

Jewish Self-Help in Warsaw

July 1940

It is in difficult times that the noble side of people sometimes reveals itself. It has never before been possible to witness so many examples of devotion and self-sacrifice as at this hour. Countless individuals hurry to answer every call for help from the Jewish Community or the Jewish Self-Help,* and sometimes, on their own initiative, they give aid where the need arises.

.... A Social Welfare department was set up under the ZSS with sections for: *Finance, Clothes Collection, Emergency Aid, Sanitation and Housing for the Homeless*. In addition, *Local Committees* have been set up in the various sections of the city. In this way a fairly complicated and widespread system of public assistance has penetrated through every level and part of the Jewish public, and reaches into the most distant areas populated by Jews....

A separate chapter worth noting in the work of the House Committees is *child care*. Owing to the fact that the schools are not operating, many children of school and kindergarten age have remained without care and supervision, particularly where their parents are sometimes obliged to leave their homes in order to make a living. The House Committees, under the auspices of the ZSS, have undertaken to set up child-care centers in many houses, and particularly for children who have become abandoned. The Centers are managed by first-rate pedagogical personnel under the supervision of devoted public workers, who do everything possible to ensure that the children receive proper care. In this way the Centers play an important part in easing the suffering and poverty of the Jewish population of Warsaw, together with the Child Feeding Stations of the ZSS, which are intended mainly for the children of the refugees. The number of House Committees has grown steadily, and their work has been extended. There are now at least 2,200 active [House Committees] with 10,000 devoted workers.

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* Zydowska Samopomoc Spoeczna – ZSS .

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