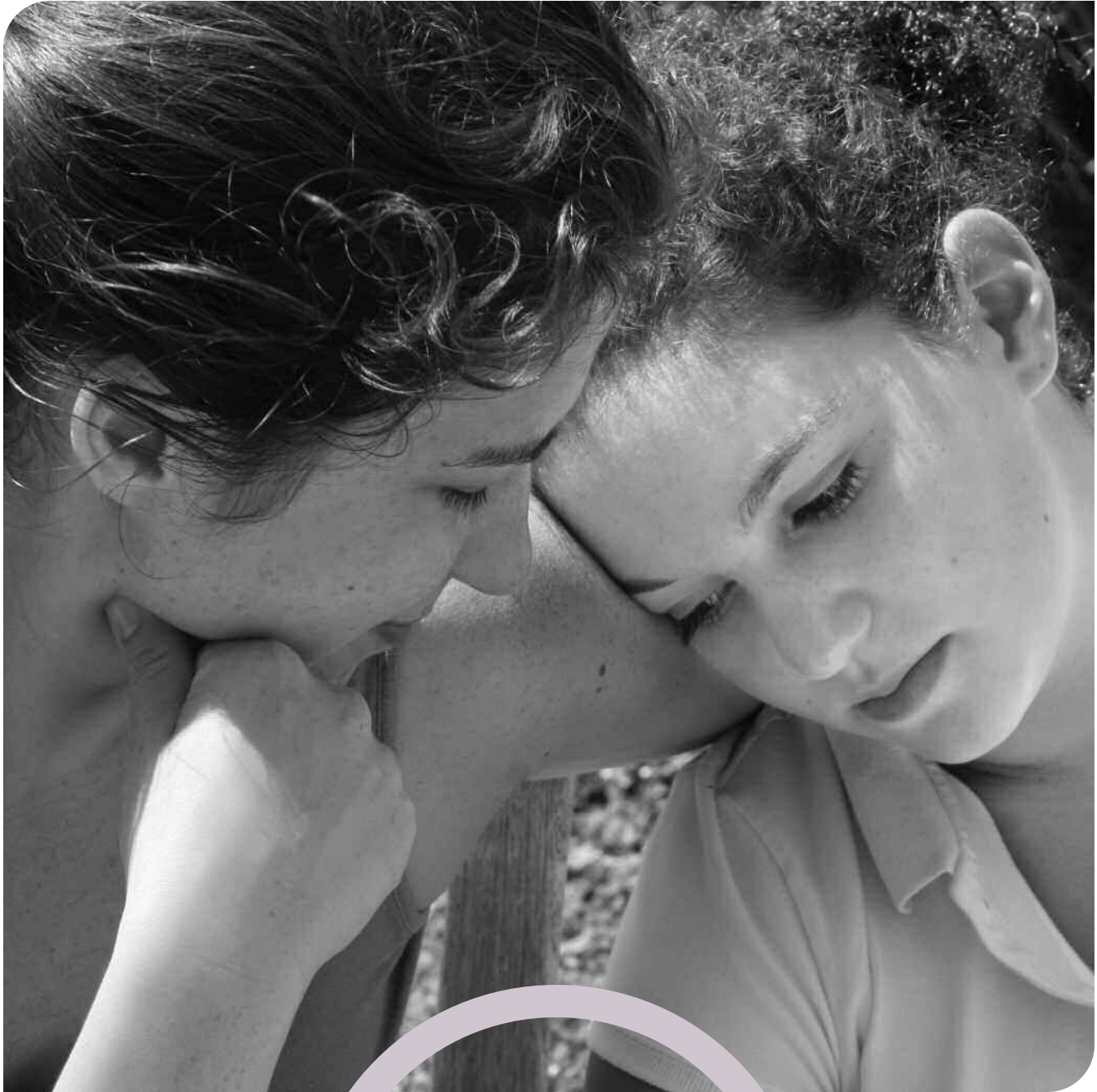
- ASTEH, a kosher safe house for women and children leaving abusive relationships. This is operated with the assistance of Jewish Women International.
- Bereavement Support Services: a program for the Jewish community, including the delivery of Comfort Kits, follow-up support and counselling and Jewish Widows Support Group, in collaboration with the Louis Brier Home and Hospital.
- Psycho-educational parenting groups, aimed at teaching and empowering parents about a variety of effective parenting skills and strategies for children with a range of needs and/or behaviours.
- Bagels & Babble, an annual series of workshops aimed at those who are or may be working in the helping professions, such as counselling, social work, nursing or spiritual care. Workshops are led by experienced therapists and/or instructors.



