Jewish Federations of North America

Center on Aging, Trauma, and Holocaust Survivor Care

Communicating the PCTI Approach to Reach Key Audiences

December 4, 2025

Speakers



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Objectives

- Describe the person-centered, trauma-informed (PCTI) approach in a way that feels personalized and relevant to my work.
- Develop messages with confidence and consistency describing the PCTI approach, its role in their work, and its impact on populations and individuals served.
- Identify communications opportunities to share the PCTI approach and its role in their work.

The Center's Work



Grant Making



Training



Coaching



Evaluation



Research

Center Impact



Direct Service Participants

85% Improved overall health (health of the body, mind, or spirit)

89% Improved overall well-being (quality of life or life satisfaction)



Training Participants

90% Improved understanding of how trauma impacts health, aging, and/or service delivery

96% Improved ability to use and/or train others in the PCTI approach

Trauma

Individual trauma **results** from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.

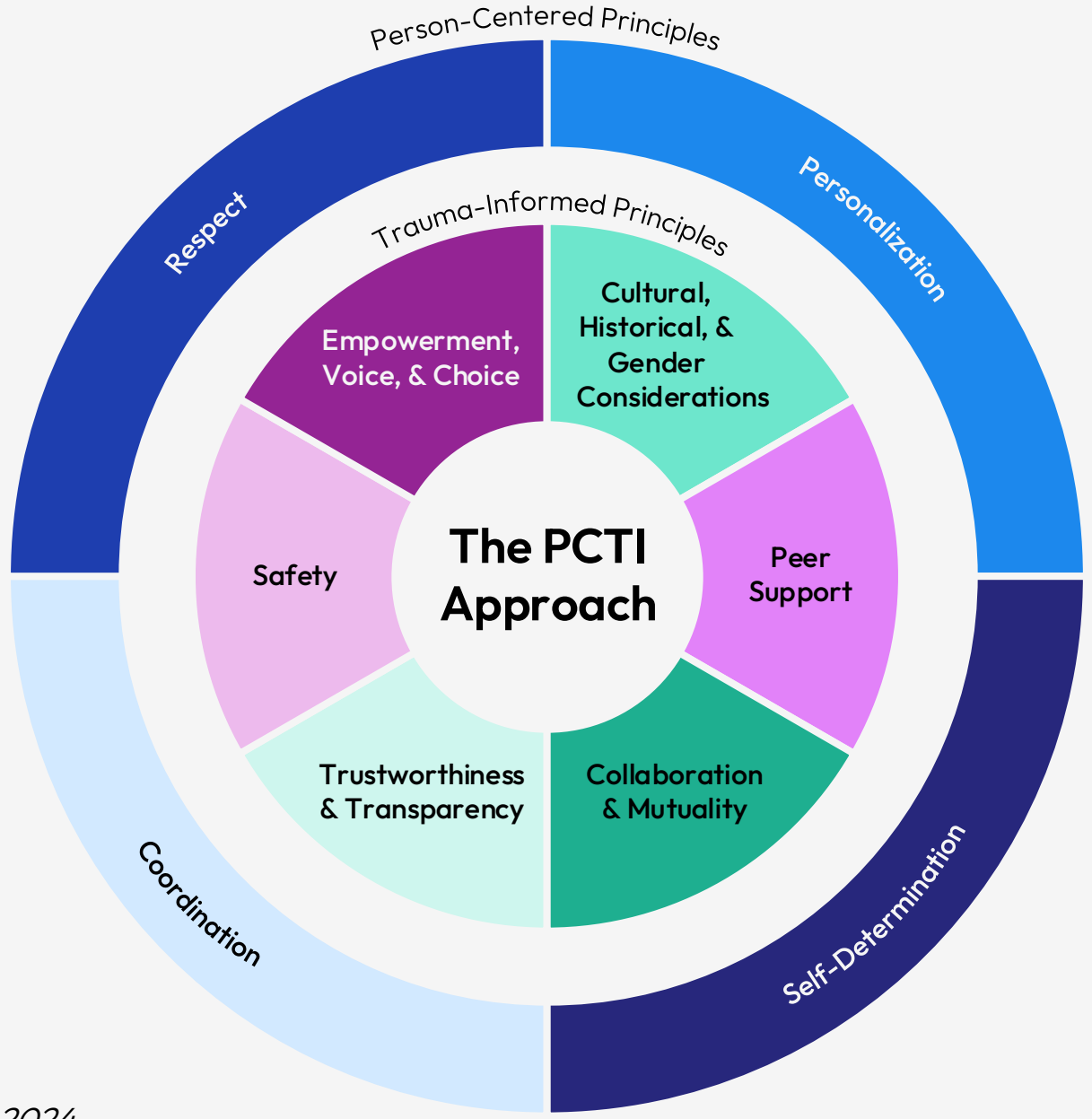
SAMHSA, 2014

The PCTI Approach

The person-centered, trauma-informed (PCTI) approach is a holistic model of care that promotes the health and well-being of individuals by accounting for the role of trauma across the life course and by resisting re-traumatization, while also focusing on the strength, agency, and dignity of the person receiving care.

