

Twin Cities Jewish Community  
Mental Health  
Education Conference

OCTOBER 22, 2023  
9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Temple Israel

**FREE AND OPEN TO ALL!**

*hope*

*compassion*

*resilience*

*healing*

*learning*

*transformation*

This conference is a collaboration of:



# WELCOME

The 23rd Annual Twin Cities Jewish Community Mental Health Conference is presented by Jewish Family and Children's Service of Minneapolis (JFCS) and Jewish Family Service of St. Paul (JFS) – partners in improving mental health access, understanding, and education in the community. With generous support from community donors and partners, the conference continues to be **free and open to everyone**.

Mental health affects all of us, no matter our age, where we live, or what resources are available to us. The experience of living through a pandemic, in addition to the challenges of everyday life and the troubling news we see nearby and far away, affects our sense of well-being. In planning for this conference, we think of a kaleidoscope representing the emotions, perspectives, ideas, challenges, and hopefully a sign of unity.

# SCHEDULE

9:00 a.m.	<b>Registration check-in and Resource Fair open for browsing in Atrium</b>
9:20 a.m.	<b>Sanctuary opens for seating</b>
10:00 a.m.	<b>Welcome Address</b>
10:30 a.m.	<b>Keynote Session - Sophie Riegel</b>
11:15 a.m.	<b>Transition/Break</b>
11:30 a.m.	<b>Breakout Session One: #1-8</b>
12:30 p.m.	<b>Lunch and Resource Fair (dietary laws observed)</b> <i>Register by Oct. 10 to receive a box lunch at no charge</i>
1:30 p.m.	<b>Breakout Session Two: #9-15</b>
2:40 p.m.	<b>Closing</b>

# ADDITIONAL INFO

- When you register for the conference, you will receive a confirmation email. Prior to the conference, you will receive a reminder email with additional information.
- The in-person and virtual Resource Fair, available in the Resource Fair section of the Conference Home Page, offers you the opportunity to check in with representatives and/or browse websites and contact agencies that best suit your needs.
- You can access books and information from the Hennepin County Library at the Conference. Also, look for a Mental Health book list in the Handouts section of the Conference Home Page to read about the topics that are of interest to you.
- In consideration of the environment, please bring a tote bag to collect materials and a water bottle.
- Certificates of attendance will be available at the end of the conference.
- Individuals in need of ASL interpretation should contact Tabitha at [TDeRango@jfcsmpls.org](mailto:TDeRango@jfcsmpls.org) by Oct. 6, 2023.



# KEYNOTER

## **Sophie Riegel**

Sophie Riegel is an author, professional speaker, certified coach, and mental health advocate. She is the author of “Don’t Tell Me To Relax: One Teen’s Journey to Survive Anxiety (and How You Can, Too)”, “Overcoming Overthinking: 36 Ways to Tame Anxiety for Work, School, and Life,” and “Go To Help: 31 Strategies to Offer, Ask for, and Accept Help.” Sophie graduated from Duke University in 2023 with a degree in Psychology and Creative Writing. She has conducted workshops, keynote speeches, and individual coaching with local organizations, schools, summer camps, universities, youth groups, and corporations including Netflix, Target, and Audible.





## 1. How helpful are you really? Effectively helping youth with their mental health

We all want to help. We all think we are helping. But when was the last time you checked how helpful you really were to a young person in your life? In this session, we will examine habits of highly ineffective helpers and you will leave with new strategies for making sure your offers of help have a positive impact.

Sophie will continue to explore how to support youth in their mental health through her professional and personal experiences.



## 2. Navigating complex healthcare systems

In this session, you will learn about barriers in the mental health care system, ways to overcome those barriers, and how to advocate for better mental health care. The stories of family members who advocate for loved ones will illustrate strategies to help navigate the maze we may encounter when searching for effective mental health care.

