

Jewish Social Services

Thoughts From Adrienne

By Adrienne Rosenberg
Jewish Social Services Drtr.

Most of us are anticipating the opening of the new facility at Shalom Park with excitement of good things to come. We are expecting a Jewish facility where excellent programming and opportunities will exist. But will the facility really accommodate the needs of the total Jewish community? Are the institutions planning programming and availability to participate with the "have-nots" in mind, not just the "haves"? Will the institutions sharing Shalom Park be foresighted enough to include Charlotte Jewry as it is becoming, rather than perpetuating how it has been?

Change is never easy for most people, communities, or institutions to accept and strive for. We have only to see the anachronism of Charlotte's roads at traffic time to observe what putting on blinders to progress can do.

The following is part of a paper I wrote for a Foundation retreat held on September 27-29 which speaks of the changing demography of Charlotte Jewry. My hope is that the community and its institutional leaders are planning for these changes and not putting on blinders. Then Shalom Park will address the total Jewish community, not just one segment.

The population of our community is growing in numbers (there are approximately 4000 Jews on the Federation listing currently), but it is not stagnant and reflects a difference in the stereotypical Jewish family with its nice house in the suburbs and a successful working father, a housewife, car-pooling, bridge or tennis playing mother, and 2.5 children with healthy bubbes and zeidas close by to lend support and/or babysit for the kinder.

When I moved to Charlotte a little over a year ago from Atlanta, I had been here about two months when I said to myself, "What have I doomed myself to, because Charlotte is a married town." But what I have learned within the last year is that it is not that Charlotte is only a married town, but that the Jewish institutes are perpetuating services and programs based on what were the stereotypes with others often falling between the cracks or feeling left out.

Yes, the stereotyped family does exist. For example, we seem to have an emerging "baby boom" of young families. But, many of these families financially find it difficult with rising costs to maintain memberships in both synagogues and the Jewish Community Center, especially when we speak of building funds.

We have an aging population emerging, most on fixed incomes — many without

family members here in Charlotte. When we speak of seniors, we are speaking of three groupings based on abilities, resources and needs: the active senior who usually still drives and may even work or do volunteer work part-time; the less active senior who is beginning to experience health and financial problems added to the potential loss of spouse, friends and activities; and the frail elderly who may or may not require institutionalization. In fact, with the rising costs of nursing homes and with the Blumenthal Home being 90 miles away, community-based services for the frail Jewish elderly should be and will need to be addressed by our institutions.

There are more households where both parents are employed. There is a rising single parent population. Both of these create needs for adequate child care, transportation and enough free time to actively participate in some currently offered activities.

Charlotte has a range of singles — from the unattached young adult who often can't afford to live on their own and remain or return to the parental home (statistically, people are marrying later in

life, also), to the single parent with or without custody of their children, to the widowed person whose children are grown. Many of these, who fall in this grouping, do not have family members living here because of our society's mobility. I myself am an example of a single parent who came to Charlotte because of my job rather than because I have family here.

Charlotte has an increasing number of interfaith families — no longer does one partner necessarily convert to Judaism. Many of these couples feel that they are on the fringes of the Jewish community although they would like to be included, especially where there are children.

I am excited, as Director of Jewish Social Services, that as we enter the new facility with its campus concept that those persons who do not meet the stereotype can be included more by the institutions and Charlotte Jewry in general. I am hopeful, programming and a place to come for the total Jewish community, regardless of age, financial or marital status, affiliation or not, will meet the challenges and needs of our changing Jewish population.

Counseling Memos

By Elaine Chernotsky

I have been at Jewish Social Services for four months and often hear this question: "Do you keep busy?" Many assume that Jewish people have few problems that might require counseling and support. That is simply not so.

Adrienne Rosenberg and I see and hear from a variety of clients including:

- Seniors whose children have moved away and are alone.
- Seniors who are new to Charlotte and only know their families.
- Men and women of all ages and backgrounds who are unemployed.
- People looking to change career fields.
- Families who are facing eviction due to nonpayment of rent.

The list goes on and on. Jewish Social Services provides geriatric and vocational services as well as counseling for marital, loss, parent-child depression or other stress issues. Call us at 364-6594.

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New Fee Policy Established For JSS

The Social Services Committee of the Charlotte Jewish Federation announces that effective January 1, 1986, a fee policy for all social work services will be in effect. This will cover geriatric, vocational, and counseling services through the agency.

Jewish Social Services has always had counseling fees, \$40 being the maximum with a sliding fee scale based on income and number of family members. This is not being changed but the charging of fees for geriatric and vocational services will now be added.

The reasons for the fee policy enforcement are twofold: (1) The belief that clients should contribute to the counseling services they receive; (2) the rising costs of the agency.

It will be up to the client and

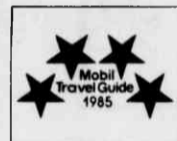
counselor to establish the fee and to determine whether a fee should be waived based on circumstances. In no way is this meant to be a financial hardship and no one will be refused the service because of inability to pay. For all services which are not charged, donations are encouraged. Confidentiality will be ensured because the Social Services' secretary will handle the billing process.

Clients, currently being seen by the agency, will not be charged until March 15, 1986. Again, this fee is to be handled between the client and the counselor with the same guidelines used.

No fees will be charged for information and referral calls, student loan applicants, or financial requests. These will continue to be services provided by the agency.

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