



SUMMER NEWSLETTER

2025



MESSAGE from Linda Steinberg, President

As summer winds down, we are reminded of the strength and resilience of our NCJWC community. This newsletter highlights the meaningful work we've accomplished together — locally, nationally, and globally.

It is with deep sadness that we remember **Sheila Neuburger**, who served as President of the Toronto Section for four years, as well as a valuable of our National Board. Sheila's professional expertise, visionary leadership, and unwavering dedication profoundly impacted Toronto Section, helping to ensure its continued success. She will be greatly missed by all who had the privilege of working with her.

A lot has happened since our last Newsletter.

We are delighted to welcome **Deb Shime** as our Project Manager for the federally funded initiative, **FIGHTING ANTISEMITISM: THE POWER OF SMALL CONVERSATIONS**. Deb has developed a comprehensive work plan, engaged and met with the Boards of NCJWC and Toronto, the National and Toronto Antisemitism committees, as well as numerous project partners and key stakeholders. This initiative has drawn attention from many organizations and individuals with specialized knowledge who have reached out to be part of this exciting initiative, elevating the profile of NCJWC as a prestigious and impactful organization in Canada.

While this flagship project is a major focus, there is much more happening across the country, as highlighted in this newsletter.

Thanks to your generous support, we were able to send a second wire transfer to **ALUMA** this year. Be sure to read the reply from Gadi Lidshitz, Deputy CEO, ALUMA. We also received a heartfelt note of thanks from **Yoseftal Hospital Children's Centre** for our generous donation in order for them to help create a computer centre for the children.

Montreal Section was honoured at Auberge Shalom's 26th anniversary event as a founding member. Winnipeg is gearing up to host National's Triennial AGM in October and to celebrating its **100th anniversary in November**.

Looking ahead internationally, the **International Council of Jewish Women (ICJW) DeHerczeg Seminar** will take place in Israel this November. It promises to be an enriching experience. In memory of the late Bunny Gurvey, former National President and lifelong member of the ICJW, her family has generously established the Bunny Gurvey Bursary to help offset the costs of this seminar. See details below.

In May, the ICJW welcomed its newest members from **Japan** at the Executive Meeting in **Paris** — watch the power point presentation featuring this expansion.

We're so proud that Hannah Pressman Chikiar, daughter of Vancouver Board member Yamila, has been selected to serve on **a planning committee for the International Day of the Girl**. This opportunity became possible through our involvement with ICJW.

And there's so much more to share.

I look forward to working with our incoming NCJWC Board who will be installed in October at our Triennial AGM In Winnipeg. Together, we will develop our focus for the next three years and beyond.

Finally, please remember to contribute to our Vital Connections Campaign. Your donations truly make an impact in supporting our activities and the implementation of our Strategic Plan ensuring a robust future for NCJWC.

Linda Steinberg
NCJWC President

The POWER of SMALL CONVERSATIONS



August 2025 Update

As we all know and are experiencing, since the October 7th Hamas attack against Israel, antisemitism in Canada has grown exponentially. Incidents continue to take place regularly with antisemitic acts reaching unprecedented levels including shootings, bombings and hate graffiti at Jewish schools, synagogues, cemeteries, community buildings and business and through violent attacks on individuals.

Here are some particularly powerful stats:

Nationally:

- **Police-reported hate crimes in Canada rose to 4,777 in 2023**, marking a **32% increase** over 2022 [Statistics Canada](#).
- Among those, **religiously motivated hate crimes surged 67%**, with antisemitic incidents alone growing **71%—from 527 in 2022 to 900 in 2023** [Statistics Canada cija.ca](#).
- Although Jewish Canadians make up less than 1% of the population, they were the target of **19% of all hate crimes** and accounted for **70% of religion-based hate crimes** in 2023 [cija.ca](#).

From the B'nai Brith Canada Audit (2024)

- A **record-breaking 6,219 antisemitic incidents** were documented in 2024, a **7.4% increase** over 2023 and a staggering **124% increase** over 2022 [The Canadian Jewish News Wikipedia](#).
- The vast majority were in-person or online harassment, with **online incidents up 161%** from 2022 [The Canadian Jewish News](#).
- Regionally, incidents increased sharply in several provinces:
 - o **Quebec**: +215% (1,651 incidents)
 - o **Alberta**: +160% (916 incidents)
 - o **British Columbia**: +44% (671 incidents)
 - o **Prairies & Atlantic Canada** also saw significant rises [B'nai Brith Canada The Canadian Jewish News](#)
 - o **Interestingly, Ontario saw a 25% decrease**, yet remained the province with the highest total number of incidents (1,782) [The Canadian Jewish News B'nai Brith Canada](#).

