

Pesach Tikvah Sponsored Enlightening Principals and Menahalim Summits

Pesach Tikvah hosted an enlightening Summit for girls' school Principals on October 28th, followed by an impressive training for Menahalim of boys Yeshivahs and resource room staff on October 29th. Over 100 Principals, Menahelim, and resource room staff attended. The purpose of these events was to encourage school administrators to be partners in providing mental health care for their students.

Lea Scharf, LCSW, Director of the Pesach Tikvah Training Institute, delivered opening remarks. Alluding to a little known midrash on Parshas Vayera as a metaphor, she established the importance of treating every student as someone special. Ms. Scharf encouraged active listening to troubled students, and illustrated the critical need to follow up with girls who have been expelled or sent out of class. It is imperative, she stressed, that the student feel that their dismissal stemmed from a place of concern rather than anger, and that true empathy, care, and consideration continue to follow the dismissed student wherever she may be.

The first speaker gracing the Principal's event was Dr. Yaakov Freedman M.D., a renowned American psychiatrist who works within the Orthodox, Charedi, and Chassidishe communities in Israel. His work with adolescents and children involves nurturing cooperative relationships with their schools. Dr. Freedman's speech, titled "Addressing Mental Health Challenges with Talmidim and Their Families", discussed the process of securing mental health care for a talmid/

talmida, highlighting the role of the school administration. He emphasized that school administrators and teachers play a fundamental role in recommending and advising students to obtain mental health care, as they are often the first to note a student's hardships.

The lead speaker at the women's event was Rebbetzin Sima Spetner, an acclaimed American educator who lives in Israel, and works primarily with high school students. Throughout her long and rich career, the Rebbetzen has honed her ability to connect with students and school administrators. She discussed — through true anecdotes and clear hashkafa — what students really need from school administrators and mental health professionals. Throughout her dynamic speech, she emphasized that respect for the student is the first and foremost ingredient required for true connection. She also stressed the value of actually listening to students, by providing a listening ear. Rebbetzen Spetner's wise, witty and warm words kept the principals enthralled and captivated for the full two hours that she spoke.

A lively Q&A session followed the Rebbetzin's speech, where principals voiced their concerns and received practical solutions to real-life situations.

The principals, many of whom traveled from Monsey, Crown Heights, Williamsburg, Five Towns, and Staten Island to attend, were hosted with a delectable buffet that added to the warm and welcoming atmosphere.

In the Men's Division, Aharon Fink, LCSW, Director of the Pesach Tikvah 640 Family Center, addressed the Yeshivah Menahalim. He described

what it means to be a Supervisor for therapists, as well as some of the challenges inherent in that position.

Rabbi Avrum Grunwald, Director of the Yeshiva Satellite Program and Avremi Marmorstein, LCSW, Head Supervisor of the Yeshiva Satellite Program addressed the many Menahalim in attendance. Dr. Freedman M.D. presented a keynote speech titled “Understanding the Effects of Medication in the School Setting” and discussed how to go about further evaluation for a struggling student.

Rabbi Grunwald praised the Board of Directors and Yeshiva Satellite leadership for their tireless efforts in bringing the Pesach Tikvah Yeshivah Satellite Program vision to fruition. He noted that Pesach Tikvah was founded close to fifty years ago as a non-profit organization, setting it apart from other mental health for-profit agencies. He lauded Pesach Tikvah for investing all of their resources towards meeting the needs of the community.

In closing remarks, Avremi Marmorstein, LCSW, discussed how teachers can create an environment of trust in the classroom. This, he explained, promotes healing for children whose early-childhood experiences of lack- of- trust cause both social and academic underperformance.

Pesach Tikvah owes a great debt of gratitude to Lea Scharf LCSW, for her indefatigable work in producing these fabulous events. The unparalleled success of these Summits and their seamless execution bear testimony to Ms Scharf’s personal attention to every minute detail. Pesach Tikvah’s Executive Director Yerachmiel Stern LCSW, Rabbi Grunwald, and executive assistant Nechama Greenberg are all appreciated for the assistance they extended to make this Summit possible.

Pesach Tikvah looks forward to an evergrow-

ing relationship with Yeshivas and girls’ schools in New York. With much gratitude to Hashem for this spectacular success, we continue on in prayer that we may continue to serve our community faithfully and bring a Door of Hope — Pesach Tikvah — wherever needed.

