



# The Jewish Federation OF EDMONTON

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With all the heightened emotions and rhetoric polarizing Canada right now, one antidote is kindness. This week marked the first National Kindness Week, where Canadians can celebrate acts of kindness in their communities. Ottawa Rabbi Reuven Bulka z”l inspired the Kindness Week Act, which received royal assent on June 3, 2021.

Rabbi Bulka started the initial kindness week 14 years ago, with one signature action being a blood drive. In Edmonton, we have an ongoing initiative with Canadian Blood Services (with a special thank you to Lauren Tankel for this message and reminder).

We set up a Canadian Blood Services Partners for Life for Jewish Federation donations a few years ago. Anyone who wants their donation counted towards the Federation partnership donations can sign up once online (use JFED174360 when signing up) before their donation. It automatically counts all future donations towards our Partners for Life donations, and can choose to remain anonymous. To join the Jewish Federation “team” [sign up here](#). If you want to share your contribution, please take a selfie and email us at [info@edifed.org](mailto:info@edifed.org) the photo to post on social media to encourage others to take part.

We have planned for our annual Good Deeds Day in April and will provide information soon about the community wide collections to support new moms and babies in need. Thank you to Melany Allen for spearheading this initiative.

February is Jewish Disability Awareness, Acceptance and Inclusion Month (JDAIM). Our partner agency, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) held Jewish Disability Advocacy Day on February 17. This was an opportunity for leaders across Canada to meet with elected officials to advocate for issues of concern for Jewish Canadians living with disabilities. Thank you to Jeanette Hoffman and Michelle Ausfresser for representing Edmonton and joining in these sessions throughout the day. You can read [Michelle’s article](#) about the need for real and lasting change to reduce barriers, increase accessibility, and enhance the services provided to vulnerable Canadians to the benefit of all. As an organization, we strive to make our online programs and events more accessible by including closed captioning. We would be interested to hear from you on how we can become more inclusive and accessible online and in-person.

While the Jewish Federation of Edmonton has many roles, the values that underpin our work of “Yisrael Arevim Zeh l’zeh”—all the people of Israel care for each other, Tikun Olam—repairing the world, and Ahavat Chesed—loving kindness are clear in the efforts of our volunteers and partners this week. Connecting Jewish Edmontonians with meaningful volunteer roles is one of the many highlights in our [strategic plan](#).

We are continually looking for volunteers, especially those who want to build their leadership skills. If you are interested or know someone who might be, please reach out. Volunteers are the core of our community.

Shabbat Shalom,

*D. Lewitt*

Stacey