Research shows that personal relationship building can be a powerful antidote to antisemitism and hate. Large-scale surveys in the United States, Europe, and around the world consistently find that people who personally know someone who is Jewish hold significantly fewer

antisemitic beliefs. For example, The Anti-Defamation League's GLOBAL 100 INDEX likewise reported a 27% lower prevalence of antisemitic attitudes among those who knew a Jew compared to those who did not¹.

That is why the NCJWC national initiative - **the Power of Small Conversations**, a collaboration through the National office and the Toronto section is so important. Our grassroots effort is designed to combat antisemitism through small group conversations that create space for a safe and respectful dialogue, storytelling and information sharing.

Over the summer we have made great strides in the development of this project including hiring a consultant to support our work, forming a Steering Committee that will meet in August, developing a communication strategy for a variety of stakeholders, creating a learning and evaluation framework, meeting with partner and like organizations to engage them, and making plans for the design and development for the content of the conversations and the training and support for the facilitators.

The Steering Committee will be comprised of people from across the NCJWC sections and we are reaching out to each section to learn more about their local context and how they want to engage in this important and impactful project. Over the fall we will be reaching out with opportunities to engage in and support this project. Stay tuned!

If you have any questions, require additional information, or want to get involved, please reach out to your NCJWC Section President or contact: Linda Steinberg, President, NCJWC, lindasteinberg7@gmail.com

Deb Shime,
Project Manager, The Power of Small Conversations

¹ Anti-Defamation League. (2019). ADL GLOBAL 100: AN INDEX OF ANTISEMITISM. <https://global100.adl.org/>

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| **Canada** 

International Day of the Girl

The mission of the United Nation's International Day of the Girl (IDG) focuses attention and addresses the challenges and disadvantages that millions of marginalized girls continue to face around the world. This UN commemoration promotes girls' empowerment and gender equality as it calls for an end of discrimination and a guarantee of basic human rights and social justice for all girls.

CONGRATULATIONS to Hannah Presman Chikiar, Vancouver on becoming our representative on the UN Girls Speak Out 2025 Committee

Why I Nominated Hannah Presman Chikiar for the Girls Speak Out 2025 Committee
by Jordana Corenblum, Vancouver Section President

When the call came to nominate a young leader for the UN's International Day of the Girl, Hannah Presman Chikiar, 16, came to mind immediately.

Rooted in the Jewish value of **TIKKUN OLAM**, she leads with purpose, compassion, and conviction.

As a member of the Girls Speak Out 2025 committee, Hannah collaborates with girls worldwide to shape a bold, girl-led event at the UN this October under the theme "We Are Here: Bold, Diverse, and Unstoppable" — a phrase that truly reflects her.

Through her advocacy, leadership, and deep sense of responsibility, Hannah is already making a difference. It was an honour to nominate her through the National Council of Jewish Women of Canada, and we're proud to see her represent our Vancouver community on the global stage.

Meet Hannah Presman Chikiar



My name is Hannah Presman Chikiar, and I'm 16. I'm honoured to join the United Nations Committee for the International Day of the Girl 2025, after being nominated by the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJWC), an organization rooted in Jewish values and committed to justice, equity, and empowering women and girls.

Every Saturday at 5 a.m. PST, I meet with girls from around the world to plan [GIRLS SPEAK OUT 2025](#) — a girl-led, policy-driven event taking place October 10th at the UN in New York and online.

I was raised with the value of [TIKKUN OLAM](#), the belief that we each have a role in repairing the world. This work is one of the most meaningful ways I live that out. Our theme this year is [“WE ARE HERE: BOLD, DIVERSE, AND UNSTOPPABLE,”](#) and we're creating space for girls to speak directly with global leaders on issues like education, climate justice, gender-based violence, and digital equity - not just to be heard, but to drive real action.

Change doesn't wait for the perfect moment — it starts when we show up, speak up, and do the work. I'm so grateful to the women who support and inspire me, especially my mom, Yamila Chikiar, my grandmother Ivonne Walter, and Jordana Corenblum of NCJWC.

To every girl who's ever been told her voice doesn't matter: we're here. We're leading. And we're not backing down.

NCJWC COMMITTEES

AGEISM COMMITTEE

A very successful webinar was held on June 11 on the topic of “Scam Alert: Become Scam Savvy” presented by Stephanie Senecal, Senior Support Unit Coordinator of the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre. We received many appreciative comments on the presentation and requests to share the link with those who weren’t able to attend. Stephanie also left us with an impressive toolkit on how to avoid being scammed. If you missed her talk, visit ncjwc.org, scroll down the webinar menu for the free Fraud Awareness Toolkit in English and French and the presentation.

