



The Investment & Evaluation Subcommittee, advised by the Assessment & Planning Subcommittee, has selected four priority areas in which to focus any new Community Investments in 2021.

- Elderly Jews at risk
- Mental health and well-being
- Safety net for those living in or near poverty
- Strengthen the organizational capacity of Jewish organizations and service agencies

New investments will only be made if funding is available.

While we recommend reading the complete needs assessment reports, this document provides a high-level overview of Federation's completed community needs assessments, desired outcomes (i.e., changes we want to see in the community based on the assessments), and specific strategies and plans to create those outcomes.

Organizations and collaborative groups are invited to apply for funding in these priority areas for work that aligns with the identified needs, developed strategies & plans, and desired outcomes.

- In the priority areas for which we have **completed** needs assessments, developed strategies and plans, and/or determined desired outcomes, investments will be directed specifically to those strategies, plans, and/or outcomes.
- In the priority areas for which we have **not completed** full needs assessments or have not developed specific strategies or plans, and/or determined desired outcomes, anyone is welcome to propose strategies, plans, and outcomes to address the identified needs.

COVID-19 has impacted all parts of our community, including the priorities, identified needs, strategies, and desired outcomes outlined in this document. In addition to completed community needs assessments, developed strategies & plans, and desired outcomes, needs related to COVID-19 will continue to be one lens through which we will review requests and make new Community Investments in 2021.

Core Commitment:

Secure the well-being and safety of individuals within the Jewish Community

Priority: Elderly Jews at Risk

- Needs Assessment: [Elderly Jews at Risk Needs Assessment Report \(September 2019\)](#)
- Identified Areas of Need:
 - Case management and service coordination
 - Transportation
 - Isolation
- Identified Strategies & Developed Plans:

A planning workshop was held in October 2019 which brought together professional and lay stakeholders to develop strategies around the primary issues identified in the needs

assessment. This led to Federation convening the executives of the five Jewish organizations which serve older adults to develop action steps to reach and enhance the lives of older adults; a group that developed into AgeWell St. Louis. The AgeWell St. Louis partner agencies are: Covenant Place; Crown Center for Senior Living; the Jewish Community Center and its Adult Day Services; JFS (formerly Jewish Family & Children's Services); and the Naturally Occurring Retirement Community (NORC). They have developed plans focusing on:

- Developing a centralized care management system
- Providing comprehensive care management
- Meeting transportation needs
- Building connections to reduce isolation
- Desired Outcomes: *Outcomes of this work are related to two priority areas: Elderly Jews at Risk and Promoting and Increasing Opportunities for Collaboration Among Jewish Organizations and Service Providers. They include:*
 - Older adults access the services they need more easily
 - More older adults access the services they need
 - Maintain or improve the wellness and independence of older adults served by the AgeWell system
 - Increase in service coordination among agencies that serve older adults
 - Meet the transportation needs of Jewish older adults to promote their wellness and autonomy
 - Decrease feelings of isolation
- **Note: Any additional investments in this priority in 2021 will be directed to AgeWell St. Louis.**

Priority: Mental Health and Emotional Well-being

- Related Needs Assessments:
 - [COVID-19 Phase I Needs Assessment](#) (March 2020)
 - [Covid-19 Phase II Needs Assessment](#) (July 2020)
 - [Building Resilient Jewish Communities: St. Louis Key Findings](#) (August 2020)
- Identified Needs & Key Findings:
 - COVID has affected the emotional wellbeing of people across all generations.
 - Despite having similar or greater social support, younger adults (ages 18-34) had more trouble coping with the psychological effects of the pandemic than older adults.
 - Adults under age 35 had the greatest need for social services, such as help obtaining food or other necessities, Meals on Wheels, home health care, mental health services, vocational services, medical care, and/or help obtaining public benefits.
 - Younger adults and those in the most difficult financial situations had worse psychological outcomes, with the worst outcomes for respondents who were both young and lacked sufficient financial resources prior to the pandemic.
 - Respondents whose financial situations were worse prior to the pandemic had a harder time coping and tended to have less emotional support than more affluent respondents.
 - Respondents whose work hours increased and those whose jobs were most difficult to perform from home experienced the most job stress.
- Identified Strategies: Strategies and plans have not yet been identified and developed. A plan is in place to begin convening stakeholders for a planning process related to the mental health and emotional well-being of young adults.

- Desired Outcomes: Outcomes have not yet been determined.
- **Note: Organizations or collaborative groups can propose strategies to address these identified needs and the change they aim to achieve (outcomes).**

Priority: Safety Net for Those Living in or Near Poverty

- Needs Assessments:
 - [2014 St. Louis Jewish Community Study](#)
 - [Understanding Services for Jewish Families and Individuals Living in Poverty](#) (2018)
- Identified Needs & Key Findings:
 - 2014 St. Louis Jewish Community Study found that poverty and hunger in the Jewish community was higher than anticipated with 26% of the Jewish community in St. Louis considered poor or near poor.
 - [2014 Community Study Human Services Slides](#)
 - Individuals have a lack of knowledge about benefits and resources as well as access challenges
 - St. Louis' Jewish social service sector has multiple points of entry with little coordination
 - There is a need for vocational retraining and other employment programs
 - A perceived stigma of asking for help exists in our community
- Identified Strategies: *Below are strategies identified in the 2018 needs assessment as well as the COVID-19 needs assessments. A planning process has not yet taken place to identify additional strategies and develop plans.*
 - Improve marketing/communication to increase awareness and information about services
 - Establish formal networks and collaboration among service providers
 - Support individuals' food security
 - Support economic security needs
- Desired Outcomes: Outcomes have not yet been determined.
- **Note: Organizations or collaborative groups can propose strategies to address these identified needs and the change they aim to achieve (outcomes).**

Core Commitment:

Develop the financial and human resources, and infrastructure needed by our community

Priority: Strengthen the Organizational Capacity of Jewish Organizations and Service Agencies

- Needs Assessment:
 - [2020 Jewish Federation Organizational Capacity Survey Summary](#)
 - [2020 Jewish Federation Organizational Capacity Survey Full Report](#)
 - [Covid-19 Phase II Needs Assessment](#)
- Identified Needs/Key Findings:
 - Organizations have a strong positive perception of their financial management capabilities.
 - Organizations feel successful in celebrating and appreciating volunteers.
 - Perceptions of lay leaders and professional leaders sometimes differ significantly.

- Getting the right people in place to ensure future success – both short- and long-term – is a challenge for organizations.
- Organizations likely face equity issues around compensating their employees.
- Budget constraints hinder organizations' ability to succeed in their work.
- There is a pervasive lack of capacity around impact evaluation.
- Smaller organizations face increased challenges in many capacity areas.
- Some organizations do not have enough dedicated staff or staff time to focus on essential organizational functions.
- Jewish Early Childhood Centers and Jewish Day Schools are experiencing increased infrastructure and capacity building challenges due to COVID-19
- Organizations have an increased need for technology software and training due to COVID-19
- Identified Strategies: Strategies and plans have not yet been identified and developed.
- Desired Outcomes: Outcomes have not yet been determined.
- ***Note: Organizations or collaborative groups can propose strategies to address these identified needs and the change they aim to achieve (outcomes).***