



PRESS RELEASE
January 30, 2018

Disabilities Navigator Program Launches in Jewish Community

Rochester - When a child or other family member is diagnosed with a disability, the question of how and where to access support for that family member can be overwhelming. Institutions also struggle with meeting the needs of their diverse constituents.

The newly instituted Jewish Family Navigator program, a resource for families coping with disabilities, aims to address this need from a communal perspective. The program, a partnership between AutismUp and the Jewish Federation of Greater Rochester with funding support from the Max and Marian Farash Charitable Foundation, launches on February 7 at an 8 am program at the Federation, 441 East Avenue.

This newly instituted service will link families in the Rochester Jewish community with needed services, consolidating information and referral and providing individual family consultations. The Jewish Family Navigator will also work with local Jewish institutions to support their efforts to be inclusive.

"AutismUp's Navigator Program is a comprehensive, family-centered, approach to care coordination," explained Sarah Milko, Executive Director of AutismUp. "The Rochester Jewish Community Navigator is one of only three across the country, and joins our existing Family Navigators located at the UPMC Levine Autism Clinic and at AutismUp. Our partnership with the Jewish Federation will serve as the model for the expansion of the program across our community, improving access and outcomes for individuals with autism, developmental and intellectual disabilities and their families."

"For the Jewish Federation," added Meredith Dragon, Federation CEO, "the creation of this

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position will bring our efforts to elevate the needs of those with differing abilities to the next level. Over the last two years we have invested significant resources to enhance the ability of our local religious schools and early childhood programs to include children with differing needs.”

The Jewish Family Navigator program also serves to enhance awareness and cooperation among agencies serving people with disabilities in the Jewish and Greater Rochester communities.

Contact the Jewish Family Navigator service at navigator@jewishrochester.org. Learn more at www.jewishrochester.org/navigator.

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