

ANNUAL REPORT 2025

**NATIONAL
COUNCIL
OF JEWISH
WOMEN OF
CANADA**
ncjwc.org





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MESSAGE from Linda Steinberg, President

I am excited to welcome everyone to our Triennial Meeting, hosted by the Winnipeg Section.

We are celebrating the incredible projects and programs developed by our Sections and National organization - initiatives that continue to strengthen and enrich our communities.

The rich history of National is reflected in the longevity and vitality of our Sections. Both Vancouver and Winnipeg Sections are proudly marking their 100-year anniversaries, each having contributed immensely to their communities and to National as a whole. Tikkun Olam - repairing the world is at the heart of our work. Congratulations to Vancouver (celebrated November 2024) and to Winnipeg (celebrating in November 2025) on these outstanding milestones.

Our success is built on a foundation of teamwork, within each Section and across our National level.

Our two National committees have offered meaningful and timely webinars, each attracting over 100 registrants.

The **Antisemitism Committee** presented "Israeli Women's Voices: Stories from the Frontlines" featuring Professor Tal Oron-Gilad in conversation with Robin Gofine and hosted a session on "Social Action in the Diaspora: Combatting Jew-Hatred" with Joan Lurie (ICJW) as part of the series, "Women on the Front Lines"

The Ageism Committee featured Dr. Allison Seculer's, presentation "Defy Dementia; Learn How to Reduce Your Dementia Risk"; followed by relevant podcasts in our newsletter and a webinar entitled "Scam Alert Become Scam Savvy" with Stephanie Secular.

Under the stewardship of **Deb Shime**, implementation has begun on the multi-year grant received by NCJWC and Toronto Section from Heritage Canada for the project **Fighting Antisemitism: The Power of Small Conversations."**

Through collaborations with partner organizations and the creation of the **Canadian Women's Collective**, we have hosted impactful events such as the-film screening and panel discussion of "Screams Before Silence" and "Resilience Rising to Our Challenge" featuring Jeanne Bekker in conversation with Talia Schlanger.

Looking beyond Canada, during the Israel-Hamas conflict, we expanded our support for Israel. We increased our contribution to the longstanding **ALUMA** project and raised additional funds to help establish a children's computer center at the **Yoseftal Medical Centre**.

Our **Mitzvah Day** projects continue to thrive across the country and have received recognition from founding members in England. Kudos to everyone involved!

We are also proud to share that **Hannah Pressman Chikiar**, daughter of Vancouver Board member Yamila, has joined the planning committee for the **International Day of the Girl**.

Sadly, we pay tribute to the outstanding leadership of **Sheila Neuberger**, President of the Toronto Section, who passed away this year.

Together we are stronger and stand a little taller. Thank you for your unwavering commitment to your communities and to NCJWC.

The following reports from our Sections highlight the integrity, commitment and dedication of NCJWC.

SECTION REPORTS



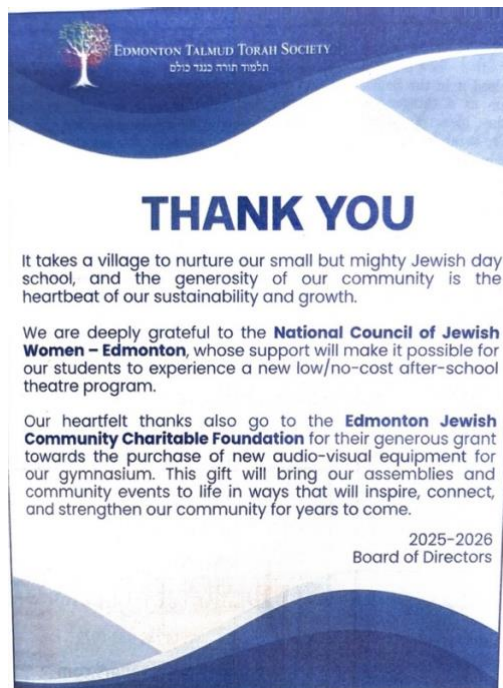
The Edmonton Section held a two-casino event under the auspices of Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission on August 5-6, 2025. There were 36 volunteers participating over the two-day event. We expect to see the results of this event by November 2025.

At the end of August, NCJWC-Edmonton Section provided 20 Backpacks and supplies to Jessie's House – a woman's shelter in Morinville, Alberta. It was greatly appreciated by the women and children who received them.

