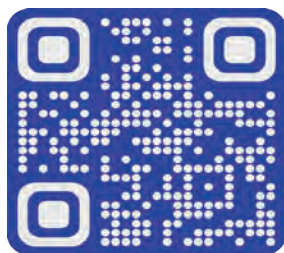




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OUR COMMUNITY

JFS Offers Free Family Caregivers Expo

The event will feature expert speakers, panelists and representatives of local agencies.

ASHLEY ZLATOPOLSKY CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Jewish Family Service is hosting a free, small-scale expo for family caregivers on Thursday, Sept. 19, from 1-4 p.m. at the Jewish Family Service Orley Building in West Bloomfield.

Intended for new and existing caregivers, the event will shine a light on the importance of taking care of one's physical, mental and financial health as an adult caregiver.

A caregiver is an individual, often a family member, who cares for a spouse, parent, sibling or child with short- or long-term limitations due to illness or injury. Often, caregiving becomes a top priority, and the caregiver's own health and needs take a backseat.

However, this expo aims to prioritize caregivers by providing the tools and knowledge caregivers need to support and empower themselves throughout the entire caregiving journey.

The afternoon event will feature expert speakers, free 15-minute consultations with a JFS therapist, holistic health options and the chance to meet professionals from local nonprofits.

Guests will have a chance to speak to representatives from the Alzheimer's Association, Jewish Community Adult Day Program, Jewish Senior Life, Spier Financial Services and more.

They'll also hear from a panel of community caregivers sharing their own personal stories.

Expert speakers include Evie Lynn Breuer, a licensed clinical social worker and certified dementia practitioner, as well as Howard H. Collens, an attorney who focuses on probate and trust administration, guardianships and

conservatorships, estate planning and elder law.

The event is funded by a grant from the Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Legacy Funds via the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan, helping it remain free to all who attend.

A GROWING NEED

As a newer initiative within JFS, the Family Caregiver Support Program is open to all individuals.

Program manager Emily Gordon



Emily Gordon

says there's been a growing need for caregiver support as the boomer population continues to age. "The need for caregiving is so much more common these days," she says.

While caregiving may be more widespread, the toll it takes on caregivers themselves remains

unchanged. "They get more susceptible to getting sick physically and feeling down mentally," Gordon explains. "Caregivers see themselves as a loving daughter or a loving spouse who just wants to do the right thing, and they don't know where to turn for help."

Caregiving can also be tough financially, Gordon adds, as 9-5 jobs can take a backseat to make room for what's often the full-time job of caregiving. These challenges, among others, are why JFS receives calls regularly from caregivers seeking help with no idea where to look for it.

That's why JFS decided to assemble a one-stop shop with everything caregivers need — legal and financial advice, counseling, even yoga and sound therapy — to take a much-deserved break at their free Family Caregiver Expo.

"We wanted an expo that did a bit of everything," Gordon says.

Being able to offer free consultations with a JFS therapist was another critical factor for event organizers. "Mental health resources can be difficult for people to pay for," Gordon adds.

The goal of the event: to "normalize and validate" the caregiving experience. Guests will also walk away with everything they need to continue to support themselves and their loved ones.

"We're going to have pamphlets, hard resources," Gordon says, "everything outlining what's available so that someone can take next steps." 📌

To register and for more information, visit jfsdetroit.org/expo. The first 50 people to register receive a free gift bag.