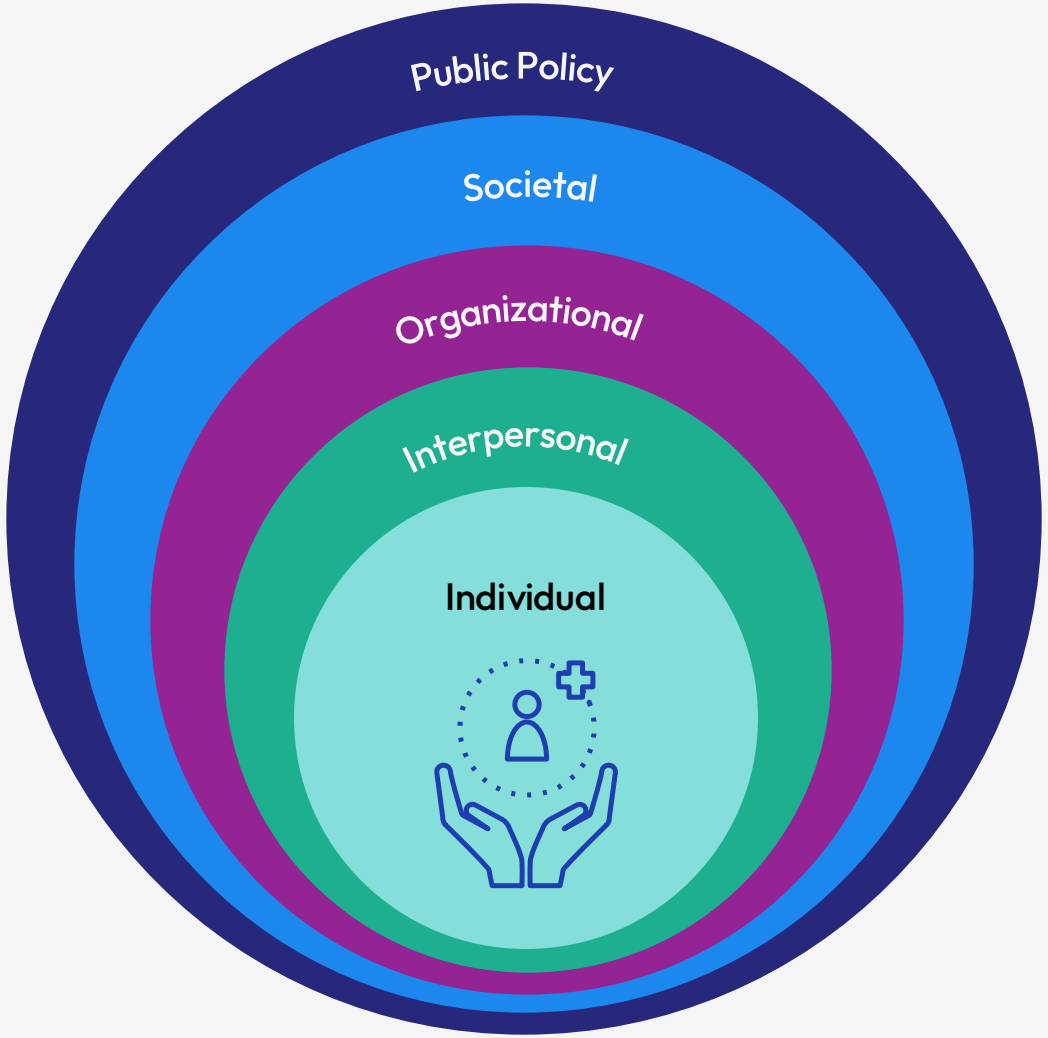
PCTI Principles

The PCTI approach implements SAMHSA's principles of trauma-informed care through the