



ADVOCACY IN ACTION

ADVOCATING CHANGE = ADVANCING LIVES

Jewish Community Day at the Missouri Capitol

When: Wednesday, January 17, 11:30 AM – 2:30 PM
(Lunch to be provided)

Where: Missouri State Capitol in Jefferson City

[RSVP Here](#)

When tensions escalate in the Middle East, hate against Jewish people rises in the U.S. and around the world. Anger over the Israel-Hamas conflict can seep into American society in the form of antisemitic harassment, assault and vandalism. No one should fear for their safety because of their faith. Nonprofits like NCJWSTL should not have to sacrifice their limited resources to combat threats to their physical and cyber spaces.

Please join NCJWSTL and other local Jewish Community organizations for advocacy training, meeting with Missouri Senator Tracy McCreery and Representative Adam Schwadron and a panel discussion about Jewish communal safety with NCJWSTL President Nancy Litz, STL Jewish Community security chief Scott Biondo and the ADL's Jordan Kadosh. We will also hear about House Bill 1557, which would establish the "Supplemental Nonprofit Safety and Security Fund." The Fund shall be used to defray the costs of security enhancements or measures for eligible nonprofits like NCJWSTL. The schedule for the day is as follows:

- 11:00am Advocacy training (run by NCJWSTL)
- 11:30am Advocacy meetings
- 12:30pm Lunch (Sponsored by ADL)
- 1:30pm Panel discussion in the Rotunda

If you are interested in attending or have any questions, please contact Jen Bernstein at jbernstein@ncjwstl.org.



SAVE THE DATE: REPRO SHABBAT



Reproductive freedom is a Jewish value, and we're going to celebrate it!

NCJWSTL is excited to once again partner with local synagogues for our annual Shabbat celebration that honors the Jewish value of reproductive freedom. It takes place annually on *Parshat Mishpatim*, the reading of which contains the verses commonly referenced as the foundation of Judaism's approach to reproductive health, rights and justice.

Please [click here](#) to see which local congregations have signed up to participate so far. If you do not see your congregation listed, please contact Jen Bernstein at jbernstein@ncjwstl.org and she will be happy to reach out to them.

"Show Me Shenanigans" First Episode




Our new podcast, **Show Me Shenanigans** launched last week and we have received great feedback so far! Listener Katie said *"The podcast was so good! Amy is an excellent host, and she, Heather and Jen provided such an easily understandable introduction to the MO legislative process and the priorities of NCJWSTL. It's so reassuring and hopeful that there are smart, dedicated advocates like them working for change in our state."*

The podcast aims to demystify the legislative process in Missouri and providing action steps for anyone wanting to influence policies impacting women, children and families.

Tune in twice monthly as host Amy Hammerman, her guests and cohosts decode making positive change in the State of Missouri. [CLICK HERE](#) to listen to the first episode.

We are very excited for this new endeavor and would love to hear your feedback. **Our next episode will drop on January 17th!**

January Lunch & Learn: Combatting Human Trafficking with FBI Special Agent Daniel Root

Thursday, January 18, 2024
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM CT

Daniel Root

When: Thursday, January 18 | 12:00 - 1:00 PM
Where: Zoom

[RSVP Here](#)

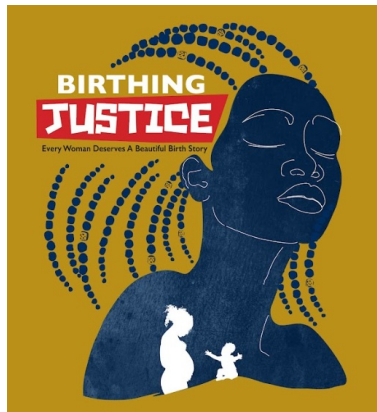
January is National Human Trafficking Prevention Month. Every year since 2010, the President has dedicated the month to raise awareness about human trafficking and to educate the public about how to identify and prevent this crime. Because combatting human trafficking is one of NCJWSTL's priority issues, we dedicate each January's Lunch & Learn to educating our membership and raising awareness on this topic.

For January's Lunch & Learn, we are thrilled to welcome FBI Special Agent Daniel Root. Because he often works undercover, **we will not be showing his photo before his presentation.**

Daniel Root is assigned to the Violent Crimes Against Children/Human Trafficking task force. Prior to the FBI, Daniel worked as a linguist, high school teacher, and with a refugee resettlement agency and immigration clinic. He was a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteer before joining the FBI. In his current assignment, he investigates child exploitation and trafficking crimes, as well as serving as an FBI Crisis Negotiator.

Please [click here](#) to register for the January Lunch & Learn. Questions? Email Jen Bernstein at jbernstein@ncjwstl.org or call 314.993.5181.

Birthing Justice Screening and Panel Discussion



When: Thursday, January 25 | 6:30 - 8:30 PM

Where: Temple Israel | 1 Rabbi Alvan D. Rubin Drive, St. Louis, 63141

[RSVP Here](#)

Global maternal mortality is decreasing, but the US ratio of deaths to live births has doubled since 1987. Missouri's ratio is now double the national average, and getting worse -- higher than 42 other states, and in fact eight times higher than the lowest state. And the rate for Black Missourians is three times higher than for white women.

Policies can change that trajectory. California, for example, has reduced maternal deaths by 65% over the last 15 years. Join us to learn Missouri's scope of the problem, underlying causes and potential solutions at a screening and panel discussion of the award-winning documentary, *Birthing Justice*, which tells the story of the crisis faced by Black mothers and their children and the solutions needed to transform the maternal care system.

