

THE JERUSALEM HILLS

Therapeutic Centers

לשעבר מוסד בני ברית (ע"ר)

הרי ירושלים

מוסדות לטיפול פנימייתי



NEWS FROM JERUSALEM HILLS

JULY 1, 2018

Fourth Year Graduation at the Children's Home



Graduation at the Children's Home is a time marked by difficult endings. For most of the children, this means farewell for the short summer vacation, which in and of itself is not easy. For the children who are completing their stay this is a graduation from the Home. This year the children of the Eitan group, the fourth year group in the elementary unit, are graduating. Throughout this last year everything is steered towards the anticipated graduation. A great deal of preparation and graduation related content is needed, both for the children and for the staff. This is reflected in many group conversations where the children and the staff process and think, talk and express how they see themselves and what their thoughts are toward the graduation. Together they process their collective memories of the 4-year journey. The staff leads the children through a process in which they "jump" between the past and the future. After four years in the bubble created here in the Children's Home and the strong relationships formed with the staff, these processes are very complex and the children must prepare for the next stage. Some are in the process of searching for a new framework for the next year, and so they find themselves in a situation where they are simultaneously contemplating the separation and also what will be in the year to come.

As part of the separation process, there are several ceremonies throughout the year. Two Parents Days are held as they focus on summarizing and reliving memories. One of the most important ceremonies begins at Hanukkah when each child is paired with a staff member who becomes the child's support for everything related to the separation process for the rest of the year. The child receives a farewell album and together with his assigned staff member s/he fills it with the story of the group's life from the child's point of view. Each child creates the album from his/her memories and thoughts. This is a very meaningful process for the child and the staff member.

The children are also divided into committees that allow them to have an active part in the separation process by gradually connecting them to it. One committee is in charge of the unit's newsletter. Another committee is responsible for the end of year project. This year the children are building a green house. This is a very suitable choice for this group, which over the years has been very active in planting around the school grounds. The last committee is responsible for the graduation party. The party is the culmination of the process, a formal and very significant event for the children and staff, which summarizes the life of the group.

The Eitan group is successfully completing the 4-year period which was marked by many crises in the early years. The relationship between the children and the staff is very strong such that the moments of crisis that

the child may experience are successfully addressed rather than being destructive. We wish all the children of the Eitan Group success in the journey that lies ahead.

Graduation at the Kemper Group Home

At the Kemper Group Home the whole last year of treatment for boys who are about to graduate is called "separation year." This is usually the year in which a boy finishes 12th grade, and begins to see on the horizon his life as an independent adult. In this year, the child's treatment emphasizes aspects of maturity, taking responsibility and gradually becoming independent of the staff. This is done by encouraging the boy to make decisions about his life and learn to cope with their consequences. We expect that during the "separation year" each boy will manage his own calendar, integrate to an extent in the work force, manage an independent bank account and handle various issues according to his ability. This is done with staff guidance that allows them to experience downfalls and to learn from their mistakes. During this year the staff and the graduate review the treatment process that the boy underwent in preparation for the graduation ceremony. The ceremony summarizes the therapeutic process and the 'story' of the boy. Preparations include a staff evaluation of the boy's personal file in which the boy participates, hears what is said and speaks out in relation to the process that he has undergone.



During the "separation year", the boy, with the help of the staff, prepares for the life he will lead following graduation. We accompany the boys through the process of deciding on the way and the place they will continue to after graduation (army service, national service, continued care for young adults, etc.) according to the needs of each youth. This process often triggers a regressive response on the part of the boy who is wary and afraid of an unknown future and of the separation from the secure and comforting group home. At this time we often witness a repetition of behaviors from the boy's past and try to help him express these anxieties and fears, call them out, and allow him to process once more what he went through. This is a long journey and often takes the whole year. Good luck to the three boys who are graduating this year.

Annual Choir Convention

The Jerusalem Hills School choir consists of 26 students, about one-third of the school, and is made up of two groups, the young choir with children in their second year and the older one, consisting of the older children from the elementary unit and from the junior unit. The children themselves choose to participate in the choir, and the school staff encourages all who love to sing and like music to join, not only those who are natural born singers. There are children in the choir who still do not know how to read. They learn the words by heart and thus expand their vocabulary. In the choir they are exposed to music and songs, which are not heard every day, learn about different composers and are exposed to Hebrew at a high level. Boys and girls of different ages from different groups sing together, and a special array of tones and sounds is created.