On Tuesday, Sept 16th, NCJWC-Edmonton Section partnered with Renewal Canada for a Kidney Donation Awareness Event and Swab Drive. This was very successful and a great learning opportunity about this wonderful Jewish organization. They match donors and people who need kidneys; it is a life-saving organization. There were quite a few people who were willing to see if they are a match for donors in need.

Before Rosh Hashana, the Rabbi of the Beth Israel Synagogue will be visiting Shut-ins and people who are not able to go to the Synagogue for the High Holidays. With the help of NCJWC-Edmonton Section, the Rabbi left them a gift package to make their Rosh Hashana a little brighter and meaningful.

NCJWC-Edmonton provided support to the Talmud Torah School for their new After School Theatre Program. We are proud to assist the students prepare for their future. This thank you letter was included in the Alberta Jewish Newspaper (September Edition).



We look forward to the fall and winter 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.

Respectfully submitted by:
Jodi Zabłudowski
President, NCJWC Edmonton



We enjoyed a very good collaboration with the Jewish Public Library last February, at an event that celebrated the life of **Simone Veil**, a Holocaust survivor who became a 20th century trailblazer for women.

More collaborations are planned for the 2025/26 season.

A mobile of origami peace cranes is now hanging in the Youth Room of Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom synagogue, created during a Mitzvah Day activity in March. Plaques with our English and French NCJWC/CNFJC logos describe the story behind the peace cranes.

In May, the 36th Anniversary Gala of Auberge Shalom gave prominence to the National Council of Jewish Women of Canada, Montreal Section as founders of a shelter that offers diverse and comprehensive services for women and children who have been affected by intimate partner abuse.

This fall we are cooking meals for the Hope & Cope Cancer program of the Jewish General Hospital.

We are also planning an event at the end of the year entitled: Defy Dementia with Music — for people diagnosed with dementia and their caregivers.

By-laws have been developed and will be presented for membership approval when our numbers have grown.

Respectfully submitted by:
Monika Simon,
President, NCJWC Montreal Section



NCJWC, Simcoe County has focused on clarifying job descriptions with the goal of expanding our leadership team. We now have a Vice President and a transition plan in place. We added a Membership Chair focused on outreach. To engage younger women, we've introduced a second Programming Chair, who will focus on evening events for women working inside and outside of the home.

We continue to have our monthly drop in lunches. It is a way for women to "try us out" and for new women to meet each other in a casual, no pressure setting.

Our monthly book club continues to be virtual, with several women joining us from outside Simcoe County. Once again, we held our July meeting in person, with the author in attendance and successfully used it for outreach.

In the summer of 2025, we added a third monthly program with the launch of a crochet club to make baby blankets to be distributed in Israel to mothers who have given birth 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, a reform synagogue and Chabad helping us reach a broad spectrum of the local Jewish community.

Mitzvah Day 2024 had us partnering with the Barrie Food Bank. In the first phase we partook in the fall "Tim Horton's Smile Campaign" where our members put the smile on the cookies and encouraged donations to the Barrie Food Bank. This was followed up in the spring with a tour of the Barrie Food Bank and opportunity to sort food.

In February 2025 we had a lunch meet up in Fort Lauderdale for members wintering in Florida.

In July, we held our 4th annual Games Day fundraiser. This year we added lunch and introduced a silent auction. Proceeds went to ALUMA. In August, we hosted a mindful yoga and Jewish meditation session. Due to demand, we are offering a fall series, and the leader is donating a portion back from each registration to NCJWC, Simcoe County.

Susan Jackson, VP, Israel and Overseas of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto gave an insightful and humorous presentation on volunteerism, community and the significance of Jewish food. She kept us laughing all day by presenting both in the afternoon and evening.

We celebrated Rosh Hashana picking apples with PJ Library. Our members helped provided support to the 20+ young families that attended. During Sukkot we had our first challah bake led by Sidura Ludwig, the author of the PJ Library book, Rising. Our members made extra dough that enabled 20 children to braid and bake their very own challahs at the PJ Library Sukkot event happening later that day.

For the second year, NCJWC, Simcoe County is a proud sponsor of Third Age Barrie which provides programming for retirees and seniors to offset isolation and provide lifelong learning. On October 14th, Monika Simon, president of Montreal Section delivered a well-received presentation on Ageism and generously donated her speakers fee back to Simcoe County.