lens of the person-centered principles.



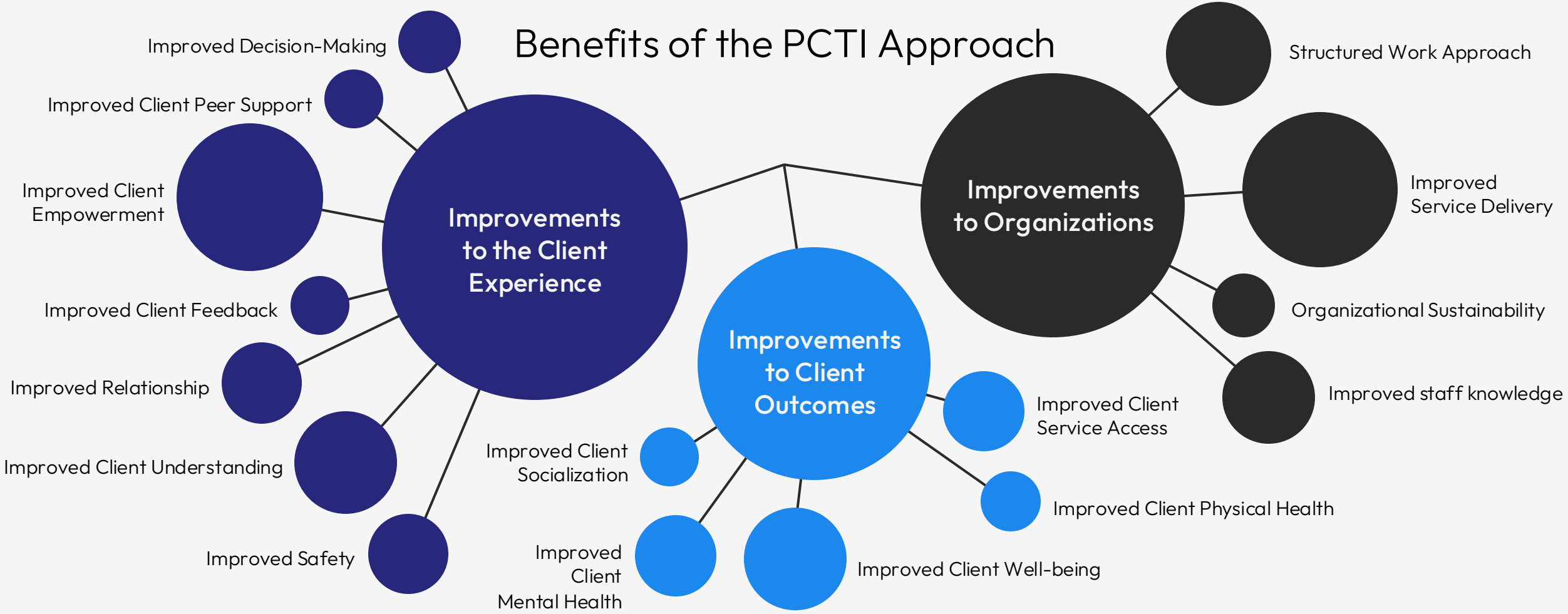
Center on Aging, Trauma, and Holocaust Survivor Care, 2024