The JFNA Visited Pesach Tikvah

On Thursday, October 30th, Senior Services was visited by the Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA). Senior Services has a long relationship with the JFNA, and the visit was an affirmation of their ongoing relationship.

Zalman Kotzen, LCSW, Director of Senior Services said, “The first grant that Senior Services received from the JFNA was a six-year grant to work with the caregiver children of Holocaust survivors. We did some very exciting programming for them. The programming included two overnight trips during which the caregiver children of survivors attended therapeutic and educational workshops and networked with each other. Topics included inherited secondary trauma, respite, and Holocaust education. Under the first grant, Senior Services also did several large educational events in halls, and an event with SAMSHA, which was a training for people working with trauma victims.”

“The whole thrust of the JFNA grant is to educate providers and the community in general about person-centered trauma-informed therapy. It’s very important to work with people that it should be person-centered and trauma-informed. Taking account of the individual needs and you also take account of the trauma they’ve experienced in their lives in the case of children of survivors often have vicarious trauma, secondary trauma through the fact that their parents were survivors. These issues of trauma can be helped by the right therapeutic approach and training for mental health professionals working with them,” said Zalman Kotzen.

He said, “The second grant was a three year grant to help seniors (not necessarily children of Holocaust survivors), any seniors 55 and older. We’ve arranged for two monthly group therapy sessions, one led by Susan Weinberger, LCSW and one led by Malky Gestetner, LCSW. They’re both seasoned, experienced therapists with a lot of expertise in working with Holocaust survivors and trauma victims. These groups have become immensely popular in the community and we have hundreds of people wanting to attend and we can’t accommodate all of them. We can accommodate at most 30 people per group.”

“The visit now from the JFNA was really prompted by their receiving a new grant through the federal government and looking for bigger projects, and we will have the opportunity to apply. We have a few ideas that we’d like to do. One of the ideas is a program to help men who suffer from dementia. It’s helpful for the men in terms of their emotional health, and it also provides respite for their wives or caregivers. We have done this program in the past with Holocaust survivors and it was very successful. We might be able to replicate that with seniors in general,” said Zalman Kotzen.

“We’re grateful for the people who came. Shelly is the director of the Holocaust Survivors Center at JFNA. A very important position. She has contact with top government officials. She is a major force in the field. She also was accompanied by her assistant, Jake Scott, who led a lot of discussion and asked many questions of us and our staff. They spent a full day at the agency. We took them to see also 640 Broadway where they met Aharon Fink. It was very encouraging for us that they came. They met the Board of Directors including our chairman of the board Rabbi David Neiderman. They met our CEO Yerachmiel Stern and some of the other directors, Isser Rosenberg, and Zack Teper. We’re very grateful that they took the time to spend with us, and we hope they

enjoyed their visit,” he said.

Simpatico Says Goodbye to Fraidy Landau

Fraidy Landau, Simpatico’s first employee, is leaving Pesach Tikvah. Simpatico and the entire Pesach Tikvah staff want to thank her for her valuable contributions over the years. Fraidy Landau started in August 2021 as an Admin and grew with the department to become the Program Coordinator. Fraidy Landau has added so much to the Simpatico program, and we are grateful to her. We wish her the best in future endeavors.

The Training Institute Delivered Two Excellent Trainings

Within the last month, the Training Institute delivered two excellent trainings: One on Psychiatry and one on Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. Here’s what therapists said about the Psychiatry training:

“Learning about psychiatry was interesting — how it’s related to practicing as a social worker.”

“As a therapist, I think it’s so important to understand medication and to be in partnership with a psychiatrist. I liked knowing that there is a genetic predisposition for disorders and triggers just bring them out.”

“[I learned about] the depth of what a properly done intake can be.”

“[I appreciated] the statistics on different disorders and their prevalence.”

“I love the way he described motivational interviewing.”

“[I learned] treatment recommendations percentages: 85 percent therapy, 50 percent medication and 100 percent lifestyle changes like eating, sleeping, and exercising.”

The CBT training was given by Dr. David Miller,

who was chief psychologist at Maimonides Medical Center, who has extensive experience treating anxiety and OCD. Here's what participants had to say about it:

"[I learned] multiple relaxation exercises that I believe would help my clients."

"I learned many techniques to help with anxiety that I can use with my clients."