Organizing for Mitzvah Day 2025 is well underway as we plan to prepare 150+ lunches for unhoused people in need across Barrie and Innisfil, supporting local charities including the Food Banks and Troy Scott Fridges. We have a potluck page set up where members and friends can sign up to contribute food items or volunteer to make the lunches. We look forward to the coming year and the opportunities it will provide to enhance Jewish life in Simcoe County as well as strengthen our relationships with friends, allies and other non-profits outside of the Jewish community.

Respectfully submitted by:
Helen Silverstein
President, NCJWC Simcoe County



In partnership with NCJWC, NCJWC Toronto received an unprecedented \$259,000 grant from the government of Canada, which has launched a national project to address antisemitism at the grassroots level, locally and across the country. Thank you to Linda Steinberg, President of NCJWC, for her partnership and leadership, along with our Toronto Anti-Semitism Committee Chairs Susan Glickman and Stella Seigal, where this project was born. Thank you to our new members and volunteer Patti Carlson for her valuable contribution.

We held the most successful Mitzvah Day in our history, which helped and supported an estimated 1,000 individuals in our community.

We completed our fourth annual Kids Summer Essentials Fund Campaign, which has resulted to date in providing gift cards to over 750 children in the GTA to purchase summer essentials, such as runners and other summer items. At our AGM in September, we announced the renaming of this fund in memory of our President Sheila Neuburger, who passed away prematurely in June 2025. We hope to expand the reach of this initiative to provide gift cards to a growing number of children in our community to ensure they have the essentials for a great start to summer.

We completed the 42nd Annual Passover Food Drive, ensuring that we provided food boxes to over 2,450 vulnerable members of our community. The committee is currently making plans for 2026 to innovate and ensure that our program reaches new heights.

Through the NCJWC L'Chaim Cancer Support Program, Jewish women diagnosed with cancer receive important social connection and peer support. This year's innovation—the creation of a wig bank—will enable women in our community to receive a new or lightly used wig for free, fitted and styled with the support of our amazing L'Chaim Cancer Support Volunteers.

The establishment of the Canadian Jewish Women's Collective, has enabled us to offer programs in person and online that address the issues important to Canadian Jewish women locally and across the country. The Collective includes organizations such as NCJWC, NCJWC Toronto, CHW (Canadian Hadassah-Wizo), Na'amat Canada, Momentum Canada, and Women of Holy Blossom. In total, these joint programs have engaged over 1,000 women, bringing them together to ensure a collective voice as Canadian Jewish women. In addition to growth in all of our program areas, we are particularly proud of these accomplishments.

The coming year will bring continued growth and change. In addition to improving technology and operational systems at NCJWC Toronto, we hope to continue building our working relationship with NCJWC and its sections across the country. We will focus on expanding our fundraising capacity, exploring additional staffing to help us grow, engaging new and talented volunteers, and building new community partnerships.

Respectfully submitted by:
Patty Niles
President, NCJWC Toronto



Most notably since last year's AGM, NCJWC Vancouver proudly celebrated our **100th Anniversary**. We are so grateful to everyone who joined us on Sunday, November 24, 2024, to mark this incredible milestone, and a special thank-you to **Linda Steinberg** for flying out to celebrate with us. Guests enjoyed swing dance lessons, live music, and heartfelt words from special friends of NCJWC. With participants ranging in age from 7 to 95, we truly had A ROARING GOOD TIME! It was a sensational way to honour a century of service.

Our signature program, **Books for Kids**, donated **\$2,000 worth of new books** to children and families this year. A special thank-you to **Rhea Lazar** for her dedication and commitment to sustaining this important program for so many years.

NCJWC Vancouver continues its partnership with **JFS Vancouver** to support food security and education. With our funding, JFS launched the first **Veggie Voyagers** summer camp. This unique program brings children into our community garden and on a field trip to a local farm, building connections from seed to table. Rooted in the belief that every child deserves a place in our growing community—regardless of their family's financial capacity—the camp offers subsidized, experiential learning that combines farming, cooking, and environmental education. We look forward to continuing to expand this exciting initiative.

Every year we mark **International Women's Day**, and this year we were thrilled to host the Vancouver premiere of SHE RISES UP. This must-see documentary showcases women-led businesses that defy the odds and create lasting change. With over 80 attendees, the evening was filled with inspiration, resilience, and celebration of women transforming communities around the world. We are proud to have shared such powerful stories with our community.