The Universal Approach



Eisinger, M., & Bedney, B., 2018

Benefits


Benefits of the PCTI Approach
Improvements to the Client Experience
Improved Decision-Making
Improved Client Peer Support
Improved Client Empowerment
Improved Client Feedback
Improved Relationship
Improved Client Understanding
Improved Safety
Improvements to Organizations
Structured Work Approach
Improved Service Delivery
Organizational Sustainability
Improved staff knowledge
Improvements to Client Outcomes
Improved Client Service Access
Improved Client Physical Health
Improved Client Well-being
Improved Client Mental Health
Improved Client Socialization

West End Strategy Team

Intro to West End Strategy Team

- We are a mission-driven strategic communications firm that partners with leaders and innovators across nonprofits, foundations, schools, camps, coalitions, and socially responsible businesses to amplify visibility.

- We collaborate with clients to enrich lives and communities, create meaningful, lasting change, and create a more just, equitable world.

What is Strategic Communications?

Strategic communications is

- Proactive, not reactive (*sometimes reactive!)
- Planned, not just ad hoc
- Aligned with organizational mission, values and goals
- Meets key audiences where they are
- Supports organizational strategy and goals

A Holistic Communications Strategy Integrates:



Goals

- What do you want your organization to achieve?



Audience

- Who is your organization trying to reach?



Tactics

- How will you reach your audiences to achieve your goals?

Identifying the Players

Target audiences

- Whom is your organization trying to reach?

Stakeholders

- Who has a vested interest or is engaged in your organization's work (or a specific part of it)?

Spokespeople

- Who represents your organization externally?

Additional messengers

- Who else can amplify your organization's message? (internal / external)

Why Messaging Matters:

Consistency is essential as messaging shows up everywhere

- In-person client conversations
- Program descriptions
- Board presentations and donor pitches
- Fundraising appeals
- Staff introductions and role descriptions
- Website copy
- Social media boilerplate and content
- Informal community conversations

Components of an Effective Message



Head

The Substance



Heart

The Emotion



Hand

The Ask

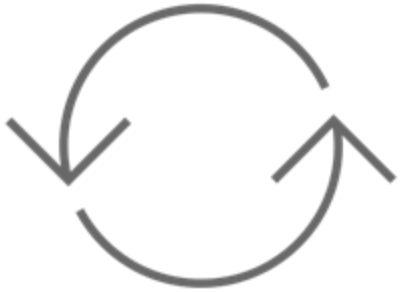
Components of an Effective Message



Focus



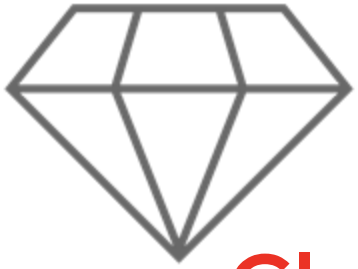
Authenticity



Consistency



Leadership



Clarity

Customizing the Message to Reach Specific Audiences

- What does PCTI mean to you, your organization, your clients?
- Adapt this core message for specific audiences, so it resonates with them

Capturing Anecdotes

Story pipeline development includes creating and maintaining systematic processes to identify, collect, document and share:

- Stories demonstrating impact
- Client/family experiences
- Staff/donor insights
- Community connections, partnerships and impact

Content Maximization Strategies

One story can be repurposed as multiple pieces of content. A single successful program outcome can become:

- Social media post
- Email newsletter item
- Website case study
- Donor appeal story
- Annual report highlight
- Board meeting talking point
- Example to illustrate a point in a media interview

Telling the PCTI Story



About Comms

What we do at Jewish Federations of North America

- Messaging
- Press Outreach / Media Relations
- Social Media
- Email marketing
- Speech Writing
- Digital Strategy



What's the Hook?

A news hook is a compelling angle or unique story aspect that captures media attention

- Journalists like pegging stories to something happening **"now"** (holiday, anniversary, milestone, news event, etc.)
- Journalists are always looking for **personal stories**, different perspectives, and "color"
- There may be a **connection** between big events or milestones and your work
- **Niche publications**: Local papers want a local angle, Jewish publications want a Jewish angle



Example: Ukraine

"It's **retraumatizing,** because it's reminiscent of trauma that they have gone through," Wernick said. "Seeing pain, loss of life, loss of control."



