

APRIL  
2024



ניסן  
תשפ"ד



## Upcoming Trainings

MAY 16 AND 17

Core Belief Training, given by  
**Roy Keissling, LISW**, at 1720  
Ave J at **1720 Ave J**

MAY 19-23

Somatic Intervention Level  
3, given by **Ricki Bernstein,**  
**LMSW**, on Zoom



We'd like to wish a שנת הצלחה to all our staff with April birthdays. We are so grateful to have you as a member of our staff. You should be blessed with everything you need materially and spiritually.

## Festive Inauguration Event Inspires

The evening of Tuesday, April 2, Pesach Tikvah's Board of Directors and program directors met in the conference room for an elegant celebration of our Executive Director's inauguration. The event was led by Chairman of the Board Rabbi Neiderman, who addressed the group. He spoke about being at the forefront of helping the community in light of its recent tragedy, as well as helping the community in every capacity, especially in school settings. He also spoke about the excitement and hope of people within Pesach Tikvah.

Our Executive Director, Yerachmiel Stern, gave an inspiring speech about creating a workplace culture of kindness and making progress toward the organization realizing a state of greatness.

Mr. Stern said, "I think it is very important to imbue this concept once and for all:

ואהבת לרעך כמוך... זה כלל גדול בתורה ואהבת לרעך כמוך. This is going to be an agency of "לרעך כמוך."

Mr. Stern described a workplace that is free of chronic tension. He said, "That is my bracha to Pesach Tikvah ... achdus and no sinas chinam. It's going to help us prevail ... That is the number one mission of Pesach Tikvah."

"Baruch Hashem, we're bouncing back, and we have tremendous high hopes for the future. All the departments are taking shape and stabilizing," he said.

Mr. Stern emphasized Pesach Tikvah's reputation in the community. He said, "Just this week I got a call from someone in a small Chassidische yeshiva in Borough Park. There is a struggling kid who comes from a very frum family. They asked the menahel, and the menahel said, 'Pesach Tikvah. If you want to get help, you go to Pesach Tikvah.'"

Mr. Stern closed his speech by thanking the Board of Directors for their strong leadership and for giving change at Pesach Tikvah a chance. He also sincerely thanked all the staff, and especially the Board, who "took a piece of this organization on their back" during the time of difficulty.

The staff of Pesach Tikvah is delighted to be working with Mr. Stern, and we look forward to serving the community under his leadership. A special thanks goes out to Shlomi Helwa, who set up the event in an absolutely beautiful way and stayed to clean up the event. Zack Teper also helped to produce the event, and the dinner was arranged by Aaron Zev Herbstman.



פתח תקוה וואונטשט  
פאר אונזער אלע  
מיטארבעטער א כשר'ן  
און פרייליכן פסח!

## Good News from Pesach Tikvah Programs

During the month of March, Pesach Tikvah's programs excelled. Our program directors and staff deserve **א גרויסע דאנק** for their exceptional work. Here are some of the ways that Pesach Tikvah's programs have made progress during the month of March, and a few **מזל טוב'ס**:

**CORE:** Congratulations! Pesach Tikvah's CORE program has once again been the recipient of an OMH (Office of Mental Health) grant. Only a select few CORE programs in New York state were thus rewarded. This grant reflects OMH's continued recognition of Pesach Tikvah's CORE program as the pre-eminent CORE program delivering services to the Orthodox Jewish population of New York.

The awarded grant will enable the program to hire an employment specialist and will allow the program's members to receive expert support in reaching their employment goals. As has been clearly documented, employment is a positive social determinant of mental health. We are grateful to the state for this recognition and are very excited to begin implementation of employment services over the next few months!

Program Director Pearl Ostreicher and her dedicated staff deserve recognition for this great accomplishment!

**Health Homes:** **מזל טוב** to Care Managers Sheina Sandhaus and Chaya Moskovitz on their engagements!

**Geriatrics:** Geriatrics hosted a beautiful luncheon for Holocaust survivors at Le Chateau a week before Purim. The food was great, and every attendee received a **משלוח מנות** gift of chocolates and a large hamentash. For entertainment, the Geriatrics team brought in a team of hilarious women to perform an adorable skit. The attendees laughed and enjoyed the skit.

The Geriatrics team also brought a group of ten survivors to the Hobby House, where they painted. This is an outing that the attendees always love.

