

Holocaust Center surveyry shows impact

By Mary Lou Calloway
special writer

The Holocaust Memorial Center in West Bloomfield attracted more than 100,000 visitors in its first year.

Founded and directed by Rabbi Charles Rosenzweig, a survey of 2,566 people who visited the center, the first of its

kind outside of Israel, has been released.

Wayne State University Professor Emeritus Dr. Jacob Hurwitz, who wondered how visitors reacted, volunteered to conduct the survey.

The results showed the overall impact was greater than visitors had expected. They said it in-

creased their understanding of the Holocaust.

Most also said their knowledge of Jewish history increased, noting a stronger tendency to guard against totalitarianism, the report said.

OPENED IN September 1984, on the grounds of the Jewish Community Center on Maple, the cen-

ter is a graphic reminder of the murder of 6 million Jews and the destruction of 4,500 European Jewish communities at the hands of the Nazis and their allies from 1933 to 1945.

The memorial was the culmination of a 20-year dream of Rosenzweig and the Holocaust Survivors (Shaarit Haplaytah) of Metropolitan Detroit. He

reminds visitors who are emotionally moved by the exhibits that the purpose is to prevent another Holocaust from happening.

"You have to see the real things and learn the lesson of what intolerance and hate can lead to," said Rosenzweig at the center's dedication.

Survey results suggest the goals of the Holocaust Memorial Center have

been achieved to a singular extent.

"The exhibit appeared to reach best those who needed to be reached most," the report said.

The oldest (60 plus) and the youngest (12-15 years old) said their understanding increased to a great or very great extent. Half of those in the ages between experienced, they said, the same impact.

A moderate or greater increase in understanding was indicated by 75 percent of the Jews and 80 percent of Protestants and Catholics; 83 percent of those with no personal involvement in the Holocaust; about 75 percent of the survivors, grandchildren of survivors and those who lost a relative in the Holocaust; and 60 percent of survivors' children.

Institute studies addiction

The Detroit metropolitan area has more than its share of problems related to drug and alcohol abuse.

The founders of the newly formed Addiction Research Institute of Michigan, the only one of its kind in the state, hope to bring that number down to size.

With the cooperation of the Wayne State University faculty and administration, the Michigan Office of Substance Abuse Services, and the Detroit Health Department, the Addiction Research Institute formed at the university in April. Now, with its research program well under way, the institute is moving into its new headquarters on Wayne State's medical campus.

"There's nothing else like this in the state," said Institute director Dr.

Eugene Schoener, associate professor of pharmacology in family and community medicine at Wayne.

"Over the next five years, we hope to build this into a nationally recognized, multidisciplinary center for addiction studies."

JOANNE SOBECK of Farmington Hills is coordinator of the institute. Dr. Antonio Abbey of Ann Arbor, an assistant professor of community medicine at Wayne, is assistant director.

Schoener of Southfield said the institute will study policy, prevention and treatment.

"Policy deals with environmental factors that control use of mood- and mind-altering substances. For example, we have a natural experiment going on right now with the in-

creased costs because of the recent liquor tax increase," he said.

"We want to know if such an increase has a measurable effect on the use and therefore the detrimental consequences of drinking - cirrhosis, highway deaths, drownings and so on."

The institute is studying policy with the help of a contract from the Michigan Office of Substance Abuse Services.

ON THE prevention side, Abbey is heading a pilot study focusing on early elementary school education. "The program we are evaluating builds kids' self esteem and their resistance to peer pressure. These skills should help them to resist the abuse of alcohol or drugs as they get older," he said.

Schoener added, "Attitudes about alcohol and chemical abuse are developed by the age of 6, suggesting that we really have to bring prevention programs into the lower grades." It is our hope to follow kids who have gone through this program to see if it really affects their behavior as adolescents.

With the Bureau of "This is a community-based prevention project," Schoener said. "Public health consultants will work with community groups to foster their own initiatives and develop community strength to resist substance abuse problems."

Further information about the Addiction Research Institute should be directed to the institute's new address, 1368 Scott Hall, 540 E. Canfield, Detroit 48201 or telephone 577-1388.



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