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FAST FORWARD

Holocaust survivors and their descendants thank Biden for Israel support

'What is happening today brings back my terrible memories,' wrote one

President Joe Biden joins Israel's Prime Minister for the start of the Israeli war cabinet meeting, in Tel Aviv on Oct. 18, 2023. Photo by Getty Images

By Beth Harpaz
October 31, 2023

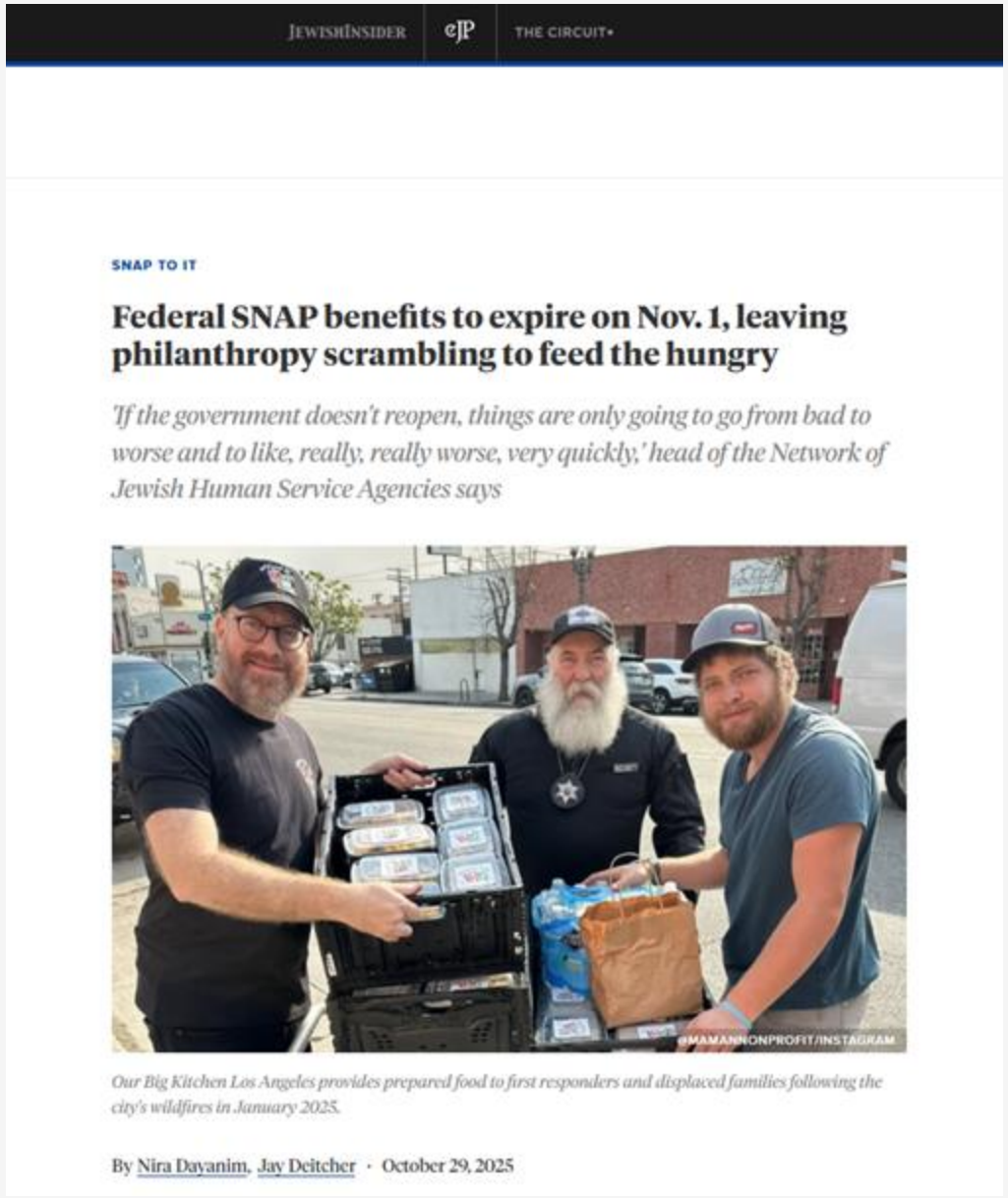
Nearly 2,500 Holocaust survivors and their descendants signed a letter thanking President Joe Biden for supporting Israel.