We are also excited to announce that a very special student from Vancouver will represent both the National and International Council of Jewish Women at the United Nations this fall. On October 11, 2025, Hannah (daughter of NCJWC Vancouver board member, Yamila) will participate in the **INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL – GIRLS SPEAK OUT** event in New York. For months, she has been waking up for 5 am Saturday morning meetings to work with a global team to help bring this event to life. Once she returns and takes a well-earned breath, Hannah will join our board in developing our new Youth Social Action Mentorship Program. We are thrilled to finally launch this initiative and to see youth voices help shape the future of NCJWC Vancouver.

Respectfully submitted by:
Jordana Corenblum
President, NCJWC Vancouver



This year has been one of meaningful community engagement, impactful advocacy, and celebration. Below are highlights of our key accomplishments:

Mitzvah Day (November 2024): In our sixth year leading Winnipeg's participation in International Mitzvah Day, over 25 organizations from across the Jewish and broader community joined us in acts of kindness. Initiatives included collecting essential items for social service agencies, preparing and delivering sandwiches to outreach centres, volunteering at community support hubs and soup kitchens, writing letters to families of abductees, and creating Hanukkah gift bags for Simkin Centre residents.

We were honoured to receive the 2024 Award for Outstanding International Mitzvah Day - a testament to the power of collaboration.

Working Women Employment Mixer: This group met regularly, offering peer networking, job skills development, and a welcoming space for newcomers and job seekers.

Employment & Labour Law Workshop (November 13, 2024): In partnership with JCFS Settlement Services, we hosted a workshop featuring Cindy Lazar, Labour and Employment Lawyer and Past Section President. Another session is scheduled for December 3, 2025.

Organ Donation Awareness Panel (March 9, 2025): In partnership with Chesed Shel Emes (Jewish Burial Society), we hosted a powerful panel featuring Rabbi Yosef Benarroch, Dr. Aviva Goldberg (pediatric nephrologist), and transplant recipient Henriette Ivanans-McIntyre, moderated by a Transplant Manitoba specialist. The discussion explored Jewish perspectives on organ donation, the value of *pikuach nefesh* (saving a life), and how to register as a donor.

Mishloach Manot Project: Continuing our cherished tradition, we baked hamantaschen and assembled 100 mishloach manot for clients of Jewish Child and Family Services, with support from local sponsors and volunteers.

Pride Parade Participation (June 1, 2025): We proudly marched alongside other Jewish organizations in support of the 2SLGBTQI+ community, under a banner reading "Love is Love / אהבה היא אהבה," reflecting our commitment to inclusion and diversity.

Backpack Project (August 2025): Now in its ninth year, this initiative provided 45 fully stocked backpacks to JCFS clients, meeting our highest number of requests to date and including water bottles for the first time.

Celebrating 100 Years of NCJWC Winnipeg Section: To honour our centennial, we established a 100th Year Celebration Endowment Fund at the Jewish Foundation of Manitoba, ensuring our legacy continues for generations.

We are also thrilled to share that:

- Her Honour, The Honourable Anita Neville, Manitoba's first Jewish Lieutenant Governor, will host a reception at Government House on November 4, 2025.
- MP Ben Carr will deliver a Member's Statement in Parliament recognizing our 100 years of service and advocacy.

Respectfully submitted by:
Leah Craven,
President, NCJWC Winnipeg

NCJWC COMMITTEES

ANTISEMITISM COMMITTEE

This year the NAC accomplished two main things:

1) our two-year long exploration of how to disseminate correct information about Israel and the war led to the procurement of our pivotal grant of \$250,000 grant from Heritage Canada. This multi-year project, entitled Fighting Antisemitism: The Power of Small Conversations will educate Canadians of all backgrounds, races and religions to respectfully discuss contemporary antisemitism and hatred in our society. Members of our committee are now on the various tasks to bring the project to life.

2) this committee has representation from across the Sections – Vancouver, Simcoe County, Toronto and Montreal. This makes our voice truly National. It has also allowed us to share the climate of antisemitism in each of these cities and what the specific communities are doing to address it.

Now going forward, NAC is working on how to continue to be effective internally and externally; how to continue to educate our NCJWC members and exploring ways we can continue to be a force in the community combatting antisemitism.

Eva Karpati, Vice President and Committee Chair

AGEISM COMMITTEE

The June 11 webinar on "Become Scam Savvy" was very successful: 168 registrations, 74 attended the webinar, and 82 people watched the YouTube video of the webinar after the presentation.

Speaker Stephanie Senecal, [Community Support Coordinator of the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre](#), [Royal Canadian Mounted Police](#) and [Ontario Provincial Police](#) also left us with a "Show Me the Fraud" toolkit, which is posted on our website and will serve as a resource for future newsletters.

