

Community Mapping

A TOOL TO HELP IDENTIFY COMMUNITY RESOURCES TO SUPPORT OLDER ADULTS



Part of the Seivah elder abuse resource series.

Seivah: Promoting Sacred Aging
SACRED SPACES | www.JewishSacredSpaces.org



**COMMUNITY MAPPING:
IDENTIFYING RESOURCES TO SUPPORT SACRED AGING**

The Jewish population in the United States is rapidly aging, bringing new priorities for Jewish communities. Jewish organizations provide a variety of services and activities for older adults that promote physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. This positions organizations to help older adults age with dignity and reduce the prevalence of elder abuse.

Proverbs 16:16

מִכֶּסֶף: נִבְחַר בַּיָּנָה וּקְנוֹת מִחֶרֶץ מֵה־טוֹב קְנֵה-חָכְמָה

How much better to acquire wisdom than gold;
To acquire understanding is preferable to silver.

Jewish organizations interested in supporting older adults often ask what they can do to demonstrate a commitment to the prevention of elder abuse. As trusted sources for information and help, Jewish organizations play a critical role in connecting older community members with other formal agencies and resources. One place to begin is to learn what resources exist in your community so that you can confidently connect older adults to these resources when concerns about elder abuse arise. Community mapping is a tool to assist in identifying those resources.

What is Community Mapping?

Community mapping, also known as asset mapping, helps identify the strengths, resources, and opportunities in a neighborhood.¹ It involves information gathering, often through conversations and surveys, as well as documenting the findings.² While the process can be accomplished by one person, it is intended to be collaborative. The scope of the process can vary. For example, community mapping can take just a few hours or an entire year and can be informal or formal depending on the capacity of those involved. For some organizations, the process of information gathering, and dialogue is as important as the outcome.

Benefits of Community Mapping

There are many advantages to community mapping. The first is the ability to locate credible programs, services, and organizations available to support older adults. Additionally, it can help

¹ It is called mapping because some organizations draw or make a map of where assets are located in the community. Creating a visual representation allows organizations to quickly determine where there are resource-rich areas or resource-deserts. This tool includes a sample template to capture the information you glean to assist your organization in developing a referral list for older adults.

² This tool is designed to guide your organization in collecting information through conversations but can easily be adapted to a different modality.

your organization:

- Demonstrate a commitment to the well-being and safety of older Jewish adults.
- Engage staff, volunteers, and other stakeholders in discussions about the needs of older adults served by your organization.
- Build a shared awareness of elder abuse.
- Form relationships with individuals and organizations in the community with whom you may not typically interact.
- Identify partners for future projects.
- Identify gaps in resources for Jewish older adults in your community.
- Mobilize the community to leverage resources to fill those gaps.

What is a Community Asset?

According to the Center for Community Health and Development, a community asset is “anything that can be used to improve the quality of community life.”³ “Anything” can include individual residents, physical structures, institutions, associations, businesses, or community services. Some examples are:

- Individuals: community organizers, elected officials, mentors, clergy, volunteers.
- Physical Structures: JCCs, senior centers, museums, synagogues, schools, hospitals, long-term care facilities.
- Community/public services: public park, public transportation, libraries, home food delivery, public safety.
- Associations or collaborations of residents: Bikur Holim groups (visiting the sick), free loan societies, community food co-op.
- Local private, public, and nonprofit institutions: Jewish Federations, Jewish Child and Family Services, Department of Aging, colleges.