"These Holocaust survivors appreciate your consistent, vocal support and friendship with the Jewish people and your efforts to fight antisemitism," the letter to Biden, dated Monday, said. "We hope you will take to heart the guidance from Holocaust survivors, who are the embodiment of resilience and courage and the greatest teachers of the dangers of antisemitism."

Example: Oct 7th

Some of the survivors added personal notes.

"I had trouble sleeping, thinking about all the innocent people in Southern Israel who were tortured, raped, and viciously murdered," wrote one. "**It brings back memories** of the past to think how mankind could be so cruel."



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SNAP TO IT

Federal SNAP benefits to expire on Nov. 1, leaving philanthropy scrambling to feed the hungry

'If the government doesn't reopen, things are only going to go from bad to worse and to like, really, really worse, very quickly,' head of the Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies says

Our Big Kitchen Los Angeles provides prepared food to first responders and displaced families following the city's wildfires in January 2025.

By Nira Dayanim, Jay Deitcher · October 29, 2025

Example: SNAP

[The number of financially vulnerable Jews] increases among Holocaust survivors...where 1 in 3 live in poverty and rely on programs like SNAP.

"This is a very, very serious issue," said Goldfarb. "I think what's very scary is to think of folks like that and what they might be experiencing. That they might not have food anymore and are being **retraumatized** by some of these risks, particularly in light of the current environment in the United States."

PCTI in interviews

PCTI in interviews: Before

- Determine the objectives of the interview, what are you looking to accomplish with this interview?
- **Identify a social worker, friend, or relative that the survivor trusts present for the interview**. It will lead to a better interview by making the survivor feel comfortable, and that person will need to debrief with the survivor after.
- Share the objectives with the social worker/contact and interviewee beforehand.
- Ask the social worker/contact whether there are any **sensitivities** we should be aware of or topics that we should avoid entirely.
- Identify a meeting time and place that is both **convenient for the survivor as well as accessible**.
- Ask the survivor what questions they would want to be asked.
- Send survivor the **questions in advance.**

PCTI in interviews: During

- If in-person, give the Holocaust survivor choices of where to sit in the room, and **allow them to guide whether the door is open or closed**.
- If virtual, have your Zoom camera on if the survivor has their Zoom camera on to **create an equal playing field**.
- These conversations go best if they are unscripted. Do not create a script in advance.
- Ask open-ended questions, not leading questions.
- **Let the survivor lead** (lead the tone, conversation content).
- Ask about the survivor's role or connection with the social service agency. How would the survivor describe it?
- **Stay away from politics** if you sense the survivor doesn't want to get political.

PCTI in interviews: Tough situations

- Okay to ask about childhood/war **if discussed previously**.
- If the conversation veers into an emotionally difficult direction, steer back to the objectives. Ask the interviewee if they'd like to **take a break**. Get some fresh air.
- Try not to "empathize" by saying "that makes me feel terrible" - rather redirect the conversation back to their experience, "that must have been so difficult **for you**."

PCTI in interviews: After

- After the interview, make sure to **thank the survivor for their time**. Consider writing a handwritten letter and sending it to their social worker to send to the survivor.
- In an article, describe the survivor's relationship with the social service agency the way that the survivor described it in the interview.
- If the survivor does not describe their relationship with the social service agency, please say that they are “active with” the organization referenced. Generally, **we don’t identify anyone as a “client” or as “receiving services” unless that is how the survivor describes themself**.
- Make sure to always **send the final product** or article to the survivor.

Questions?

Thank You!

Contact Us

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