Our next webinar will take place on November 27, 2 pm ET on ***Elder Abuse in Trust and Power Relationships***, speaker: Bénédicte Schoepflin, Executive Director, Canadian Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse.

Monika Simon, Vice President and Committee Chair

JEWISH GENETIC DISEASES

Report on Progress on the Development of a therapy for the GM2 gangliosidoses (Tay Sachs Disease)

In our laboratories, Dr. Barbara Triggs-Raine and Dr. Brian Mark are continuing to work toward the development of a treatment for Tay-Sachs disease. This year we

1. Submitted a paper for publication describing two new mouse models for testing therapies for Tay-Sachs disease. The paper is currently under consideration and should it be published, please note the NCJWC is acknowledged for its funding and will receive a copy of the publication.
2. A paper is in preparation for submission describing the improved performance of an enhanced enzyme called a "hyperphosphorylated" enzyme for treatment of GM2 gangliosidosis using a Tay-Sachs Disease like mouse model. The NCJWC will be acknowledged for its funding.
3. A gene therapy trial of a vector expressing HexM or its hyperphosphorylated form is ongoing in Sandhoff mice (but should be transferable to Tay-Sachs disease). In preliminary data, mice treated with both vectors are surviving well past the untreated controls.

We very much appreciate the support of the National Council of Jewish Women of Canada for their assistance in these studies.

Submitted by Dr. Barbara Triggs-Raine

ALUMA

In previous updates, I described the enormous volume we have been dealing with since October 7th, both in terms of the number of requests we receive and the intensity of the multiple needs.

This time, I would like to share with you the story of one patient from the Nova music festival, in order to provide a closer look at the coping and rehabilitation process of those affected by October 7th.

The patient, a 37-year-old woman, was attending the Nova music festival when Hamas terrorists broke into the festival grounds. She and a friend chose to hide inside a caravan located within the festival area. They remained hidden there for eight hours, during which time they first heard, and later saw, the barbaric acts of murder and rape.

In the late afternoon, the patient and her friends were rescued by security forces, and she immediately began treating severely injured people who were still lying there.

About a month and a half later, the patient sought treatment with us, and since then I have accompanied her through her difficult and complex healing and rehabilitation process. From a young woman with a developing career, romantic relationship, and hope, she became someone suffering from depression, anxiety, severe post-traumatic reactions, and an inability to return to functioning in various areas of life.

The process we are going through together is characterized by many ups and downs—outbursts of anger, moments of dissociation, flashbacks, and more. During the war with Iran, the patient struggled greatly with being in a shelter together with neighbors and friends because it triggered a re-experiencing of the hours of terror in the caravan. At that time, we had to intensively practice breathing exercises and mindfulness techniques to help her remain in the neighborhood shelter—unfortunately, in an area that suffered direct missile hits.

The therapy is highly intensive, and for months we have been meeting twice a week. There are moments, growing in number when we can see the light together. The patient is planning a career change with the specific aim of growing from the trauma, has begun a new and promising romantic relationship, and is suffering less from severe anxiety attacks.

The road to recovery is still long, but the patient has acquired many emotional tools that are gradually enabling her to return to the circles of her life.

This is, as noted, the story of one patient among many to whom we strive to provide the best possible therapeutic care.

As always, we need your continued generous support to carry on providing care and therapy for our many patients.

Gadi Lifshitz

Tahel Organizational Practice, ALUMA

International Council of Jewish Women



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Dear friends of the Canadian affiliate,

On behalf of ICJW and on my own behalf, on the occasion of your *Triennial Meeting* I would like to warmly congratulate you for the path you have taken thus far. This gathering is not only a moment for balance and reflection, but also an opportunity to recognize the effort, the constancy, and the vision with which you have worked over these past years.

The achievements you have reached in this period are a true testament to your commitment and to the strength of your affiliate, which has become an example for all of our members around the world. Every initiative you have promoted, every project you have carried forward, and every goal you have attained reflects your dedication to the common ideal we all share: to improve the lives of women, our communities, and society at large.

I am confident that this Meeting will be a most enriching space, where in addition to celebrating your results, you will also be able to envision new goals and dreams for the future. I sincerely wish that you continue to reap many fruits, and that with the same energy that characterizes you, we may go on building together a strong, supportive, and purposeful ICJW.

With appreciation and admiration,

Lilian Grinberg

World President – ICJW



Dedicated to furthering human welfare in the community.

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