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Your donations support Women Helping Women Talkline & Counseling Services
Women Helping Children Art & Literacy Programs and Educational Advocacy Events

NCJW is a 501(c)(3) volunteer organization, inspired by Jewish values, that works to improve the quality of life for women, children, and families and to ensure individual rights and freedoms for all through its network of 90,000 members, supporters, and volunteers nationwide. Its efforts are executed through programs consisting of Advocacy for individual rights issues, reproductive freedom and child welfare; Women Helping Women Family Counseling Services; Women Helping Children Art and Literacy programs and Council Thrift Shops, whose proceeds benefit the many community services that NCJW/LA programs provide.

NCJW/LA CONTACTS		
NCJW/LA	(323) 651-2930	ncjw@ncjwla.org
Advocacy	(323) 852-8503	advocacy@ncjwla.org
Council Thrift	(323) 852-8510	thrift@ncjwla.org
Membership	(323) 852-8512	membership@ncjwla.org
Women Helping Children	(323) 852-8505	whc@ncjwla.org
Women Helping Women Services	(323) 852-8508	whws@ncjwla.org
WHWS Talkline	(323) 655-3807 or (877) 655-3807	
Council Thrift Donation Pick-up Service	(323) 655-3111 or (800) 400-NCJW	



'Origins' Emergency Survival Fund Fundraiser... Taking care of ourselves while helping others

The 'Origins' Fundraising Event of February 13th, sponsored by Women Helping Women Services and Sempra Energy was a great success. We enjoyed an evening of pampering and socializing and everyone looked refreshed and relaxed when it was over. Even Merle Siegel's brother-in-law enjoyed a mini facial! We raised over \$6000 including individual donations, to benefit the Emergency Survival Fund - helping women and families in need. Our clinical staff received complimentary services on behalf of the WHWS Committee as a special thank you for their hard work throughout the year. The wonderful staff at Origins Century City Westfield who led mini classes on skin care, gave mini massages and facials and loved our group so much they have invited us back! A special thank you to Sandy Kasden, for stopping by just to volunteer! Congratulations and many thanks to Merle Siegel and Sally Wilk for coordinating this successful event!



* A WOMAN OF STRENGTH *

Author Unknown

A strong woman works out every day to keep her body in shape...
but a woman of strength builds relationships to keep her soul in shape.
A strong woman isn't afraid of anything...
but a woman of strength shows courage in the midst of her fear.
A strong woman won't let anyone get the best of her...
but a woman of strength gives the best of herself to everyone.
A strong woman makes mistakes and avoids the same in the future...
but a woman of strength realizes life's mistakes can also be unexpected blessings and capitalizes on them.
A strong woman wears a look of confidence on her face...
but a woman of strength wears grace.
A strong woman has faith that she is strong enough for the journey...
but a woman of strength has faith that it is in the journey that she will become strong.



Cipra Nemeth
President

Message from the President

Hello Everyone,

In my last message to you I outlined how our Section has been raising its profile in a variety of ways, and I am delighted that we are continuing to create new venues in which to do so. Here are some examples: Women Helping Women Services held a very enjoyable and successful fundraiser at Origins in Century City. Dozens of supporters came for beauty treatments, and over \$6,000 was raised for WHWS's Emergency Survival Fund. Also, our Clothing Give Away will now be held twice a year, instead of a December holiday special, and will be in conjunction with the huge city-wide volunteer project, Big Sunday, on May 4th.

The Advocacy Department has been a constant source of pride as a vehicle to both educate and energize the community through its timely and informative Lunchtime Speakers Series, and to welcome new guests so they can learn about NCJW/LA and the range of services we provide. In January we hosted our Director of Washington Operations, Sammie Moshenberg, and an outstanding panel of experts who discussed the status of Roe v Wade, and NCJW's Plan

A Campaign. This program attracted over seventy-five attendees from many agencies, organizations and backgrounds. We intend to further our collaborations with many of these groups as we extend our programming outreach.

Our membership has grown since June, but I urge you to spread the word about the treasures waiting to be discovered in our Thrift Stores, special events such as our unique Women's Seder, and many fulfilling volunteer opportunities. Together, we are a growing network of progressive change makers who can make a difference in the lives of women, children, and families.

