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Staenberg-Loup Jewish Community Center Offers Expanded Inclusion Services for Children Ages Six-Weeks-Old to 17-Years-Old

JCC Hires Kelley Smith Bramlage as on-site inclusion coordinator

DENVER, Colo., October 17, 2017 – The [Staenberg-Loup Jewish Community Center](#) (JCC Denver) is now offering expanded inclusion services within the Early Learning School (ELS) and Camp Shai, the center’s Jewish Day camp. In order to do so, and to support the JCC Denver’s goals to be an inclusive community center, they hired Kelley Smith Bramlage as the on-site inclusion coordinator.

“We strive to provide an ideal learning environment for children, not just at our Early Learning School but throughout our entire facility,” said Rachel Hagar, director of early childhood engagement at the JCC Denver. “With Kelley on board, we can now provide more support at our Early Learning School for teachers and students both inside and outside of the classroom. We can also provide inclusion services at Camp Shai throughout the summer and during the camps’ year-round programs.”

Smith Bramlage has been working in education and special education for the past 15 years. During her career, she has provided services to young children, who have autism, global developmental delays and significant behavioral needs, and their families. She has also been part of a collaborative team that developed, researched and provided project implementation on curriculum models for Parent Skills Training, Social Skills and High Frequency, High Intensity Behaviors. She received her Masters in Early Childhood Special Education from University of Colorado at Denver.

As the inclusion coordinator, Kelley engages with families and children to support their individual needs. She provides training, coaching and technical assistance for

teachers, camp counselors, and JCC Denver staff so they and can create and support successful programs to ensure that all children are included all the time.

“One of my goals as inclusion coordinator is to help teachers and counselors grow their practice to help them understand how to meet the needs of all children,” said Smith Bramlage. “This begins by helping staff identify their professional development needs around inclusive practices and providing staff with trainings around these practices, real-time modeling of strategies in the classroom, live coaching and ongoing reflective feedback.”

[Camp Shai](#) is the only Jewish day camp in central Denver, and one of few others in the city, that offers inclusion services for campers with disabilities or who need special attention. The goal of the camp inclusion program is to work with these campers to help them be a part of the greater group, to be included in activities and to have them play and interact with their peers, not just with the adults who are working with them.

At Camp Shai this past summer, the JCC Denver experienced Smith Bramlage’s inclusion practices at work, engaging kids with special needs and creating fully inclusive environments. While research shows that behavior change in children is typically shown after six to eight weeks, Camp Shai regularly witnessed behavior change in campers by about three days after a camper arrived. Campers who attended multiple weeks of camp showed great improvement in their ability to interact with peers and engage in group activities over previous years and/or in their school year programs through the use of positive behavior supports. With Smith Bramlage’s expertise, the camp could correctly assess campers’ needs, allowing Camp Shai to more than double the number of campers with a disability served from previous summers.

While an inclusion program has been available for the past few years, the program has been enhanced under Smith Bramlage’s guidance and generous support from the Jay & Rose Phillips Family Foundation of Colorado and the greater community. To further the inclusion model, the JCC Denver as a whole including the Early Learning School and Camp Shai encourage children of all faiths and backgrounds to attend their programs.

The Staenberg-Loup Jewish Community Center is located at 350 S. Dahlia Street in Denver. For more information, visit www.jccdenver.org or call (303) 399-2660.

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ABOUT STAENBERG-LOUP JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER

The [Staenberg-Loup Jewish Community Center](#) (JCC Denver) serves the metro-Denver area through educational, social, cultural, fitness, sports and other programs that are rooted in Jewish values. The JCC Denver’s mission is to create a vibrant and inclusive family and social gathering place, guided by these timeless Jewish

values. The J's four program areas focus on connection, community and well-being and include: a robust fitness, sports, tennis and aquatic center; Early Childhood Engagement, including an Early Learning School and a variety of programs for families; the Mizel Arts and Culture Center (MACC) which offers Denver Children's Theatre, JAAMM Fest (Jewish Arts, Authors, Movies & Music), Denver Jewish Film Festival, Wolf Summer Theater Academy, Art Academy and adult art classes; summer camps including Ranch Camp and Camp Shai; intergenerational and older adult programming like the Grandparent Connect Group and Jewish Aging Mastery Program (JAMP). The JCC Denver is located at 350 S. Dahlia St. in Denver. For more information, visit www.jccdenver.org or call (303) 399-2660.