We are also pleased to share with you that our next webinar will take place on **Thursday, November 27, 2 pm ET** on the topic “**Elder Abuse in Trust and Power Relationships**,” to be presented by Bénédicte Schoepflin, Executive Director of the Canadian Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse. Mark your calendar and stay tuned for more information in the fall.

SECTION UPDATES



EDMONTON UPDATE

The Edmonton Section has been active over the last few months. We do our best to help out the Edmonton Jewish community as well as the community-at-large.

On March 8, 2025, at the International Women’s Day event in Saint Albert, NCJWC-Edmonton made a donation to help a woman’s shelter called the Jessical Martel Memorial Foundation. In later March, the Edmonton Section met with the Executive Director of Jewish Family Services

and provided the organization with funds to assist those in need with help during the holiday of Passover. This donation was greatly appreciated by the recipients.



On May 1st, 2025, the Edmonton Section publicised the community Yom Ha'atzmaut event celebrating Israel at 77 years strong. It was nice to be part of this positive and energetic Edmonton event.

The Edmonton Jewish Film Festival took place May 6-15, and the Edmonton Section sponsored two short films: *Paddling for Life* and *Hope on the Water*. They were shown virtually so the audience could watch the films anytime during the festival period.

On August 5-6, NCJWC, Edmonton Section is having a 2-day (and evening) casino through the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission. This event takes place at the casino in West Edmonton Mall and hosts almost 40 volunteers. We look forward to receiving the proceeds in about 3-5 months, so that more important work can take place in Edmonton, Alberta over the next two years.

We look forward to the rest of the summer and the fall as we go forward to assist the community in the best way possible. We appreciate being part of a larger organization, including the National Council of Jewish Women of Canada, as well as the International Council of Jewish Women.

Jodi Zabłudowski,
President Edmonton

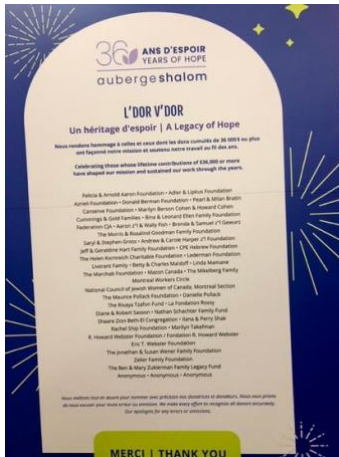


MONTREAL UPDATE

We collaborated with the Jewish Public Library by promoting the film “Simone Weil - Heroine of the 20th Century” during the week of the International Women’s Day. The event was outstanding and NCJWC Montreal had good exposure to the Jewish community. Future collaborations are planned for the 2025/26 season.

We participated in the Mitzvah Day of Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom by making origami peace cranes at the NCJWC Montreal table, while promoting our Section. A mobile of the creations will be displayed in the youth room of the synagogue.





Some of our members attended the 36th Anniversary of Auberge Shalom celebration with a packed crowd of donors in May. The thriving women's shelter was created in 1989 by the former NCJWC Montreal Section, and recognized as such in the introductory comments by its Executive Director and listed on the 'Legacy of Hope' donor board.

We will soon be volunteering at the Hope and Cope organization, which provides support to cancer survivors.

And, last but not least, we are in the final process of editing our bylaws.

Monika Simon,
President, Montreal



SIMCOE COUNTY UPDATE

Simcoe County has dedicated the last several executive meetings to clarifying job descriptions and restructuring, with the goal of expanding our leadership team. We now have a Vice President who is prepared step into the role of President when the time is right. In addition, we've added a Membership Chair focused on outreach to new members and reconnecting with those whose membership has lapsed. To better engage younger women, we've also introduced a second Programming Chair, who will focus on developing evening events for those unable to attend daytime programs.

We recently launched a knitting & crocheting group, drawing women aged 30- 75 who are making baby blankets. These blankets will be distributed in Israel by Ameinu to mothers who have given birth in the hospital and whose husbands are serving, kidnapped or tragically passed. Held in the evenings, the group has appealed to a younger demographic. The location alternates between Am Shalom in Barrie and Chabad in Innisfil helping us reach a broad spectrum of the local Jewish community- and we've welcomed several new members as a result.

Our monthly book club and lunches continue to be well attended and serve as a warm and easy way to introduce new women to NCJWC Simcoe County.