Finally, we will begin our year-long 100th Anniversary celebration in October at our very special Hannah G. Solomon Awards Dinner. This will certainly raise our profile when we honor a group of outstanding women in our community, and celebrate our Section's many accomplishments. Planning is underway and we look forward to sharing the details soon. In the meantime, I hope to see you at Council House, and thank you for your support.

"It is not upon you to finish the task, not are you free to desist from it." Pirkei Avot



Hillary Sevin
Executive Director

An Update from the Executive Director

I have never been especially impressed by the heroics of people who are convinced they are about to change the world. I am more awed by those who struggle to make one small difference after another.

Ellen Goodman

National Council of Jewish Women, Los Angeles is about making a difference one person at a time. Our programs revolve around individuals and actions and causes that can and do make a difference in one's life. Our ability over the past few years to increase the number of people we serve through education, counseling, support groups, literacy and art programs, and other programs and services is not by chance but by

the important work the Board, volunteers and staff are able to accomplish.

We see our work as an aspect of being a member of a community. We do not leave the work to others but work with others to help create better lives for women, children and families. Whether we do the work each week or monthly; we do it because we see the need and we feel responsible to those around us.

We need your help to meet the growing needs in our community. Please call me 323-651-2930 and let's talk about what you are interested in, and what you can do to change someone's life.

What is happening at NCJW/LA...

WOMEN ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE THROUGH NCJW/LA'S NEWEST GROUP

Cooking dinner for residents of a women's shelter and then joining them for the meal. Playing Bingo with seniors at a nursing home. Getting together at a member's house to make blankets for children in need. These are some of the ways that women are making a difference through NCJW/LA's newest group, Women Making a Difference.

Women Making a Difference ("WMD") was started in August 2007 to provide one-off once-a-month volunteer opportunities for women who are interested in getting involved with the work that NCJW/LA does, but are too busy with their careers and/or families to commit to ongoing volunteer programs. Each month, WMD offers a different volunteer event, ranging from working with children to assisting the elderly to gathering at a member's home for "Mitzvot and Merlot" nights. The events are held on week-day evenings or Sundays and most events last no longer than two hours.

WMD is growing quickly. What started with three NCJW/LA Board members last summer now has a mailing list of over 60 people, with new people joining all the time. There is no commitment required to join WMD - members RSVP on an event-by-event basis. Professional women and young mothers, in particular, have embraced the flexibility of this group, many saying that WMD "is exactly what I've been looking for."

If you or someone you know is interested in getting involved with WMD, please contact Joanie Ceballos 323-852-8518 or by e-mail Joanie@ncjwla.org to be added to our list.

WOMEN'S PASSOVER SEDER

Thursday, April 24, 2008 beginning at 6:30 pm. with Cantor Mimi Haselkorn. Join us for a special Seder that explores the holiday through the eyes of Miriam. All are welcome. To make a reservation or to become a sponsor, please call Joanie at 323-852-8518.

TICKETS

Members: \$47.50 Non-Members: \$55

SPECIAL OFFER

\$25 if you become a member when you register

SPONSORS

Table of 8	\$400
Miriam	\$500 - 4 tickets
Midwives	\$250 - 2 tickets
Foremothers	\$100 - 1 ticket

Biannual

CLOTHING GIVE A WAY

May 4, 2008 from 9am to 12pm
in conjunction with BIG SUNDAY
Volunteer to help call Melissa at 323-852-8505.

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SUPPORT OUR 2008 FREE CLOTHING GIVE-A-WAYS

Help provide clothing, books and toys for those who are in need

Couture Sponsor \$5,000 - provides 500 women, men, children and families with a bag of clothes

Special recognition on all banners, press releases, Update (newsletter), website and silver plaque (Patron) on our donor wall

Designer Sponsor \$2,500 - provides 250 women, men, children and families with a of bag clothes

Special recognition on all banners, press releases, Update (newsletter), website and copper plaque (Friend) on our donor wall

Runway Sponsor \$1,000 - provides 100 women, men, children and families with a of bag clothes

Special recognition on all banners, press releases, Update (newsletter), website and plaque on our Circle of Friends Wall

Each year our Clothing-Give-a-Way has provided over 30,000 pieces of clothing, books and toys for those in need. We have served over 1,000 people at each give-away. This year NCJW/LA is beginning a new tradition with two FREE Clothing Give-a-Ways each year. The need is growing and NCJW/LA is here to provide unmet basic essentials.