Mrs. Weinberger and the Geriatrics team bring so much light and love to Brooklyn's community of Holocaust survivors! Thank you!

**CFTSS/Simpatco:** The Office of Mental Health has issued an expansion license to CFTSS/Simpatco. Enrollment has already reached the capacity of the expansion, so they will be applying for another expansion. This is incredible news, and Program Directors Bruchy Endzweig and Gitty Kahan, and their super dedicated team, deserve recognition.

**מזל טוב** to CFTSS/Simpatco supervisor and intake worker Hinda Dalfin on her engagement!

Simpatco is available in all five boroughs and Long Island. The CFTSS/Simpatco team would like to encourage everyone to refer people, both children and mothers, to Simpatco, whether they are current Pesach Tikvah clients or not. Registration for groups is always open!

**School Satellite Program:** Three new clinicians will be joining the staff of the School Satellite Program within the next few weeks. New

potential clinicians have been approaching the School Satellite Program because of the unique training and supervision it provides to clinicians. Every Thursday, Aaron Zev Herbstman, the 926 Family Center Director, gives a training and group supervision; this is a serious incentive.

Several new schools have reached out to the School Satellite program to request to join. The School Satellite Program will begin to serve them within a few months.

**מזל טוב** to Sruly Herschlag on the birth of a baby girl!

Thank you to Rabbi Avrum Grunwald, Aaron Zev Herbstman, and supervisor Lea Scharf for the tremendous growth of the School Satellite Program.

**Clinics:** The clinics have implemented tracking PHQ9 and PHQA, which are depressionary measures. PHQ9 is for adults, and PHQA is for children. The current PHQA data shows that the clinics are excelling at reducing symptoms of depression in children. Our clinic directors, therapists, and psychiatrists deserve huge recognition for the work they do; it's making a difference in so many people's lives.

The 5309 Family Center intake department is improving its excellence by instituting a front desk focus group.

**ICF:** The ICF is preparing the residence for Pesach, which includes cleaning, kashering, and haircuts for the residents. It's a very busy time for the ICF, and they are accomplishing these extra goals while maintaining their excellent standard of care.

## American Psychological Association Finds Sleep Loss Triggers Anxiety

The American Psychological Association synthesized more than 50 years of research on sleep deprivation and mood in their article "Sleep Loss and Emotion," which was recently published in the journal *Psychological Bulletin*.

The study's lead author Cara Palmer, PhD, of Montana State University, said, "This study represents the most comprehensive synthesis of experimental sleep and emotion research to date, and provides strong evidence that periods of extended wakefulness, shortened sleep duration, and nighttime awakenings adversely influence human emotional functioning."

Through analyzing 154 studies, the authors found that all three types of sleep deprivation resulted in fewer positive emotions such as joy, happiness, and contentment, as well as increased anxiety symptoms such as a rapid heart rate and increased worrying. These symptoms occurred in study participants who had experienced even short periods of sleep loss, such as losing just a few hours of sleep. Findings for symptoms of depression were smaller and less consistent.

In our chronically sleep-deprived society, therapists face the challenge of treating clients whose anxiety is triggered by or worsened by sleep loss. A great thanks goes out to Pesach Tikvah's clinicians who consistently step up to the plate to treat anxiety and depression.

Focus On:  
Zack Teper, *Human Resources Director*

# Q&A



*Each month, we feature an unsung hero of Pesach Tikvah – someone who contributes something indispensable to the organization. This month, we spoke with our Human Resources Director, Zack Teper, about his work. Mr. Teper has been with Pesach Tikvah almost four years.*

Building rapport with everyone is crucial, so employees feel comfortable discussing any concerns or issues with me. Often, what seems like a significant problem can have a simple solution, and I aim to address issues promptly to prevent them from escalating into conflicts.

## Q: What are the responsibilities of the Director of Human Resources?

**A:** As the leader of the Human Resources department, my role encompasses a variety of tasks. This includes overseeing payroll operations, ensuring minimal employee grievances, and serving as a bridge between executive management and our workforce. I wear many hats in my role.

## Q: What do you appreciate about working at Pesach Tikvah?

**A:** The people here make it a joy to come to work every day. The genuine kindness and positivity we have with everyone is truly remarkable. Our primary focus is on serving the community and making a positive impact. As the Director of Human Resources, I'm grateful to contribute to this mission in any way I can.

