

## Ask Miriam...

Individuals and families in the community are faced with challenging issues and concerns regarding their social, emotional and psychological health. Through the cooperation of **The Jewish World**, Jewish Family Services will offer responses.

### Q. Dear Miriam,

*We have been living in the community for five years. We have two young children, one of whom will soon be ready for a preschool program. We are an interfaith couple, but have made a decision to raise our children as Jews.*

*We don't know how to find out about the Jewish community in this area.*

*In the near future, we would like to join a synagogue or become part of a social network.*

*Could you give us some ideas about how to get information about the community and activities open to us?*

**Relative Newcomers**

### A. Dear Relative Newcomers,

You are asking for ideas at a good time of the year. If you haven't already registered your child for preschool, check out the Jewish Community Centers or the programs offered by various congregations. This is a good way to meet other young families who have some affiliation with the Jewish community. You will find that there are many other families who have not yet made choices about synagogues.

Also check out the web sites for the synagogues and Jewish communal organizations in the area. You can learn a lot about the community. You must already be getting **The Jewish World**, another resource.

Your timing is also good because Jewish Family Services is about to start some community programs for Jewish families. Don't hesitate to call any of the mentioned organizations and ask for information.

Our community is welcoming to new people just moving in, or to those just moving into the Jewish community.

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### Q. Dear Miriam,

*I am an adult daughter living hundreds of miles away from my widowed father. My mother died 10 years ago and my father has stayed in his home successfully since then. In good part this happened because he and a close female friend were able to help each other out. He is close to 90 now and growing less able. His friend, who never lived with him, has become a caregiver for a family member and is less available.*

*While there is not an immediate crisis, I know that he will soon need more assistance and I need to know what is happening. Is there a way to keep track of what is happening so I can avoid a crisis?*

**Distance Daughter**

### A. Dear Distance Daughter,

Yes, there is just the service that you need. Jewish Family Services offers a Care Management Service that can include monitoring, supportive visits, help with check writing, and connections to other services as needed.

The catch with any service for seniors is the selling of it to the senior.

Many older adults see other people's coming into their lives as a precursor to losing independence. I suggest that you try to present what Jewish Family Services can offer in a way that helps your father understand that a little help now is an investment in his being independent for as long as possible. Urge him your father to meet the service provider, always emphasizing that accepting the help will be his decision. If a trust can be developed with your father, he will be a partner in making necessary changes, as he needs more assistance.

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Miriam Adler, A.C.S.W., C.S.W., is assistant director of J.F.S. She answers most frequently asked questions. Please send questions to "Ask Miriam," c/o Jewish Family Services of NENY, 877 Madison Ave., Albany, NY 12208 or e-mail [madler@jfsneny.org](mailto:madler@jfsneny.org) or call 518-482-8856.