**Marjorie Schaffer, Ph.D., RN**, is Professor Emerita from Bethel University in St. Paul, and author of “Journey Through the Mental Illness Maze: How Families Find Hope and Acceptance.” After retiring in 2015, Dr. Schaffer embarked on an advocacy journey in mental health, serving on the Hennepin County Adult Mental Health Advisory Council for six years, teaching four Family-to-Family classes for NAMI, and becoming an ambassador for Mental Health Connect. Her inspiration is her daughter, living well with bipolar disorder.



## 3. “Ask The Psychologist” Q&A session

What is “normal”? When is there cause for concern? Through the years, Conference attendees have shared that having the opportunity to talk directly at the event with a licensed mental health professional about a diverse array of concerns is a program highlight. In this breakout session, Dr. Wittenberg will talk briefly about the process he engages in when assessing client concerns, and then open the floor for an extended question-and-answer period. Come prepared to take advantage of Dr. Wittenberg’s expertise with your questions, concerns, or case examples.

**Mitchell Wittenberg, Ph.D., LP**, Counseling Program Director at JFS, specializes in the assessment and treatment of children, adolescents, and their families, although a large part of his clinical practice is with adults and couples. Dr. Wittenberg is the psychological consultant at the Chabad Lubavitch Jewish Educational Center, where he also runs a creative problem solving program for students in grades three through eight.



## 4. Mental health 101

In this introductory session to mental health, we will discuss levels of care and the continuum of services available to support mental health, factors impacting mental health, and ways to manage your own mental health. Participants will also identify ways to effectively support others on their mental health journey.

**Angela Cowan, MSW**, Counseling Manager at JFCS, specializes in working with individuals experiencing severe and persistent mental illness, anxiety, depression, life transitions, and grief and loss.



## 5. The spiritual care component of mental health

Mental health includes the fullness of our well-being. Of importance is how we understand ourselves as connected to issues of spirit and spiritual meaning in our daily lives. When life gets hard, where do we find strength, courage, and hope? We will consider the role of spiritual belief, finding meaning, faith, and the power of knowing our spiritual selves as we seek to make our way through everyday life.

**Rabbi Lynn Liberman**, JFS Community Chaplain, on-call chaplain for Regions Hospital, Gillette Children’s Hospital and MHealth Fairview Hospitals. Rabbi Liberman volunteers as a police and fire chaplain for the Mendota Heights/West St. Paul Police and Fire Departments and the Minnesota State Patrol. She is an ARC Spiritual Care Disaster Responder, a member of the Metro CISM Team, the Children’s Hospital Ethics Committee and is on the Executive Board of Neshama: Association of Jewish Chaplains.



## 6. Harm reduction 101: Teen addiction and where harm reduction fits

Explore the world of harm reduction and addiction support as we delve into what harm reduction is and how it can make a difference. Learn practical strategies for navigating addictive situations, whether for yourself or to help peers and family. We will cover the basics of harm reduction principles and how it fits into dealing with teen substance use and behavioral addiction. Discover valuable resources from harm reduction agencies that offer support and guidance.

**Liliane Jurayj**, Addiction and Recovery Services Program Coordinator at JFCS, focuses on building a program centered around harm reduction, family support and de-stigmatization. Liliane has hospital-based experience treating alcohol and opioid withdrawal.



## 7. Community-based approaches to increase safety and socio-emotional resilience in K-12 settings: A courageous conversation

In this interactive conversation, the audience will participate in discussions, activities, and thinking exercises to measure the effectiveness of their local schools’ safety and violence prevention models to empower students, parents, and educators. This session will include a short introduction to the state of the research on community groups’ (parents, students, and those working as advocates) perspectives and experiences on school safety strategies to prepare for the active learning portion of this talk. Participants will then critically evaluate the current strategies used in schools to increase safety. The goal of the session is to build upon participants’ knowledge, skills, and understanding of how the community at large can push for more effective strategies and prevention programs in their local schools.

