



Elder Care

Meet the People We Help...

Problem

Leah came to the United States after surviving the horrors of the Holocaust by spending the war years hidden in a cave in Poland as a small child. Decades later, the elderly Shoah survivor enjoyed walking to the nearby Jewish Community Center of Greater Pittsburgh each day, where she met friends to play cards, volunteered with young children, took exercise classes and attended lectures and other special programs.

But the sudden onset of a neurological disease made it difficult for Leah to make her daily trips to the JCC. Occasionally she would ask her neighbors for a ride, yet she felt like a burden to them. Missing her life at the JCC and feeling isolated, Leah slipped into depression and her physical condition began to deteriorate, too.

Solution

A quick phone call to JF&CS led the Holocaust Survivors Program case workers to arrange for free, reliable transportation for Leah to the JCC several times a week through the agency's escort service—usually she could find a ride home herself. As a result, Leah no longer had to rely on her neighbors or make the difficult trip on foot.

Outcome

Leah's depression lifts and her strength increases as she begins to participate in exercise classes again and visit with her friends each day. "Her time at the JCC is her outlet, her socialization," according to Elder Care case workers. "That five-minute car ride might not seem like much, but it was really her lifeline."