## Q: What is a current interesting project you're engaged in?

**A:** Currently, I'm working with Yisroel Len on enhancing our Human Resources portal. Our goal is to streamline the annual employee training process, and eventually we would like to transform the portal into a comprehensive one-stop hub with various features.

## Q: With whom do you collaborate closely at Pesach Tikvah?

**A:** I must give special recognition to my assistant, Shlomi Helwa. Without him, the Human Resources department wouldn't function as smoothly. Shlomi plays a pivotal role in the new hire process and adeptly handles various situations from start to finish when I'm unavailable. Our collaboration ensures efficient and timely completion of tasks.

## Q: What is your philosophy when it comes to Human Resources?

**A:** I believe in maintaining an open-minded approach because unexpected situations can arise at any time. Additionally, I strongly advocate for an open-door policy.

*A great thanks goes out to Zack Teper 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](mailto:ckurtz@pesachtikvah.org) to make a suggestion.*

## Pesach Tikvah Collaborates with CARE for Special Children in the Sephardic Community

We recently spoke with Rabbi Hershkowitz about Pesach Tikvah's successful collaboration with the Sephardic community. Did you know that Pesach Tikvah is instrumental in providing OPWDD services to the Sephardic community?

Pesach Tikvah collaborates with an organization in the Sephardic community called CARE for Special Children. CARE for Special Children provides services for the parents and siblings of special needs children, as well as for the children themselves. Pesach Tikvah provides social workers and case managers for the families served by CARE.

The expense of the case managers and social workers that Pesach Tikvah sends to CARE is covered by Pesach Tikvah. Medicaid and insurance do not cover the full cost of the services that we send to CARE, so Rabbi Hershkowitz fundraises to cover the significant gap in funding. He does so by establishing and maintaining

relationships with individual donors. How does he do that monumental work? Rabbi Hershkowitz said, "We form a relationship with the people on an individual basis. We work in a way that they should be able to benefit from us as much as we benefit from them. When I go to a person, I don't start out by telling them, 'Look we have a major organization — what could you do for us?' First I see what we could do for them. What we are able to give them is services for their people."

Pesach Tikvah's relationship with the Sephardic community began thirty years ago, when members of the community came to Pesach Tikvah to see how we could be helpful to them. "We formed a nice relationship with them," said Rabbi Hershkowitz. "They gave us a letter of recognition from the Sephardic Bikur Cholim, which is an organization that helps thousands of the Sephardic community."

To this day, when opportunities are available for Pesach Tikvah to serve the Sephardic community, Rabbi Hershkowitz reaches out to them. In addition to receiving Pesach Tikvah's services through CARE for Special Children, we have had members of the Sephardic community live in the ICF, attend the day program, and use our clinics. "We are always available for them when they need us," said Rabbi Hershkowitz.

## Governor Hochul Announces "Safe Options Support" Initiative

Governor Hochul recently announced a statewide expansion of a program that has successfully housed homeless people with severe mental illness and substance use disorder in New York City. This program is administered by the Office of Mental Health. New York City now has 14 Safe Options Support teams operating and has provided 330 chronically homeless New Yorkers with stable housing. In addition, state agencies proposed regulations to ensure follow-up care for people exiting emergency and inpatient psychiatric care.

The Office of Mental Health has expanded Safe Options Support teams to Rochester and the Finger Lakes region; Albany, Schenectady, and Saratoga counties in the Capital Region; Broome, Chenango, and Otsego counties in the Southern Tier; and Orange and Dutchess counties in the Hudson Valley. These teams join three others that began serving communities in Erie County, Westchester County, and Long Island last fall.

Additionally, the Department of Financial Services proposed regulations to establish network adequacy standards for behavioral health services for commercial insurers. The regulations establish appointment wait times for mental health and substance use disorder services, and when an in-network provider is not available within those standards, the regulations will require insurers to allow access to an out-of-network provider who can meet those standards, at no additional cost. The Department of Health has proposed similar behavioral health network adequacy standards that will apply to the Medicaid program.

Pesach Tikvah's clinics have successfully reduced the wait time between intake and treatment; we are leading the way in providing high quality mental health care in a timely manner that is covered by private insurance and Medicaid. Additionally, our Health Homes and CORE programs are succeeding in managing care for severely mentally ill New Yorkers. Our clinics and our Health Homes and CORE programs deserve recognition; they are practicing what the state aspires to.