**Dr. Angie Mejia, Ph.D.**, is Assistant Director of the Community Engagement and Education (CEEd) at Masonic Institute for the Developing Brain (MIDB), and a community advocate and social justice-engaged educator. Dr. Mejia’s work has appeared in various academic journals, including *Pedagogy in Health Promotion: The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (PHP)*, *Action Research*, and *Practicing Anthropology*.



## 8. Move a muscle, change a thought

When we move our bodies and explore our big emotions with curiosity, kindness, and compassion, we can move from anxious, overwhelmed, and scattered to grounded, connected, and whole. Experience practical and research-based mind-body interventions to decrease anxiety, stress, and distress. Through hands-on learning, reflection, and discussion, participants will explore movemindfully® Breathe Move Rest practices that are easy to incorporate in a variety of settings. Create a simple toolkit of trauma-responsive mind-body strategies for yourself and to share with others.

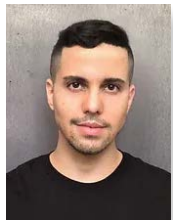
**Kathy Flaminio, LGSW, MEW, E-RYT-200**, is the founder and creator of movemindfully® training and consulting company on the science of mindfulness, movement, and social/emotional learning. Kathy has trained over 50,000 professionals in mindfulness, movement, and social-emotional strategies and has partnered with the M Health University of Minnesota Masonic Children’s Hospital and United Hospital to provide trauma-responsive practices to the child/adolescent and adult mental health units. She is co-author of “Moving Mountains: An Integrative Manual to Help Youth with Intensity, Reactivity and Anxiety” and co-creator of the Teen Resiliency Program with Dr. Henry Emmons, Dr. Timothy Culbert, and associates.



## 9. For the love of sleep: How to invite deep rest

Sleep deprivation and sleep disturbances are growing challenges within our culture that affect not only our physical health but our emotional health as well. In this session, you will discover overlooked obstacles to sleep and learn strategies to support the cultivation of deep rest in the body-mind.

**Patty Hlava, Ph.D.**, professor at Sofia University, is a certified meditation instructor, Ayurveda wellness counselor, yoga teacher, Reiki practitioner, and intrinsic coach. Dr. Hlava's work is grounded in transformative learning and embodiment practices and her unique approach blends Western psychology with Eastern wisdom traditions, offering a comprehensive path toward personal growth and overall well-being through her transformative workshops and specialized training sessions.



## 10. Creating inclusive spaces for LGBTQ+ youth

Creating inclusive spaces is essential for ALL of us to be able to show up as our authentic selves. This session will offer strategies and insights for co-creating respectful and affirming LGBTQ+ spaces for all young people in our communities. Topics include adapting physical spaces to be more inclusive, age-appropriate tools to talk about gender and sexuality, and more.

**Jonathan Echevarria Tolentino, MA (he/him/él)**, Training Manager for QUEERSPACE Collective, is an experienced sexologist, sexual health educator, and coach. Driven by his passion for holistic and inclusive human sexuality, Jonathan believes that education is a resourceful tool that has the power of making the world a better place and is committed to breaking barriers to create safe spaces so that everyone can be visible, validated, supported, and respected.



## 11. Mental health and aging: The impact of social isolation

In this session, we will explore the relationship between aging, social isolation, and mental health, and discuss ways to support yourself and/or a loved one experiencing social isolation. Participants will learn and understand the impact of social isolation on one's physical, mental, and social well-being. It will help you identify coping mechanisms to prevent social isolation; ways to support your loved one experiencing social isolation; and learn how to care for yourself in the caregiving role.

**Angela Cowan, MSW**, Counseling Manager at JFCS, specializes in working with individuals experiencing severe and persistent mental illness, anxiety, depression, life transitions, and grief and loss.



**Lindsay Kant, LGSW**, Senior Services Case Manager at JFCS, is a certified class leader for Powerful Tools for Caregivers and leads the Memory Café at JFCS, a socialization and activity group for people with memory loss and their caregivers.