"[I learned] therapeutic tools for behavioral interventions such as intervention for depressive disorder."

"I very much enjoyed the deep meditation."

"[I learned] how important it is to consider the dynamics behind a client's anxieties or OCD, rather than just trying to treat the symptoms."

Thank you to Lea Scharf, LCSW, Director of the Training Institute and her assistance Nechama Greenberg for coordinating these phenomenal trainings.

Focus On: Aaron Zev Herbstman, LCSW, 926 Family Center Director

Each month, we feature an unsung hero of Pesach Tikvah – someone who contributes something indispensable to the organization. This month, we spoke with Aaron Zev Herbstman, LCSW about his work at Pesach Tikvah.

Q: What is your position at Pesach Tikvah?

A: I'm the Clinical Director of the 926 Bedford location.

Q: Can you describe what your role entails?

A: My role involves ensuring that the clinic's day-to-day administrative and clinical operations run smoothly. I focus on maintaining high-quality services for our clients and the broader community. I also act as a liaison to the community, responding to referrals, questions, and any needs that arise.

Q: How long have you been with Pesach Tikvah?

A: I joined Pesach Tikvah in 2020.

Q: Are you working on any interesting projects right now?

A: I'm focused on building on the already strong quality of care across the board — making sure our therapists are well supervised, supported and trained, and ensuring that clients consistently have a positive experience.

Q: What kind of training are you doing with your therapists?

A: In addition to the weekly individual and group/peer supervision, we provide top quality professional development through our Training Institute, and we also have weekly staff meetings dedicated to ongoing clinical training and team growth.

Q: How is CCBHC affecting you?

A: It's been a positive change. CCBHC allows clients to access a wide range of services in one location, creating a more holistic and integrated approach to care. The transition has been fairly smooth.

Q: What do you like most about working at Pesach Tikvah?

A: The people. From the CEO, Mr. Stern, to front-line staff, everyone is supportive, approachable, and genuinely invested in the work. It's a wonderful environment and seeing clients leave feeling helped and uplifted is incredibly rewarding.

Q: How do you contribute to the positive atmosphere at Pesach Tikvah?

A: I try to equip our clinicians and staff with the tools, support, and resources they need to do their best work and feel confident in their roles.

Q: Do you have a vision for the future?

A: We've B"H grown significantly in recent years, and I want to continue that trajectory. My vision is to keep expanding while maintaining evidence-based, high-quality services so that both clients and staff feel supported, grounded, and cared for.

A great thanks goes out to Aaron Zev Herbstman, LCSW for his dedication to Pesach Tikvah, and the vital work he does. Would you like to suggest an unsung hero of Pesach Tikvah for next month's newsletter? Email ckurtz@pesachtikvah.org to make a suggestion.

Esther Deutsch Celebrates 10 Years at Pesach Tikvah

A huge mazal tov goes out to Esther Deutsch, LMSW, the Director of Borough Park clinics, on her ten-year work anniversary at Pesach Tikvah. She is a foundational member of the Borough Park clinics' staff who has grown with the clinics. The Borough Park clinics would not be what they are today without the contributions of Esther Deutsch.

The client load at 4111 and 5309 has tripled in size since Esther began working at Pesach Tikvah, and she was instrumental in that growth. When asked what she likes about being a director, she said, "What I love most about being a director is witnessing the growth of both clinicians and clients over time. Change and transformation are very real here. It's incredibly meaningful to see how much someone can grow when they are given the resources and support they need."

The designation of Pesach Tikvah's clinics as CCBHC clinics has expanded the reach of what Esther Deutsch does in her role. She said, "We have always offered therapy, psychiatry, and group therapy — which is already substantial. But now we are becoming something even more comprehensive. It transforms my role because I can begin to view clients in a more holistic way. We're asking, 'How can we help this client from start to finish? How can we provide deeper, more integrated support?'"

She brought an example of a hypothetical client with severe OCD. "In a case like this, the client would be set up with a therapist and psychiatrist to help reduce the intensity of the symptoms," she said, "and also a peer specialist who can validate the client's experience and offer hope. There is a kind of nuanced validation that can only come from someone who has lived through something similar. We can also connect him with a Care Manager who can link him to additional supports, especially if he is too dysregulated to apply for services on his own. And a Psychiatric Rehabilitation Support (PRS) provider can work with him on the daily living skills that are interfering with his functioning. With these wraparound supports in place, the therapist is better able to focus deeply on the therapeutic work, knowing the client is being held in a comprehensive and coordinated system."

