Recent studies indicate that 80,000 Holocaust Survivors are living today in the United States and more than 30,000 are living at or near poverty. The support these Survivors receive does not allow them to afford what is needed to live a dignified life. Many are choosing between heat or food, medicine or rent. Others have dire living conditions because they cannot invest what is needed to repair their homes.

Launched in March 2019, KAVOD SHEF exponentially increases the critical services directly reaching Survivors. Leveraging the dollars raised through a unique model of funder collaboration, KAVOD SHEF has built a national funding coalition and local partner network across the United States to raise awareness and bring millions of additional dollars to the Survivor community.

KAVOD SHEF funds are directed toward urgent and critical emergency services, including: dental, vision, medical, food, emergency home care, emergency transportation, emergency home services (emergency utilities, home repair, and rent support), and emergency Covid responses, including PPE and deliveries.

For more information visit:
http://www.seedthedream.org/KAVOD-SHEF
“After my stroke, my husband, also a Survivor, became my round-the-clock caregiver. We were in dire need of funds for groceries so that our family could focus on addressing our most basic needs without the added anxiety of food insecurity.”

“KAVOD SHEF has helped us significantly decrease the unmet need among Holocaust Survivors. Hearing aids, eyeglasses, nutritional supplements, and minor home repairs have undoubtedly kept clients aging in their homes safely, independently, and with dignity. We know how important it is to not trigger Survivor trauma. KAVOD SHEF funding has helped us avoid this.”

— KAVOD SHEF Agency Partner
The secular new year can be similar to the Jewish new year. For both, we reflect on the year that has passed, and we set intentions for the new year to come.

Over these past weeks of reflection, renewal and hopeful resolutions, we look back at what we have accomplished as a community and we plan for the impact we can make when we join together and place our focus on where it is needed most. Many of us felt ready to say goodbye to 2020, a year in which those who were most vulnerable were made even more so. The 30,000 Holocaust survivors living in poverty across the United States were among that population, and, became, like so many others, that much more disadvantaged and isolated.

And yet, amid the darkness of the pandemic, KAVOD SHEF (Survivors of the Holocaust Emergency Fund) serves as a bright light of assistance for survivor emergency needs. The KAVOD SHEF initiative, partners with the national nonprofit aid organization KAVOD, and directly responds to survivor needs in nine emergency areas: food, medical, dental, vision, urgent home needs (utilities, rent, repairs), emergency home care, transportation, essential deliveries and PPE.

Seed the Dream Foundation proudly partners with more than 25 foundations and philanthropists to provide national dollars that match all funds raised by local communities and enables KAVOD SHEF to address these ongoing and increasing needs.

What began in 2019 as emergency services for Holocaust survivors across 12 cities, including Philadelphia, quickly expanded in 2020 to community partnerships in more than 28 U.S. cities. Together, we succeeded in filling more than 15,000 emergency requests across the country — including 2,000 emergency assistance requests right here in our Greater Philadelphia community. When we come together and work together, our collective reach extends beyond what we thought possible.

KAVOD SHEF has become our proof. And, we have more to do as we enter into this new year. Too many Holocaust survivors, those who survived the unimaginable, are suffering still. Some face food insecurity, while others struggle to keep their homes. While some are forced to choose between heat or medical bills, others cannot afford basic home repairs.
My resolution for this new year is simple: We can and must do more to alleviate these impossible choices and help our survivors live in dignity during their last years.

Seed the Dream Foundation remains dedicated to addressing the emergency needs of Holocaust survivors and supporting SHEF in the United States and Israel.

In 2021, we are committed to expanding these partnerships. It is our hope that current partners and new partners will join together with us to exponentially increase the resources available for our survivors. Through this unique initiative, we work together with Jewish Federations such as the Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia, Jewish Family Service agencies, national philanthropic partners and local donors to bring much needed emergency aid to our survivor community and amplify our impact. One hundred percent of all funds raised are directed toward these needs — and our heroic KAVOD staff partners continue to work tirelessly to fill all of the survivor requests with urgency.

In 2021, Seed the Dream Foundation will renew our commitment to match all national dollars raised for KAVOD SHEF during the next year. As a result of the COVID-19 crisis, Holocaust survivors in Philadelphia and across the United States need us even more. We will continue to band together with local and national organizations to widen and deepen our reach, and we ask you to join us. The Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia remains our strong and steadfast local partner. As we move into what we hope will be a much brighter new year, we are grateful for their leadership and the light they continue to bring to the ever-growing needs of our survivor population.

This is the time for us to come together, work together and act together, to ensure that the emergency needs of Holocaust survivors are met. Let us show our survivors that they are not forgotten. We are here.

As we begin this new year with new hope and new optimism, please join us in our collective communal response. May 2021 bring health, light and intention.

Survivors in need, please call this confidential national phone hotline for assistance today: 720-295-8484.

Marcy Gringlas is the president and co-founder of Seed the Dream Foundation.
“We could not pay our high gas bills to heat our house and JFS was helping us as much as possible. Our home never was warm enough.”

“KAVOD SHEF has been miraculous for us, it’s been a dream come true. Surviviors have been helped so much. KAVOD SHEF has been able to fill a gap that we had no resources for previously.”

— KAVOD SHEF Agency Partner
2021 Kavod Shef Coalition Partners include federations and Jewish social service agencies in the following communities:

- Akron, OH
- Atlantic & Cape May Counties, NJ
- Baltimore, MD
- Boca Raton, FL
- Broward County, FL
- Central NJ
- Cherry Hill, NJ
- Chicago, IL
- Cleveland, OH
- Colorado
- Dallas, TX
- Fairfield County, CT
- Hartford, CT
- Houston, TX
- Indianapolis, IN
- Kansas City, MO
- Los Angeles, CA
- MetroWest, NJ
- Miami, FL
- Middlesex, NJ
- New York, NY
- Philadelphia, PA
- Phoenix, AZ
- Portland, OR
- Raleigh, NC
- San Diego, CA
- Seattle, WA
- Silicon Valley, CA
- Tucson, AZ
- West Palm Beach, FL
“Not only was she dealing with the physical and emotional effects of the stroke, she was now dealing with even greater financial hardship trying to negotiate all of these bills. Without hesitation, her social worker reached out to the KAVOD SHEF staff and requested financial assistance to help cover the costs of the medical expenses. Within a day, the request was approved and the medical bills were taken care of.”

— KAVOD SHEF Agency Partner

“Before this assistance, I never had enough. I was starving and I learned to do without.”