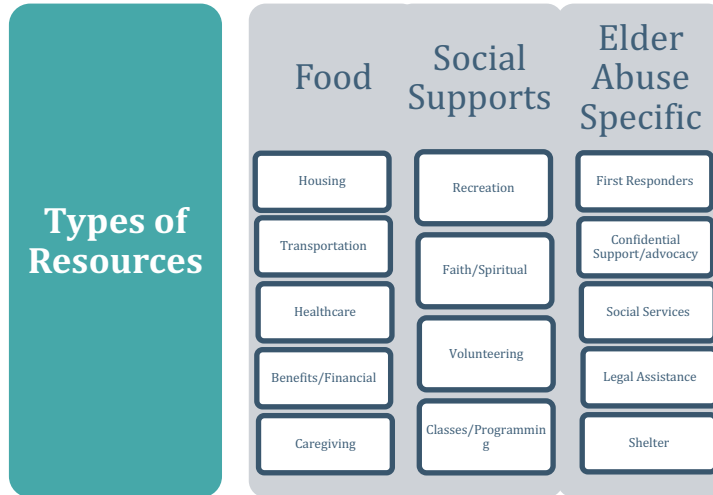
Steps to Community Mapping

The following will help guide your community mapping process.

1. Define the geographic area. For example, determine if you will be gathering information about a specific neighborhood, township, city, county, or entire state. You do not have to use a formal boundary but can define areas within neighborhoods using landmarks or streets that reflect the residents’ perceptions of their community.
2. Create your team. This can be one person from your organization, a small committee, or a cross-organizational effort. It can be helpful to involve people and organizations with different community networks and knowledge about the neighborhood.

³ Center for Community Health Development at the University of Kansas, Community Tool Box, [Section 8: Identifying Community Assets and Resources](#).

- List the types of “assets” or resources you want to learn about. This can include an array of resources, ranging from assistance with basic necessities to opportunities for social connection to crisis intervention. Your organization may start by finding resources to respond to incidents of elder abuse and, over time, expand to include dedicated efforts to engage older adults in unique programming, job training, or civic life. Start with what seems manageable to your team. Do not limit your inquiry to Jewish organizations; other entities specialize in elder abuse or offer unique resources (e.g., interpretation, legal representation), such as domestic violence and rape crisis centers, colleges, community centers, or civil protection order clinics.



- Conduct preliminary research through conversations or an internet search to identify key individuals or organizations to contact as a starting point. You may find a coalition in your community or state that was formed to address issues facing older adults, which will be a great source of information. Look for organizations that work specifically on elder abuse and include assets that support older adults living with health, dignity, and autonomy in the community.
- Record the data you are collecting. You can record the information in any way that is most useful to you. There is a template form at the end of this document that can be used as is or adapted.
- Discuss the data with your team. Note overlaps, gaps, or other interesting developments in resources for older adults. Identify ways that the information collected can be used to inform your organization’s involvement in preventing and responding to elder abuse.
- Create your own resources and referral list. Select trusted resources from the community mapping exercise and create a list of local, state, and national resources.⁴ Make sure staff and volunteers understand how to use the list and consider making it available to the community. Keep in mind that the list should be updated regularly.

⁴ To get you started, there are a few national resources listed below.

Reaching Out to Organizations

The more conversations you have, the more you will know what questions to ask and what assets you want to identify as you discover what is readily available and what might be harder to access. When you introduce yourself, share your goals and why you are contacting community leaders and organizations. It can be useful to ask people to describe what they do as though they are speaking to someone unfamiliar with the topic. This approach can sometimes elicit the clearest response and help you describe their organization to others. Make sure to share your organization's mission and programming too.

Sample questions:

- What services do you provide in the community?
- Do you have services specifically for seniors/older adults?
- Are there certain criteria to qualify for services (e.g., age, income level, type of living situation)?
- Do you have expertise in elder abuse prevention or response?
- Do you have any emergency/crisis services?
- How does someone request assistance (e.g., who should someone call, is there a registration form, is an intake held)?
- Are services confidential?
- Is transportation available to your location? Can you provide in-home services?
- If not a Jewish organization, have you worked with faith communities before? If so, in what ways?
- Is there anything our organization can do to help you reach or serve Jewish older adults?
- Do you provide education on prevention or response to elder abuse?
- Do you work in partnership or collaboration with other organizations in the community?
- Who else do you recommend I speak to in the community?

