JFS Richmond

Care • Counseling • Adoption

Annual Report 2025-2026

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Dear Friends,

Every day, older adults, caregivers, and families across Richmond face challenges that can threaten their health, independence, and connection to community. For 177 years, JFS has helped meet those challenges, and today that mission is more important than ever. As our region changes, and shifts in the social safety net affect those we serve, we are asking a critical question: how can JFS focus our strengths to meet emerging needs?

This spring, we began a strategic planning process grounded in the values that have guided JFS for generations: **Compassion, Trust, Service, Responsiveness, and Gratitude**. These values help us remain true to our mission, *Transforming Lives and Strengthening our Community*, while shaping the future of JFS.

In 2025-2026, JFS expanded services to help older adults remain safe, connected, and independent. We provided 39% more service hours than the previous year.

In Counseling, our two neuropsychologists helped 500 clients with memory assessments.

Our foster program, Connecting Hearts, is expanding in partnership with the Department of Social Services and Wendy's Wonderful Kids (the Dave Thomas Foundation). We will provide more services to connect foster children to loving homes.

Our impact is reflected not only in the number of hours provided, but in ways that matter deeply to the people we serve. Among Senior Engagement participants, 93% report feeling cared for and safer knowing someone checks on them. In our Home Care program, 97% of clients say their caregivers demonstrate genuine care, and their needs and expectations are being met.

While we are proud of these results, we know more people need support. Our new strategic plan includes serving the expanding needs of children with behavioral health services and enhancing our care of older adults with additional well-being screenings and home safety assessments. We will continue to strengthen our programs and partnerships and focus our efforts on where they can have the greatest impact.

Our promise remains unchanged: JFS will be a compassionate, trusted, and responsive partner, meeting urgent needs today while preparing for tomorrow's challenges and opportunities with service and gratitude.

Thank you for believing in JFS, investing in our mission, and sustaining our guiding value of Tikkun Olam: repairing the world one person at a time.

With Gratitude,

Martin Miller
President

Wendy Kreuter
CEO

JFS Transforming Lives

1,570
Clients Served

169,077
Hours of Service

54.65%
Clients are Low-Income

1,321
Older Adults Supported

63,249
Hours of Care Provided Through Medicaid or at No Cost

43
People Aided by Jewish Care Line

Home Care

When Andrew and his wife, Sara, moved Andrew's parents from Massachusetts to Richmond in 2020, they hoped to give them the support they needed as they aged.

After Andrew's mother, Joan, was diagnosed with kidney disease and his father, Lenny, faced growing health challenges, the family chose to live together under one roof.

As caregiving needs increased, Andrew turned to JFS Richmond, an organization he already knew through past counseling services.

Through Medicaid-funded home care, JFS now provides caregivers who help support Andrew's parents and give the family valuable peace of mind.

The Talkov Family

"Someone is always there," Sara said. "It's great to have another set of eyes on them all day long."

For Andrew and Sara, the support allows them to continue working while knowing Andrew's parents are cared for and safe. Most importantly, it helps Joan and Lenny remain in the home they love.

"Between me and Sara and the support we get from JFS, we're able to keep them in their home," Andrew said. "It means everything to them."

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT JFS RICHMOND HOME CARE

www.JFSRichmond.org

(804) 282-5644

SCAN ME!

Adoption

James and Shelby and their family

For James and Shelby, adoption was always part of the future they envisioned together. Shelby's passion began in childhood after watching her aunt and uncle adopt two children, inspiring her dream of growing her own family through adoption. After marrying in 2011 and welcoming their son Isaac in 2014, the couple began the international adoption process.

With support from JFS, they adopted Ruth from Thailand and later welcomed their daughter Nora by birth. In 2024, they adopted their son Truett.

The family praises JFS for its guidance and compassionate support throughout both adoptions. Today, their family's journey inspires others to pursue adoption with confidence and hope.

CAPABLE

At 89, Lori was determined to remain independent in the home she loves. Through the CAPABLE program, a partnership between Beth Sholom and JFS Richmond, she received personalized support to improve her safety, mobility and comfort.

With home modifications, including a ramp built by project:HOMES to help her get in and out of her house, Lori gained greater independence. With guidance from a dedicated care team, she also gained the confidence and tools needed to navigate daily life more safely.

When she graduated from the program in June 2026, Lori felt more secure, confident and empowered to continue living comfortably at home.

The ramp built by project:Homes

Resettlement

Valeriy and his wife with
Governor Abigail Spanberger

Valeriy first came to the United States in 2001 through a fellowship with the Medford Police Department in Massachusetts before returning to Ukraine. When Russia's war in Ukraine escalated, a former VCU mentor encouraged Valeriy and his wife to return to Richmond.

Today, as a JFS Richmond resettlement case manager, Valeriy helps Ukrainian newcomers navigate essential services, connect with local resources and build new lives.

He also hosts Welcome to America events, helping clients explore Richmond and feel connected to their new community. Through his work, Valeriy draws on his own experience to help others navigate the challenges and opportunities of starting a new life in Richmond.

Counseling

For more than 20 years, Heidi has found steady support, compassion and care through JFS Richmond.

For Heidi, the details matter because they tell the story of how counseling changed her life. After a severe health crisis first led her to counseling, she faced years of complex mental health challenges, extended treatment and difficult seasons for her family. Through it all, JFS Counselor Sonni Gittelman offered steady support, compassion, and strength.