❖ ❖ ❖

MAKE A DIFFERENCE Be a Clothing Give-a-Way Sponsor

To become a sponsor call Hillary at 323-852-8501

Join NCJW/LA at our amazing booths as we celebrate Israel's 60th on May 18, 2008 from 10 am - 10 pm with an amazing collection of Judaica for sale.

We will also have our kids activities including the very popular spin art.

If you are interested in volunteering, please call Joanie at 323-852-8518



NCJW/LA's Annual Meeting and Installation will be held on Sunday, June 1, 2008 at noon at Lawry's on LaCienega. This is our opportunity to celebrate and thank our amazing volunteers and Board of Directors.

To receive information on National NCJW issues go to www.ncjw.org

News from the COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

WOMEN HELPING CHILDREN ART & LITERACY PROGRAMS...

"The more you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go." Dr. Seuss, 'I Can Read With My Eyes Shut!'

Helping a child learn to read provides a legacy for a lifetime. Leave your legacy. Get involved and make a difference in our community that will create real change for a better world for our children and grand-children.

Call 323-852-8505 to learn how you can join one of our program teams:

- * our award winning Light Up A Library literacy program
- * Art Pals and Art Bridges Culture arts education
- * after school homework clubs
- * shelter based teen tutoring
- * after school enrichment program

Our Spring Theme is **Books! Books! Books!**

Allison Kaminsky is our inspiration for this year's book drive. As her mitzvah project, Allison collected nearly 500 gently read books; twelve baskets of new books and \$3,700 in donations from her friends and family in celebration of Allison's Bat Mitzvah! Allison is an example of what one person's leadership can accomplish. Her gift to Light Up A Library and our Women Helping Children programs will leave a legacy for hundreds of children who will pick up one of these books in their school library to build their love of reading and literacy. Hundreds of children will be able to take home a book to keep, many of whom do not even have one book at home to call their own.

And, we will be able to purchase over 200 additional books for elementary school libraries in our community.

Look for our new **WHC Volunteer Newsletter** designed to share the inside scoop on programs and inspiring stories of the kids we serve and our team of volunteers who serve them. You still have time to donate one hour per week to read or tutor a child at one of our school or shelter sites near you. A child or teen is waiting for someone to give them just a little extra help so join our team and let them know you care.

We were asked to participate in the "Windows on West Hollywood" Exhibition at the Center for Early Education showing our student's artwork created in our **Art Bridges Culture** program.

SAVE THE DATE: Women Helping Children will have a booth at the West Hollywood Kids Fair on Saturday, April 12th from 10am until 2pm. Join us as we offer children an arts activity and share information about our programs with parents and community members.

Remember Ben's Books and Art Cards for providing additional valuable art books for our school libraries. Art Cards for your special occasions can be obtained on our website with a nominal donation. View the current collection at www.ncjwla.org.



WOMEN HELPING WOMEN SERVICES (WHWS)

"It is time for us all to stand and cheer for the doer, the achiever - the one who recognizes the challenge and does something about it" ...Vincent Lombardi

Women Helping Women Services staff and volunteers assist women, children and families to improve the quality of their lives through a comprehensive range of counseling services, and school & shelter based psycho-educational and therapeutic programs. Take a leadership role - call Leslie at 323-852-8508.

Women Helping Women Services Leadership Opportunities:

- * Serve on the WHWS Committee or Talkline
- * Attending pertinent community meetings on WHWS behalf
- * Recruit bilingual paraprofessional volunteers for Talkline
- * Coordinate the Holiday Giveaway
- * Fundraise for the Emergency Survival Fund
- * Speak on Public Affairs radio and television shows
- * Distribute flyers and talkline cards in the community
- * What are your ideas?

Congratulations to our Paraprofessional Talkline Counselor Graduates: Andreea Constantinescu, Shelli Dodell, Mary Lou Derby, Diane Sunderland and Marilyn Sayegh. These five new



dynamic volunteers have already begun their shifts on Talkline. Take their lead and join us for the next training!

Ava Rose, LCSW facilitated three trainings at Council House during February for the Court Watch program in conjunction with Westside Domestic Violence Council. Volunteers learned how to audit actual hearings in the Family Court system, with the eventual goal of the task force to develop and present legislation that will be supported and passed by our elected officials. To join the Court Watch team call Ava at 310-205-2661.