## 12. Teen girls and mental health: The why behind the crisis and how to respond

Between the pandemic, increased social media use and feelings of isolation, teens are experiencing a growing number of mental health challenges; these challenges are especially pronounced for teen and tween girls. Increased rates of depression, anxiety, and substance use disorders have grown in the past years. Many are left wondering what to do and how to improve the well-being of teens in our lives. In this session we will discuss strategies, coping skills and

explore how to better support the teen in our lives. Supporting teens suffering from mental illness is often an overwhelming experience for parents and families and we want you to know that you are not alone.

**Leah Persky, Ph.D.**, is a Certified Family Life Educator and Parent Coach and Manager of Family Life Education and Addiction and Recovery at JFCS. Leah completed her PhD in political science with a focus on gender, health, and policymaking and has her master's degree in Conflict Resolution.



## 13. Guardianship and conservatorship: How to help a loved one go through the process—or avoid it

How can individuals make decisions for family members and loved ones who cannot make decisions for themselves? What tools are available to care for and financially support my loved ones struggling with incapacity? In this session, Maslon attorney Carly Johnson discusses the difference between guardians and conservators; what to know about being appointed and serving as a guardian or conservator; and what estate planning tools you and your loved ones can utilize to direct future care plans.

**Carly Johnson** is a trust and estate litigation attorney at Maslon LLP focusing on will/trust contests, guardianship and conservatorship proceedings, and other matters. She represents both institutions and individuals serving as trustees, personal representatives, or attorneys-in-fact for clients and loved ones.



**Yemaya Hanna** is an attorney in Maslon's Estate Planning Group who works with clients to help them achieve their wealth management, health care, and legacy goals. She understands the importance of listening carefully to clients' concerns regarding their future, business succession, and family needs. Yemaya also assists families who have recently lost a loved one by guiding them through the probate process.



**Rachel Dahl** is a partner in Maslon's Estate Planning Group specializing in comprehensive estate planning, probate and trust administration, guardianships and conservatorships, and business and farm succession planning. Her work across all is enhanced by extensive prior experience in business formation, real estate, and agriculture law.



## 14. Learning about crisis intervention

Crisis stabilization seeks to support children, adults, and their families who are facing acute mental health crises. These include suicidal ideation, self-harm, aggressive responses to stress, and heightened overall distress. Stabilization refers to finding ways to support people in crisis by using specific tools and interventions that will help them regulate their emotions more successfully.

Participants in this session will understand more about this process, as well as techniques for managing distress and stress management.

**Libby Haight, MPP, MSW, LICSW**, is Director of Community-Based Programs at Washburn Center for Children. Libby has extensive experience working with children and families facing mental health challenges, in addition to community organizing and policy work.



## 15. Grief: A spectrum of loss and a variety of ways to get through

In this session, attendees will gain an increased understanding of grief and loss as a spectrum that includes a variety of types of grief and loss. The newly added DSM-TR criteria for Prolonged Grief Disorder will be reviewed and differentiated from other commonly assigned disorders when working with grief. Attendees will gain confidence in supporting others or themselves through grief, receive intervention suggestions, and learn about grief as a normalized part of the human life cycle.

**Stephanie Larson, MSW, LICSW, LCSW**, works with people of all identities and backgrounds who are dealing with a wide range of mental health concerns. At the University of St. Thomas, she was an Area of Emphasis in Aging (AEA) Scholar and is passionate about working with older adults and their families. Her areas of clinical interest include, but are not limited to, caregiver fatigue, relationship difficulties, and LGBTQ+.

# REGISTRATION

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## 3 EASY WAYS TO REGISTER!

- 1 CLICK <https://forms.gle/dA1qAftXQyBAzK3T6>
- 2 Visit [jfcsmpls.org](https://jfcsmpls.org) and click the green button on the homepage.
- 3 Open your phone camera and scan the QR code.



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**Keynote Speaker: Sophie Riegel**