

## Holocaust kids 'special'

# Children offset suffering

United Press International  
SKOKIE, Ill. — Minna Davis never asked her father about the tattooed numbers on his forearm, but even as a child sensed there was something evil about them.

As she grew up, she learned despite a "conspiracy of silence" about her parents' terror-filled past in Hitler's death camps in Poland. By the time she was 8 she was aware that before the war her father had three other children and another wife and her mother had a first husband.

"I felt I embodied those three other children and all the family that 'One of the recurring themes that I saw is that many children of survivors feel they need to somehow make up for the suffering of their parents, that somehow they have to make up for the years and loved ones that they lost,'" Minna Davis said.

she recalled. "I remember feeling very sad and feeling a sense of what can I do to make up for it."

Davis, now 32, is an adult services worker at the Mayer Kaplan Jewish Community Center in Skokie, a Chicago suburb with about 7,000 holocaust survivors.

Davis coordinates group support sessions for children of holocaust survivors. The program was started in June 1977, about the time the holocaust was getting renewed publicity and a band of Chicago neo-Nazi announced plans, that were never carried out, to march in Skokie.

"One of the recurring themes that I saw is that many children of survivors feel they need to somehow make up for the suffering of their parents, that somehow they have to make up for the years and loved ones that they lost," she said.

"One of the ways this is played out by the children is a need to give their parents nachus (Yiddish for pleasure)." So many become over-achievers or make decisions that please their parents as a priority to making decisions that would please themselves, she said.

She told of one woman in the support group, tears in her eyes,

saying she always wanted to please her father. Another woman told of how she hurt her ankle as a child, and didn't want to worry her mother. Only after days of walking in pain did she find out she had a hairline fracture.

Many in the five support groups

"I think all of us got the message from birth that we were extremely precious or special. So we thought we had to fulfill that ideal," Davis said.

held at the center indicated they were perfectionists and never satisfied with their achievements, she said. Their desire to provide pleasure to their parents and to offset war losses was sometimes conscious, other times unconscious and usually "nonverbal," she said.

To some degree many holocaust survivors seem to "live through their children" more than other parents because their careers and aspirations were disrupted and often snuffed out by the war, she said. So, some prod their children toward success.

But one discovery among group members, she said, was that often their assumptions that their parents were pushing them were not fully correct and in effect they were pushing themselves.

Davis said many survivor children also seemed to have high expectations for themselves because their parents gave them a "high intensity" of love stemming from their war experiences.

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Martin Trachtenberg, who originated the sessions, said many of the

children encounter more resistance and family problems when they move away from home.

"All you have to do is remember the image of these people being lined up in the ghetto and wives, husbands and children being separated from each other never to be seen again and you get the message," he said.

Davis said children of survivors appeared to feel more guilt about their parents than other children. Several group members had contemplated suicide as adolescents and one attempted suicide in college, she said.

"It all goes back to the statement, 'how can I hurt them after what they've been through.'"

Some group members said their parents never talked about their war experiences, Davis said, adding that she, herself, hadn't directly talked to her mother about her ex-

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periences until she was grown and married.

Group sessions hold weekly meetings. Two facilitators, one a child of survivors and the other not connected to the holocaust and acting as a counterbalance, guide the sessions.

## Hitler intended to conquer U.S.

United Press International  
BONN, West Germany — Adolf Hitler believed that armadas of giant submarines and fleets of Luftwaffe bombers would bring the United States to his knees once he had conquered Europe, Albert Speer says in his memoirs.

Speer, who calls Hitler irrational and illogical, says Hitler even envisaged "10 million German-Americans" rising up to support a Nazi invasion.

Speer, who was Hitler's war production chief, discussed Hitler's dream of world domination in the last installment of his new memoirs which appeared Sunday in the West German newspaper Welt am Sonntag.

Speer, 73, looks back and says Hitler in private chats made it clear he intended to conquer the United States after subduing Europe.

His opinion is worthy of attention for he was closer to Hitler than any other man — "If Hitler had a friend, I was it."

Speer acknowledges that Hitler's talk of world domination was based in part on his love of theatrical bombast and lack of sophistication — "He was as unrestrained and as unpolished as a 6-year-old."

But he says the plans were more than talk. "Although it is true he did not think through to the end of his plans for world mastery, there is much evidence he took these plans seriously. Hitler's conception of conquering America was not some random thought," Speer writes.

Speer says Hitler told him that once he had conquered Europe he would embark on a gigantic armaments program and "before the Americans begin to rearm a second time we will be so far ahead they never will be able to catch up."

"These Jewish Democrats never have shown any determination and will not sacrifice their mammon," he said discussing the Americans.

"In addition, their soldiers are cowards."

Hitler said victory in Europe would give Germany 300 million people to draw on without counting Italy and England, Speer writes.

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