Looking forward to the future, Esther Deutsch has a vision that, "My hope is for our therapists to feel increasingly supported, both clinically and admin-

istratively — which includes strengthening support for supervisors. One initiative that has been especially successful is the expansion of group supervision, where clinicians can present cases and receive peer support. Supporting therapists is already a core strength of our clinics, and my vision is to continue enhancing that even further."

Thank you to Esther Deutsch for her incredible contributions. We look forward to continued growth and success at the Borough Park clinics.

Good News from Pesach Tikvah Programs

Cheshvan was a very productive month at Pesach Tikvah. Everyone returned from the holidays ready to work. Thank you to all of Pesach Tikvah's amazing staff for your indispensable contributions.

Clinics:

- **926:** Mazal tov to Sheva Meyers on the birth of a baby boy.
- **926:** Mazal tov to intern Peri Puderbeutel on her engagement.
- **926:** At the November staff meeting, there was a psychiatry panel featuring Dr. Osman and Dr. Kwok.
- **640:** Mazal tov to Reuven Russek on becoming LMSW.
- **640:** Mazal tov to Deborah Jacobs, LMSW and Tehila Estrin, LMSW on the births of their new children.
- **Borough Park:** Their first male PRS provider joined them, Pinchas Cooperman. Yehudis Scher joined as their first female PRS provider. They are working successfully with people. They are accepting more clients for skill-focused support to complement therapy.
- **Borough Park:** Orit joined as a Targeted Care Manager.
- **Borough Park:** Lunch and Learns have been educational and fun. There was one presentation about psychiatry and one presentation on group therapy.
- **Borough Park:** All interns are in a group supervision.

- **All Clinics:** A formal grievance policy was established and is available on the website. Thank you to Joe Bistricher.

Kesher Connection: The Kesher Connection and Care Management program continues to grow — and they welcome all the new care managers and support staff who are new to the department.

- Mazel Tov to Sheva Meyers, Adult CM supervisor, to the birth of her son, and a shout out to veteran care managers and social workers Chaya Moskowitz, LMSW and Rikal Mangel, LMSW for taking on the supervisory role while Sheva is out on maternity leave.
- Thank you to Dr. Mikel for giving an amazing training on Plan of Care development to all our HHSC staff. Dr. Mikel used interactive tools and exercises in her presentation to explain how a robust Plan of Care guides the care manager in every step of the work with the member. She also beautifully explored how to define strengths, weaknesses and risk factors in terms of considering goals for a member emphasizing on the person-centered nature of developing a solid plan of care — thank you Dr. Mikel.
- Coordinated Behavioral Care (Pesach Tikvah's lead health home) is implementing a values based reimbursement program for all our Molina and Emblem health members where Pesach Tikvah's care management program will receive a special bonus for closing gaps in care for those members. We are very excited about this new endeavor.

CORE:

- Welcome to new Certified Peer Specialist Concetta Veccione.
- Welcome to new PSR Provider Devorah Zolator-ev.
- CORE continues to fulfill its mission of providing support and skill-building services to those with mental illness who are on a journey of recovery. To inquire about CORE services/eligibility please email Postreicher@pesachtikvah.org.

COMHAB: Thank you to Diana Masri for her excellent ongoing work!

Simpatico:

- Mazal tov to Libby Klein on her engagement.
- Simpatico opened a new center in Borough Park. It is a space for providers to meet families in person for evaluations and a space for kids and teens to meet with their providers.

CCBHC:

- Mazal tov to Blimie Berkowitz and Zissy Rosenbaum on their engagements.

ICF: The dedicated ICF staff continues to deliver excellent care to its residents.

Human Resources:

- Mazal tov to Zack Teper on the birth of a baby girl.
- Mazal tov to Shlomi Helwa on his son's engagement.

Yeshiva Satellite Program:

- Mazal tov to Shloime Dresner on the birth of a daughter.
- Mazal tov to Shloime Weiss on the birth of a son.
- The Yeshiva Satellite program is planning a training for melamdim co-produced by the Training Institute.

Compliance:

- Welcome to Sury Fekete, a new member of the Compliance Department.