

## OUR COMMUNITY

# JFS Shines a Light on Mental Health

Gary Gulman headlines Spotlight event that honors Rabbi Daniel Syme.

JACKIE HEADAPHOHL EDITORIAL DIRECTOR

**J**ewish Family Service is shining a light on mental health in the community at the agency's Spotlight Event at 7 p.m., Wednesday, May 22, at the Flagstar Strand Theatre in Pontiac

The evening, which is part of the Reva Stocker Lecture Series, will feature the nationally renowned comedian Gary Gulman, star of two HBO comedy specials and author of his recently published memoir, *Misfit: Growing up Awkward in the '80s*. Through his authentic storytelling and brilliant humor, Gary provides a little levity around the serious issue of mental health.

Jewish Family Service will also be honoring Rabbi Daniel Syme that evening for his lifelong work in the field of suicide prevention.

"We couldn't possibly shine a light on mental health and suicide prevention without recognizing the work of Rabbi Daniel Syme. JFS and our community, and so many people throughout our world, owe a huge debt of gratitude to Rabbi Syme's work in suicide prevention over these last 50 years," said JFS

## DETAILS

An Evening of Laughter with Gary Gulman  
Wednesday, May 22, 7 p.m.  
Flagstar Strand Theatre,  
12 N. Saginaw St., Pontiac  
Chairs: Gail Danto and Art Roffet,  
and Jordon and Alex Wertheimer



Perry Ohren

CEO Perry Ohren.

Rabbi Syme, rabbi emeritus at Temple Beth El in Bloomfield Township, has long been a vocal advocate of suicide prevention. He created "Hand of Hope," an educational resource program teaching kids and parents about the warning signs of suicide. He partnered with national sports teams, celebrities and athletes to spread awareness and raise money to curb the epidemic of suicide. He is the co-executive producer of a documentary called *Death is Not the Answer* and is the founder of the Single Soul Suicide Prevention program of Jewish Family Service, which he launched after his retirement.

"It was so appropriate for rabbi's 'encore career' to take place at Jewish Family Service," Ohren said. "All that Danny has wanted to do since his brother's tragic death by suicide, is to, one soul at a time, get people the help they need. Whether employed by the URJ,



Rabbi Daniel Syme

Temple Beth El or JFS, Rabbi Syme has spent a part of every day counseling people and connecting them to lifesaving and affirming resources."

Rabbi Syme's favorite Talmud verse, "If a person saves one life, it is as though that person saved the entire world," has been the guiding principle by which he has tried to live his life, he said.

Mental health services and suicide prevention continue to be a growing need in Metro Detroit's Jewish community. Fortunately, Jewish Family Service is a leader in this area, providing critical counseling services and suicide prevention trainings. The dollars raised from the event will support the agency's greatest needs and help provide critical services to the community. ♫

For tickets and sponsorship information, visit [jfspspotlightevent.org](http://jfspspotlightevent.org) or call (248) 592-2339.