- Outreach for the gay, lesbian, transgender and bisexual Jewish community.
- Intake, case management and referral services.

## **Community Partners/Funders**

Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver through the Combined Jewish Appeal, Jewish Women International, Louis Brier Home & Hospital, Jewish Community Foundation and the Jewish Education Service of North America.



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# innovators lunch 2007

JFSA extends sincere gratitude to everyone who helped make the 2007 Innovators Lunch a great success. Thank you to our sponsors, table captains, volunteers, and all of the guests who attended.

JFSA hosted the third annual Innovators Lunch on May 17, 2007 at the Hyatt Regency Vancouver. The keynote speaker was Craigslist's founder Craig Newmark, one of the information age's most influential thinkers and entrepreneurs.

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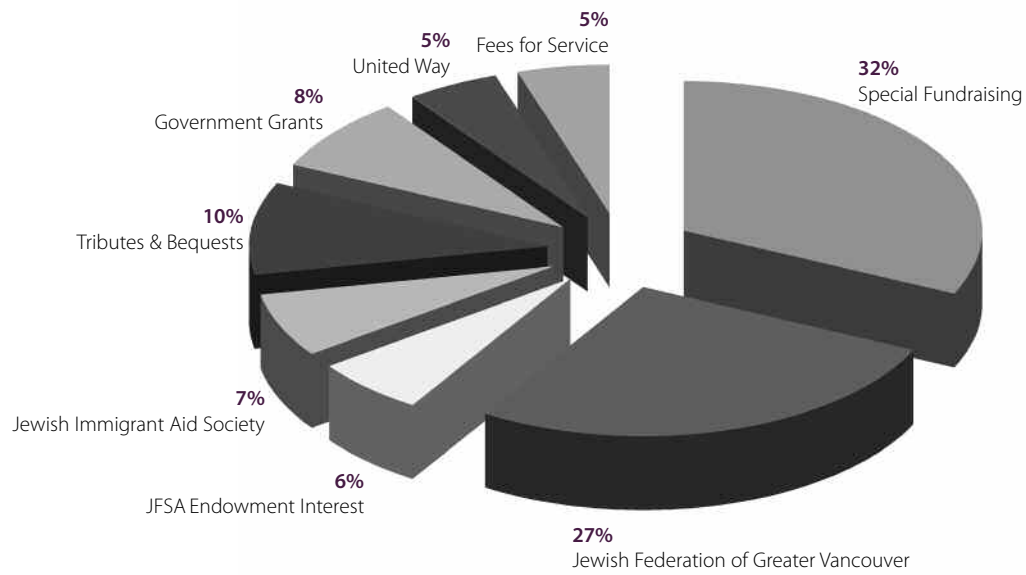
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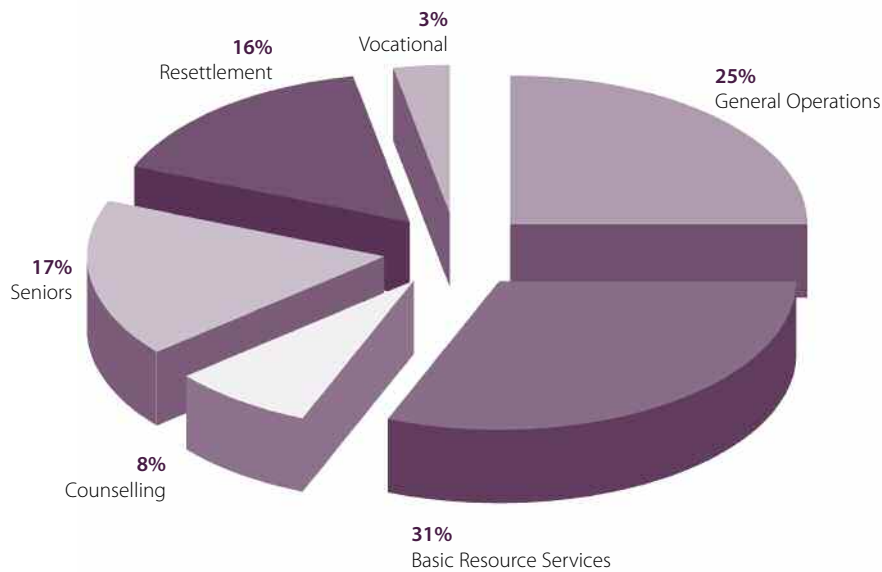
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We are committed to:

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