Birthing Justice explores the issues fueling the maternal health crisis within the Black community and advocates for the best practices to enhance birthing equity for all women. By revealing the lived experiences of Black women and their advocates working to fix a broken system, *Birthing Justice* flips the victim-blaming narrative of this national epidemic.

Our important panel discussion will be moderated by Darcy Scharff, PhD and include Dr. Melissa Tepe, Melissa Betts-Sanders (a woman with lived experience) and Lora Gulley of Generate Health, who will issue a call to action for attendees.

The Birthing Justice screening and panel discussion is sponsored by NCJWSTL, Generate Health, Temple Israel and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority. The event is free of charge, but registration is required. Please [click here](#) to register and for more information, please [click here](#).

The Sum of Us: Moving Beyond the Myth of Equity as a Zero-Sum Game

When: Thursday, February 1 | 6:00 PM
Where: Graham Chapel at Washington University
[RSVP Here](#)

[The Center for the Study of Race, Ethnicity & Equity](#) and their partners are proud to welcome Heather McGhee as 2024 Distinguished Visiting Scholar. They hope that you can attend as they kick off Black History Month and engage with Heather, a national thought leader dedicated to equity.



Over her career in public policy, Heather McGhee has crafted legislation, testified before Congress, and helped shape presidential campaign platforms. Her book, *The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together*, spent 10 weeks on the New York Times bestseller list and was longlisted for the National Book Award and Carnegie Medal for Excellence in Nonfiction. The New York Times called it "The book that should change how progressives talk about race." Starting at Fairgrounds Park in North St. Louis City, where a riot was sparked after the first Black St. Louis residents attempted to swim at the newly desegregated pool at Fairgrounds Park, McGhee chronicles the sobering history of divide and inequity across the United States. However, she implores the reader to reframe equity, moving away from a "zero sum" mindset to an inclusive perspective in which everyone can thrive.

Please [click here](#) to RSVP and learn more about this event.

ADD YOUR NAME and Help Us Oppose Censorship of Our Public Libraries

For those who have already joined, thank you!

To protect libraries throughout Missouri, including those at public schools, NCJWSTL has helped convene a statewide coalition of individuals and organizations called Right to Read. The coalition will oppose any legislative, state policy or other effort to restrict access to materials at public libraries; the coalition has the utmost confidence in trained, experienced librarians and educators to evaluate and select materials in the libraries' collection.



Did you know?

- As a result of a Missouri law enacted in August 2022 restricting some types of materials in public schools, **librarians fearful of criminal prosecution have removed nearly 300 titles** from school library shelves.
- Under an administrative rule imposed by Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft, all public libraries must have submitted by July 31 how they will comply with the vaguely written rule. **Failure to comply could result in loss of state funding**, which comprises a significant portion of small libraries' budgets.

- Missouri is among the nation's top book banning states, **especially regarding restricting access to books about gender, sexuality and race in public schools.**

More attempts will likely be made in the 2024 Missouri legislative session to suppress First Amendment rights. Free and open access to materials at our public libraries is an essential aspect of our democracy.

Please [click here](#) to add your name as an individual member of the coalition. For more information, please e-mail the coalition at righttoreadcoalition@gmail.com.

Get FREE Emergency Contraception at NCJWSTL!



NCJWSTL is thrilled to announce that we have partnered with the [Missouri Family Health Council](#) (MFHC) to distribute **FREE emergency contraception kits!** This effort is vitally important in the wake of last year's Supreme Court decision overturning Roe vs. Wade, especially in states like Missouri where abortion is illegal. Everyone should have the right to determine when and if they wish to start a family, and emergency contraception is vital in preventing unwanted pregnancies.

Also known as the morning-after pill, or by the brand name Plan B, the emergency contraception pill is an over-the-counter form of birth control that can be taken up to five days after unprotected sex to avoid pregnancy. The goal of this effort is to reduce geographic and financial barriers Missourians face in accessing emergency contraception pills.

While supplies last, MFHC, NCJWSTL and other partner organizations are offering free EC kits to anyone of any age. **Feel free to stop by the NCJWSTL office to pick up your kit - for you or a loved one.**

If you have any questions, please contact Jen Bernstein at jbernstein@ncjwstl.org. You can also order an emergency contraception kit by mail by [clicking here](#).

Take Action & Join the A-List

Now more than ever you will want to make sure that your name is on NCJWSTL's A-List for 2023! Join us as we stand together and speak out about the issues that matter most.

Together we can make a difference!

A-List sponsorship ads sustain our collaborative efforts to educate the community and elected officials about issues integral to our mission, such as birth control access and voting rights. The full-page ads will run in the St. Louis Jewish Light during 2023.

- **\$18** includes your name in the ad.
- **\$54** makes you an Advocate Plus with your name in bold.
- **\$72** makes you a sponsor with your name distinguished in color

[Click here](#) to see the A-List flyer.

[Click here](#) to see the latest A-List Ad.

Join the A-list [here](#).



Interesting Reading

Across the world, women's rights are weak where women are politically underrepresented. The U.S. lags



behind 68 other countries in women’s political representation in national legislatures, with American women holding only 29 percent of seats in Congress. At the state level, women hold only 32.6 percent of state legislative seats. In the courts, women make up only one third of federal judges and state court judges.

[Click here](#) to read Carrie N. Baker's article from the *Daily Hampshire Gazette*, "Democracy and Women's Rights in 2024."

Not yet a member of NCJWSTL? [Click here](#) to become part of a growing network of courageous and compassionate individuals who improve the lives of women, children, and families every day. You don't have to be a woman or Jewish to join!

Donate to Support NCJWSTL & Transform Our Community

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