On July 28th we held our 4th annual Games Day fundraiser which was sold out. This year we added lunch and introduced a silent auction. It was a great success. A significant portion will be donated to ALUMA with the remainder reinvested in Simcoe County Section.

Helen Silverstein,
President Simcoe County



TORONTO UPDATE

Happy Summer! This past spring has been a time of growth and rebirth for the National Council of Jewish Women, Toronto Section. We are proud of the new programs and projects that we have launched. Here are some highlights:

- The Canadian Jewish Women's Collective, comprised of a grouping of Jewish Women's organizations in Canada hosted a program at Holy Blossom featuring an interview with *Justice Rosalie Abella* by Rabbi Yael Splansky. There were over 400 women in attendance in person and online!
- We are excited to be launching a new national initiative in partnership with NCJWC to fight antisemitism in this country. Funded by the federal government's National Holocaust Remembrance Program, The Power of Small Conversations will see the initiation of 3500 hundred conversations across the country (including Toronto) over the next five years. These conversations will educate participants about antisemitism, hatred and Canadian Values. We hope that you will join us - information will follow over the coming months.

- On June 25, we launched a new career mentorship program with JIAS! This is a fantastic opportunity to leverage our amazing volunteers in the workforce and support a newcomer's entry into the workplace. We hope to do this again next year - please let us know if you would like to join us!

On June 21, 2025, NCJWC Toronto was invited to participate in the Bernard Betel Centre 60th Anniversary Celebration. Our Executive Director, Robin Gofine was invited to address the members of the Bernard Betel Centre as part of its Diamond Jubilee Celebrations. In 1965, volunteers with the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW), Toronto section, pioneered the Good Age Club at the Council House. They wanted to address the needs of Jewish seniors at the time who were isolated and had little to do to fill their days. A program was piloted at Council House and grew over time, eventually becoming over-subscribed. NCJWC Toronto is proud to have played a role in bringing this wonderful organization to life. Wishing the Betel Centre continued success!



- We are grateful that in the interim, one of our Vice Presidents, Patti Niles, has stepped into the role of Interim President until our Annual Meeting in September. At that point, our new Board of Directors will be installed.

Have a safe and relaxing summer!

Patty Niles,
Interim President, Toronto



VANCOUVER UPDATE

We're thrilled to share some exciting updates from the Vancouver Section of NCJWC!

First, we're incredibly proud that a young woman, Hannah, from our community has been selected to sit on the planning committee for the UN's *International Day of the Girl*. She will be representing NCJW(C) on the global stage. We'd of course like to take credit for part of how remarkable Hannah is, but it's really a testament to the leadership and passion her family has fostered in her and the opportunities she seeks out. Mazal Tov Hannah, we're so proud of you.

Our board has also been working to clarify our fiduciary responsibilities and undergoing training to better understand how, as a registered charity, we can responsibly distribute funds to non-qualified donees. This work is helping to strengthen our foundation and giving us a clearer understanding of both the possibilities and limitations of the many initiatives we're always dreaming up.

We're still hoping to launch a youth mentorship program - an initiative close to our hearts - and we look forward to sharing progress on that front soon.

Finally, we're proud to have partnered with Jewish Family Services and our community garden to support our first food security-focused summer camp. NCJWC Vancouver was able to provide funding for the camp and for the facilitator's training with Shores Canada, ensuring the program was rooted in Jewish environmental and food justice values.

Jordana Corenblum
President Vancouver



WINNIPEG UPDATE

NCJWC Winnipeg Section is turning 100!

In honour of this incredible milestone, we're proud to announce the establishment of a 100th year celebration endowment fund at the Jewish Foundation of Manitoba. Join us in honouring a century of service and help us build our legacy for generations to come. Donation can be made

at: [https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://www.jewishfoundation.org/NCJW100_!!GFN0sa3rsbfr8OLyAw!d7Z4zd3sdww4a8pBXbgpc1XO3MXfkr1jMNPcyxUJlNzDOo1OfpfiTPwKXKtcRuJkXHHklF2RDuGZGwUJPz-T8r9N5zTjZQ\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://www.jewishfoundation.org/NCJW100_!!GFN0sa3rsbfr8OLyAw!d7Z4zd3sdww4a8pBXbgpc1XO3MXfkr1jMNPcyxUJlNzDOo1OfpfiTPwKXKtcRuJkXHHklF2RDuGZGwUJPz-T8r9N5zTjZQ$)

Other events to celebrate 100 years are being planned and we will have exciting details to share in the fall!