"Specifically for the first five to eight years, I was in and out of various treatment facilities for long periods of time," Heidi said. "Sonni has navigated that with me with so much compassion and strength."

Their relationship began before Sonni joined JFS Richmond. When Sonni made the move, Heidi followed because of the trust they had built, and the depth of care Heidi had come to rely on.

"If it wasn't for her, I wouldn't be here," Heidi said. "She has been more than I could have ever asked for. It's like I have my own angel on earth."

Over the years, Sonni's support has extended beyond Heidi herself, offering guidance to Heidi's family and helping her husband navigate the challenges they faced together.

Heidi and her daughter

"She's just been a friend to my family and offered them guidance," Heidi said. "She gave my husband guidance and support. I had gone through a couple therapists before I met her, and I just have never experienced that kind of unconditional love [and care] from someone."

> "If it wasn't for her, I wouldn't be here."

That same care shapes Heidi's experience across JFS, from scheduling appointments to walking into the office.

"The people at the front desk are just amazing," she said. "It's never complicated to make an appointment or have a conversation."

Even with virtual appointments available, Heidi still chooses to come in person.

"It's a totally different experience," she said. "You connect with your therapist, and it feels so welcoming."

Together, those moments reflect what Heidi says defines JFS Richmond for her: attention, patience and dignity.

For Heidi, being seen, heard and genuinely cared for has made all the difference. It is why she wants others to know that JFS and its counselors are there through everything, not only in moments of crisis, but through the long, tender work of healing, rebuilding and moving forward

"From the minute I stepped through the door, it's about me," Heidi said. "It's not about what's going on in their day."

And for people walking through their own difficult chapters, that is the promise of JFS: you do not have to face them alone.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT JFS RICHMOND COUNSELING

www.JFSRichmond.org

(804) 282-5644

SCAN ME!

Community Partners

We are grateful to our community partners that supported these key initatives. Because of your generosity, our community is stronger and lives are transformed every day.

Community Cares Fund

In fall 2025, proposed federal changes to social safety programs created uncertainty for neighbors relying on care, food assistance, and support. Our Annual Fund campaign carried a simple message: when times feel uncertain, community matters more than ever.

Donors, partners, and foundations responded with generosity and trust, giving us flexibility to prepare for needs we could not yet predict.

That generosity became the Community Cares Fund, a resource created to bridge gaps when unexpected barriers arise. Whether a client needs short-term help during a benefits transition, support accessing services, or assistance when other resources fall short, the fund allows us to respond quickly and with dignity.

Because of you, we can meet uncertainty with action, offer reassurance, and help ensure care remains possible for those who need it most.

Thank You to Our Community

Without you, none of this would be possible. Thank you for being a part of our mission!

Fred Kovacs, Arlene Wiener, Karen Leibowitz, Jeff Scharf and Amy Melnick-Scharf

Richard Birnbaum, Kenny Bendheim and Aaron Sherck

Ron and Benita Felmus with JFS Staff

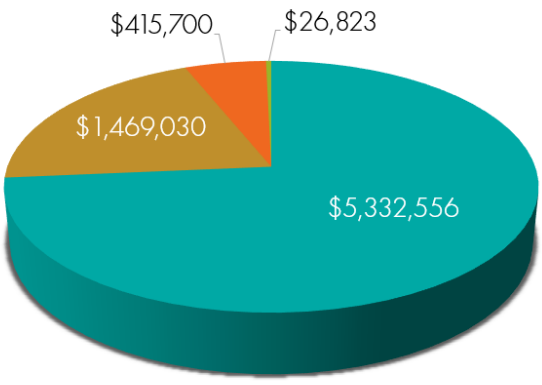
Lori Saitz, Jennifer Byrnes and Cindy Lacy

David Galpern, Schuyler VanValkenburg, Ashley Noell and Hillary Bender

Frona and Alan Colker

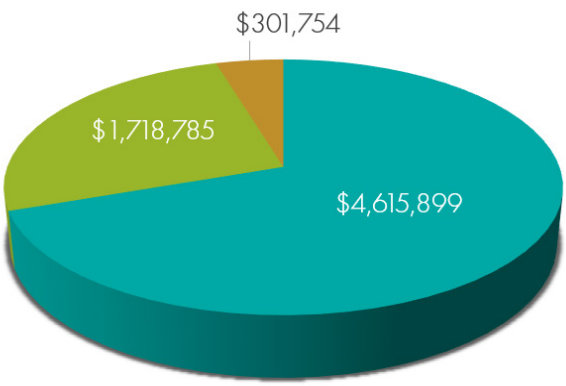
Revenue/Expenses

Revenue



- Program Revenue
- Fundraising
- JCFR/JFSSF
- Other

Expenditures



- Program Services
- Fundraising
- Management & General

JFS Richmond

Care • Counseling • Adoption

For 177 years - through pandemics, wars, and recessions - Jewish Family Services has served Richmond-area families and individuals of all ages, faiths, races, and incomes with exceptional care, guidance, and support.

Thank you for making it all possible.

JFS IS A PROUD PARTNER OF

Jewish Community Federation of Richmond

COUNCIL ON ACCREDITATION
ENGAGE. EMPOWER. EVOLVE.

United Way
United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg

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