Conclusion

Organizations can use community mapping as a tool to highlight assets that can support older adults in aging with dignity and autonomy as well as prevent and respond to elder abuse. It is an opportunity to begin conversations about sacred aging and elder abuse at your organization and within your community. The information gleaned through community mapping can be used in many ways, including developing meaningful referrals lists and identifying elder abuse prevention and response efforts in your community. Remember, this is a continuous learning process and will help guide others to join in the work of safeguarding elders.

In developing this resource, we were inspired by the following: [The Care Map for Professionals: Community Action Response to Elder Abuse](#), The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Center for Elder Justice at the Hebrew Home at Riverdale; [Introduction to Community Asset Mapping](#), The Center for Court Innovation, Training for New York City Department of Probation; and the Center for Community Health Development at the University of Kansas, Community Tool Box, [Section 8: Identifying Community Assets and Resources](#).

National Resources

ElderCare Locator 800-677-1116

Phone and chat (through website) available Monday through Friday 8:00 am - 9:00 pm Eastern. This public service of the U.S. Administration on Aging connects older adults and their families to services. Callers can enter a zip code or city to find resources in a particular community, including how to report suspected elder abuse.

Long-Term Ombudsman Program

Click on the link to find local contacts for each state's long-term ombudsman. This program advocates for residents of nursing homes, assisted living facilities, board and care homes, and similar adult care homes.

National Adult Protective Services Association

Adult Protective Services (APS) provide protective social services to older adults (typically those aged 60 and older). They also help vulnerable adults and those with serious disabilities. Use the website to locate the APS in each state or county to report elder abuse.

National Domestic Violence Hotline 800-799-7233 Text (88788) TTY (800-787-3224)

Website also offers access to chat. Open 24/7, 365 days a year. Confidential.

National Elder Fraud Hotline 833-372-8311

Hotline open Monday through Friday from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm Eastern.

National Sexual Assault Hotline 800-656-4637

Website and App (called RAINN, must be downloaded) also offers access to chat. Open 24/7, 365 days a year. Confidential.

Sacred Spaces info@JewishSacredSpaces.org

Offers case consultation services to Jewish organizations where misconduct, such as sexual abuse and other abuses of power, has occurred. Organizational leaders can contact Sacred Spaces to be guided on how to respond to the abuse responsibly. To learn more, click [here](#).

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline 988 (call and text)

Website also offers access to chat. Open 24/7, 365 days a year. Confidential.

Sample Documentation Form *This has been filled out as an example. The next page has the template form.*

Organization	End Elder Abuse Now	Kosher Meals on Wheels Collaboration operated by JCFS
Contact	Jennifer Doe (xxx) xxx-xxxx JD@endabuse.org	Joseph Doe (xxx) xxx-xxxx Joseph@koshermeals.com
Services Offered	Information and referral for individuals experiencing elder abuse. Advocates assist with safety planning and court accompaniment for civil protection orders.	Delivery of kosher meals. Monday through Friday.
Criteria for Services	Age 55+ Voluntary, self-referral. Must reside in Shalom County.	Age 60+ or an adult living with a disability. Must reside in the towns of Aleph, Bet, or Gimel and considered homebound.
Cost	None	A \$3 donation for each meal is highly desired.
How to Request	Chat 42211 on phone Call 800-abuse-org or refer to website.	Call Shoshanna at (xxx) xxx- xxxx.
Confidential?	Yes	No
Additional Notes	Community-based service provider with 30 years expertise in domestic violence and elder abuse. Works with attorneys, emergency housing, and advocates to assist older adults. Also provides community education.	Homebound defined as: Patients either need 1) supportive devices such as crutches, canes, wheelchairs, and walkers; special transportation; or help from someone else in order to leave their home because of illness or injury OR 2) have a condition that makes leaving.

Template Documentation Form

Organization	Contact	Services Offered	Criteria for Services	Cost	How to Request Services	Confidential	Other Notes

Additional Notes
