



**Press Release
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HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS LEARN ZOOM TO ATTEND MONTHLY VIRTUAL SOCIALIZATION EVENTS

WEST PALM BEACH, FL – August 20, 2020 – Before the current COVID-19 health crisis and recommended social isolation for seniors, Alpert Jewish Family Service (Alpert JFS) provided monthly “Eat & Schmooze” socialization events to connect the clients of its Holocaust Survivors Assistance program. Prior to the pandemic, many of these men and women might not have thought of themselves as techno-savvy, but these situations have changed with the times!

The socialization events are now being held virtually as “Zoom & Schmooze.” The new format has been fully embraced by clients, who are now anything but intimidated or overwhelmed by the challenge. Thanks to technology, Holocaust survivors are able to continue feeling connected, cared for, and supported while being distant.

“The Holocaust team worked diligently to find inventive ways to engage our Holocaust survivors during the pandemic,” said Alpert JFS Director of Long Term Care Jennifer Weems-Escobar. “We have transformed our monthly events so every survivor knows and feels that they are not alone, and that Alpert JFS is here for them. ‘Zoom & Schmooze’ is very popular among the demographic; more than 50 participants have attended recent events!”

A recent “Zoom & Schmooze” was hosted by Mind and Melody, an interactive music program that creatively stimulates participants’ minds, socially connects, and physically engages them. Each participant received a goody bag, including a snack tea bags, and maraca to shake during the musical program.

“Nothing is better than seeing the smiles on the faces of isolated survivors, many of whom are in their ‘90s, when they figure out that they *can* use Zoom,” said Alpert JFS Holocaust Care Manager Eva Weiss, M.Ed., Ed.S. Her colleague, Sara Zenlea, added, “Clients light up when they first come on to the Zoom screen and realize that they can hear and see each other!”

Alpert JFS’ Holocaust Survivors Assistance Program is dedicated to identifying and addressing the distinct social welfare, health care, and emotional needs of Holocaust survivors with the utmost sensitivity. Learn more about the services and support provided to survivors of the *Shoah*, including assistance navigating the reparations benefit process at www.AlpertJFS.org/for-seniors-holocaust-survivors-assistance/.

Established in 1974, Ferd & Gladys Alpert Jewish Family Service (Alpert JFS) is a nationally accredited service provider for children, adults, seniors, and Holocaust survivors. The non-profit, non-sectarian organization is a trusted leader, with a team of nearly 200 highly skilled professionals delivering high-quality care to community members. Alpert JFS works to ensure the well-being of children and families, independence of older adults, and quality of life for individuals with disabilities. For more information, visit www.AlpertJFS.org/ or phone 561-684-1991.

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