We sadly announce the passing of Esther Lewin, long time Talkline Volunteer. For over ten years, with sensitivity and grace, Esther assisted callers in crisis and helped them find solutions to life's challenges. She was greatly loved and will be greatly missed.

News from the ADVOCACY DEPARTMENT

The Advocacy Committee began its 2007/2008 program year to a wonderful response.

We hosted a very successful program on Human Trafficking and showed the documentary film CARGO: Innocence Lost not once but twice, by popular demand. This was a follow-up to the previous year's innovative and ground-breaking panel presentation, which also dealt with this growing problem.

Collaborating with our Women Helping Women Committee, we then presented a program on our current Court Watch Project. That meeting resulted in numerous new members of NCJW/LA and many additional volunteers to participate in this vital project to protect women's rights.

Our next program, which dealt with the issues imposed by the growing number of Women in Prison in California, was also well received. It featured an outstanding panel that included Kitty Felde, Warden Dawn S. Davison of the California Institution for Women, Karen S. Dalton, Joyce Ride and Gloria Killiam (a wrongly-convicted inmate that had been recently freed, thanks to the efforts of Joyce Ride).

That program was followed by our annual commemoration of the landmark decision by the U.S. Supreme Court in Roe v. Wade. At that meeting, Sammie Moshenberg (Director of our



Sammie Moshenberg, NCJW Director of Washington Operations, spoke about Plan A and the anniversary of Roe v Wade

Washington, D.C. Operations) introduced the new NCJW's Plan A, an educational program to assure that all women are granted the full access to contraception to which they are legally entitled. We also presented a distinguished panel of experts to discuss the urgent need to both provide better sex education to our young

people and to uphold the constitutional right to freedom of choice. Panelists included Dr. LeRoy H. Carhart, Katie Buckland, John DiCecco and Councilmember Abbe Land.

We are currently planning another program in collaboration with our Women Helping Women Committee, addressing the Problems and Controversies Associated with Undocumented Immigrant Women and Their Children, moderated by CBS and KCAL 9 respected political journalist, Dave Bryan.

So far, we are pleased with a productive and well-received program year.

As strange as it seems, women around the country are being denied access to contraception and given misinformation. Every single day.

Personal Decisions, Public Action

Plan A: The National Council of Jewish Women's (NCJW) Campaign for Contraceptive Access aims to secure and protect access to contraceptive information and options. Plan A is firmly rooted in the belief that such access is essential for women's well-being and equality.

Get Involved Today!

To learn more or sign up for Plan A — or to find out more about Plan A efforts in your community — please visit www.ncjw.org, email PlanA@ncjwdc.org, or 323-852-8503.



Best of the Best Makes COUNCIL THRIFT a Weekend Event

Recently, while manning the counter at our Veteran store, I overheard a cell-phone conversation by a well-dressed, well-coiffed woman holding a basket filled with shoes and silk "But I'm at the Best of the Best," she said into the phone by way of explaining her lateness for whatever. "Bingo." my heart said. We have become an event! Council Thrift is now a "Weekend Destination Place!"

The store was packed – with bodies as well as merchandise. The staff was doing all it could to ring up the merchandise thrust at them and the volunteers were doing all they could to hang up the merchandise on its proper racks. . . It was bedlam and filled with the kind of excitement you feel on a holiday when the children burrow through their gifts.

Council Thrift gets wonderful donations from our many supporters but the most wonderful are kept aside for these special events. That doesn't mean that you still can't find an Armani on any given Tuesday, it just means that you may have a choice of Armanis (or Escadas, Laurens, or Karens) on a Best of the Best

(BOB) day. Our stores always have a selection of great furniture, art works and collectibles but on BOB day there are more.

The Best of the Best events aren't sales in the typical sense. The merchandise isn't "marked down." Although used, it is of the best quality and deserves its fair price. There is no bargaining and most shoppers understand and respect this.

As a volunteer I have tremendous gratitude for the generosity of our donors without whom Council Thrift couldn't support NCJW/LA's far-reaching social services. As a former sales promotion professional, I have nothing but admiration at how Bob Klausner and his staff have brought this excitement to the community and how hard they work to rack up the fantastic numbers produced by each store on these weekends. But most importantly, as a long-time member, I have great pride in the many programs created by NCJW/LA and the vital assistance those dollars provide to the most needy in our community.

To our Thrift donors, all of us at Council say "Thank You".

Barbara Greene Ruskin, Co-VP Thrift