The interaction between the children and the shared experience they undergo together is of utmost importance and contributes to all the children.

This year, for the 4th year in a row the Jerusalem Hills choir successfully participated in the Jerusalem District convention of school choirs themed "70 Years to the State of Israel." Each school sang a song connected to 70 years to the State of Israel and the Jerusalem Hills choir sang "A Song after the War" in two voices. The children were looking forward to this event since the beginning of the school year and the opportunity to sing at the convention was very exciting!

Carmel and Arbel Annual School Trip

The Carmel and Arbel groups (the junior boys' groups) went on a two-day trip up north. Going on an overnight trip away from the campus is not easy for our children but the boys met the challenges head on.

They began the trip with a tour of the Sea Turtle Rescue Center at Mevo'ot Yam. The guide explained about the center and where to call if you come across a wounded turtle on one of the beaches. He also took the group to see all the various turtles that the center had rescued and told some of their stories. The boys asked many questions and were very curious and excited about what they heard and saw there. From there they continued on foot along the shoreline, and passed the fenced-in area protecting the turtle eggs that they had heard about on the tour of the Rescue Center. Everyone enjoyed the breeze and the beautiful beaches. At the end of the hike, they ate lunch and continued to Horshat Tal.

At Horshat Tal, the children and the staff set up a huge campground, they played different board games like backgammon and organized a meat and vegetarian BBQ. They sat to eat a delicious supper at a long table that was big enough for everyone. After supper, the boys went on an experiential night hike led by volunteers Itai and Assaf. They taught them to camouflage and maneuver in the dark which they practiced in the darker parts of the campground. The boys stood up to the challenge heroically and enjoyed the whole experience very much, especially since they topped it off by sneaking up and frightening all the staff that remained in the encampment.



The morning of the second day opened with the traditional soccer game of adults vs. children. The boys won 3:1! Then the boys experienced different activity stations including dungeons and dragons, water gun battles and giant soap bubbles. Later in the day they all went swimming in the natural pools of Horshat Tal where the boys jumped into the water, swam and goofed off, enjoying every moment. For lunch they ate a delicious meal cooked in a poyke (a special South African grill). After each boy received a treat, they all boarded the bus for a long ride back to the Children's Home. Everyone returned tired but very happy.

Isrotel Cramim Hotel adopts the staff of JHTC



This is the second year in a row that the Cramim Hotel chose to recognize the hard work of the Jerusalem Hills staff in a way only they know how – by generously donating five special days to the employees of the Jerusalem Hills.

The teachers came on two different occasions for teacher training workshops in which they worked on strengthening and deepening the knowledge of the teacher as a leader, as an impactor and as an advocator of the school's goals. The workshops were run by D.S. Ofek, a consulting and organizational development company. During the seminar the teachers were treated to a luxurious breakfast and delicious lunch courtesy of the hotel.

The counselors and group coordinators came for a relaxing “Spa Day”. The activities included lunch at the hotel restaurant, a reflexology workshop and access to all of the hotel facilities including a Turkish bath, fitness rooms, saunas, indoor heated swimming pool, an outdoor pool and a Jacuzzi. The social workers and psychologists also took turns coming to the hotel for a special day that included a reflexology workshop, lunch, and use of the hotel facilities. The wonderful hotel hospitality allowed the different staff members to take a break from the responsibility and stress and enjoy a pleasant and relaxing environment that also gave them the opportunity to strengthen the ties between them, connections that are so important for creating an uplifting and professional support system. The relaxing day at the hotel gave everyone the strength to continue working and also to feel that there is a supportive and appreciative community outside the treatment world, that is caring and loving.

Besides the special days, the staff at the Cramim Hotel came to the Children’s Home throughout the year to bring gifts for the holidays. Additionally, a group of employees from Cramim came on “Good Deeds Day” to renovate the garden furniture on the lawns of the Children’s Home. We wish to say a great thank you for the cooperation, willingness and desire to grant and invest in us. We greatly appreciate the hotel staff’s generosity and thank the Cramim Hotel for the generous donations and the recognition of the hard work and dedication of our employees.



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JHTC is committed to restoring to each at-risk boy and girl under our care their faith in themselves and their belief that the world is meant for them as well. The success of our highly personalized long term treatment program depends to a large extent on the generosity and support of our friends and supporters all over the world. Your support will make a real difference and a lasting impact

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