ALUMA Fundraising

In the spring, Gray Academy of Jewish Education selected ALUMA as the recipient for a 'Casual Day For a Cause' fundraising event, where students were able to wear casual clothes in lieu of their uniforms. This wonderful initiative raised \$762 for ALUMA and helped us raise awareness of the important work being done by ALUMA.

Participation in Pride Parade

On June 1, 2025, the Winnipeg Section participated in the Pride Parade along side many other Jewish community organizations, demonstrating our commitment to inclusion and diversity and support for 2SLGBTQI+ community members. Multiple Jewish community logos appeared on a banner that read "**Love is Love/אהבה היא אהבה**".

Leah Craven,
President Winnipeg

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN ISRAEL

ALUMA

Israel is currently experiencing a complex period of both hope and fear. After more than a year and a half of continuous turmoil, our emotional and psychological coping resources are being significantly eroded.

At Aluma, we're seeing an increase in patients with anxiety and depression symptoms, and we're treating couples and families facing ongoing emotional challenges. This reality also impacts our staff, leading us to invest more resources in "care for the caregiver" initiatives. We achieve this by holding more frequent meetings, providing increased supervision and training, and strengthening our team's sense of community.

We are also developing new treatment programs specifically designed to help people cope with prolonged traumatic situations. Our hope is that these programs will allow us to meet the growing need for high-quality care for a wide range of populations.

Thank you again for your support.

Warm regards,
Gadi Lifshitz
Deputy CEO, ALUMA

YOSEFTAL MEDICAL CENTRE

NCJWC's contribution to the Yoseftal Medical Center in Eilat.

I hope this e-mail finds you well.

I'm pleased to share an important update regarding the generous donation from the National Council of Jewish Women of Canada, dedicated to the Children's Learning Centre at Yoseftal Medical Center in Eilat. The addition of the **educational computers** has made a meaningful impact for the children.

These computers are equipped with **interactive educational software**, enabling hospitalized children to continue their studies remotely. Maintaining an **educational routine** during hospitalization plays a vital role in supporting emotional well-being and resilience, while also helping to **bridge academic gaps** caused by prolonged absences from school. This ensures that children are not left behind and can return to their classrooms with greater confidence and continuity.

It's important to note that **Yoseftal Hospital, due to its small size and remote location, often receives fewer educational resources and support** than larger institutions. As such, we see it as our mission to continue **accompanying and supporting** the hospital in its educational development, ensuring that every child, regardless of geography, receives the care and attention they deserve.

We are deeply grateful for NCJWC's partnership, which is helping us bring light and learning to children in need.

Best regards,
Omer Givati, Israel

ICJW International Update

ICJW DeHerczeg Seminar in Israel November 9-13, 2025

The DeHerczeg Seminar is held every four years in Israel and coincides with ICJW's Executive Meeting. This gathering serves as a vital opportunity for learning, networking, and strengthening connections across the global Jewish community.

Bunny Gurvey Bursary Fund: Supporting Participation in the DeHerczeg Seminar

To ensure that National Council of Jewish Women of Canada (NCJWC) members have the chance to participate in this enriching experience, the **Bunny Gurvey Bursary Fund** provides financial assistance to 1 -3 eligible NCJWC members to help cover the costs associated with attending the DeHerczeg Seminar. Funds may be used for transportation (including cancellation insurance), hotel accommodations, registration fees, or a combination of these expenses.

Eligibility Criteria

To apply for the Bunny Gurvey Bursary, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Be an active member of the **NCJWC** in good standing.
- Hold a role or position within her section or at the national level.
- Be 30 years of age or older at the time of application.

Application Process

Interested members must submit a **letter of application** to the **National President** no later than **September 5, 2025**. The application should include a **detailed explanation** of why the applicant should be selected as a bursary recipient.

Funds will be allocated based on the most economical travel arrangements, and receipts will be required for airfare, hotel stays, and seminar registration. The bursary covers **transportation costs, hotel accommodations, and seminar registration fees**. Please note that it cannot be used for personal travel expenses or incidental costs such as meals or entertainment.

Bursary Award and Travel Advance

Successful applicants will be awarded a **travel advance** to cover the seminar-related expenses. This advance will be used to offset the costs of airfare, hotel accommodation, and seminar registration. When possible, recipients are encouraged to share hotel rooms to further reduce costs.

Post-Seminar Requirements

As part of their commitment to the NCJWC and the wider Jewish community, bursary recipients will be required to:

- Submit a **report** to the National President, detailing their experiences, observations, and insights gained from the seminar.
 - Share their knowledge and experiences at **future NCJWC meetings** and events. The report may also be published in **National or Section communications**.
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Dedicated to furthering human welfare in the community.

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