



75 Years of Successful Treatment of At Risk Children and Youth

NEWS FROM JERUSALEM HILLS

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Help JHTC Celebrate 75 years of successful treatment of at-risk children

The Jerusalem Hills Treatment Centers began in 1943 as a refuge for a group of boys and girls, part of the group of the Teheran Children. The Teheran Children was the first large group of Holocaust survivors to reach Palestine from Nazi-occupied Europe in 1943 after they were rescued in Teheran by Jewish Agency workers and sent by ship, train and on foot to the land of Israel, where local activists found homes for them in kibbutzim, boarding schools, and Henrietta Szold youth villages. A group of twenty-five children who were severely traumatized, could not be integrated into the absorption frameworks available at the time. In an effort to address their unique needs, a treatment facility was established for them at the request of Henrietta Szold. Since then, the JHTC's internationally recognized Children's Home, Group Home, Goldie Kassell Therapy and Training Center, professional training programs and community projects have reached and rehabilitated over two thousand Israeli children and youth at-risk. On our 75th anniversary we invite you to join us and make a donation to our special online campaign.

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Inaugurating a new school year at the Children's Home School

The traditional commencement ceremony for the new school year was conducted by Sahar, this year's graduating group. After the school choir preformed a song, the Sahar group greeted each of the 7 different groups, starting with the new group. Each group then tied a group wish to a balloon and together they sent them off to the heavens to the sound of Shofar blowing by several Sahar boys. This is a long-standing tradition, along with the wishing tree at the school entrance, which gets decorated every year with new leaf shaped wish cards, written by each and every child in the Home.



Summer Vacation Group

The summer vacation in the children's home begins the second week of August. After the children attend summer school in July and day camp for two weeks, comes the moment most are waiting for, a long four-week vacation at home. But for about 25 of our children this moment is not anticipated. These children have no family or home to return to during vacations and holidays. This can be due to a fractured family unit (there is no caregiving parent; a parent may be in a mental institution or in jail) or there are grounds to suspect the child may be in physical danger due to violence and extreme neglect. The staff invest a great deal of thought in offering the vacation group children a variety of activities in order to create an embracing experience for them. The activities this summer included a visit to the Children's Island in Tzuba, a tour of the Coca-Cola factory, a visit to the Jerusalem Regional Station Fire Department, the movies, ice skating and more. On campus they had different activities like a puppet workshop, an activity of games including different sports and arts.



Our Housemother retires after 44 years

Ilana, our housemother for the past 44 years, has recently retired. In a very emotional farewell dinner, her family, past and present colleagues and close friends gathered to thank her for her many years of work. The evening included speeches from past and present executive directors, colleagues, friends and family in addition to some exciting presentations.



Ilana began to work in the laundry room when the Children's Home was located in Jerusalem and was known as B'nei Brit. She was one of the first faces to receive the children on their first day at the Home. Together with the child and his/her mother, they would go through the clothes and mark them. From there she went to work in the kitchen together with her mother, and later advanced to the role of housemother. Under her supervision the

Home ran like clockwork, whether it was at meals, or holidays, group outings and trips, JHTC seminars, or inspections. Both children and staff alike knew they could turn to Ilana with every request. She was everyone's "mother" who always provided you with the right thing at the right time. We wish Ilana the best of luck in all her plans.

Our Wonderful Partnership with Bezeq

On Purim two years ago, the Children's Home received a Mishloach Manot from a group of Bezeq employees thanks to a woman who works there who is acquainted with the Home. Since then a wonderful relationship has bloomed between Bezeq's human resources division and the Home. For the second year in a row, the division is organizing several activities throughout the year for the benefit of children. In the upcoming Hanukkah vacation, Bezeq will contribute an activity to the vacation group, which they will take part in as well. During this past summer, the division employees came for a fun day with the children during the day camp which included inflatable water slides, multimedia and karaoke stations and a delicious lunch. The children and the staff really enjoyed being pampered by Bezeq. Later in the summer, the employees came for two days of physical work, where they scrubbed, polished, painted and renovated two of the children's living units. The units had beautiful makeovers designed by the talented designer Nurit Baruch and covered in full by Bezeq. The renovations took place during the children's summer vacation and therefore the children only saw the final product when they returned to the Home for the beginning of the school year. The children and the staff love the new design and furniture and light up every time they enter their unit. It's amazing to see what change some color and new furniture can lead to.



Focus on the Psychological Services

As a result of their backgrounds the children in our care exhibit a wide range of difficult symptoms including fear, rage, distrust of adults and destructive or violent behavior. Our therapeutic program is designed to help these children develop emotional capabilities: to learn how to cope with their feelings of anger, aggression, loneliness, sadness, pressure and frustration. Furthermore, we want to help them overcome their lack of trust, lower their levels of anxiety and rejection and strengthen their self-esteem. The psychological services program is the cornerstone of this integrative system of care and provides for intense psychological treatment on a long term basis. This type of long-term intensive treatment is at the core of our entire therapeutic philosophy and is credited with our very high rate of success.

Our program of Psychological Services incorporates three different aspects of the psychological care supplied:

1. Play Therapy

Due to the neglect they suffered, a significant number of children in our care often have difficulty communicating verbally especially when it comes to conveying their distress. Play therapy provides a medium which bypasses verbal defenses. It is also beneficial with children who have limited verbal skills.

In play therapy toys and games are like the child's words and play is his language. Through it, therapists gain insights into the child's inner world, the conflicts and unrest that he is experiencing but may be unable or unwilling to put into words. This information can be used to promote resolution. In the context of play therapy psychologists build a nurturing relationship with the children. In doing this they teach them to trust, to develop self-esteem and to begin the process of healing.

2. Diagnostics

In recent years the number of children who are referred to our facilities with a significant psychiatric history has increased. The number of children in our care who have suffered some form of sexual trauma has grown significantly as well. In order to identify and treat psychiatric disorders and sexual abuse as effectively as possible each child needs to be diagnosed accurately and precisely. The diagnostic tools available to us now are far more sophisticated than was the case previously. We make use of these more sophisticated tools and run training seminars for our psychologists on how to use them more effectively.

3. Training of Staff

As noted, every aspect of our children's care is informed by their psychological treatment. As such, staff who are in regular contact with the children and their families receive guidance and training from our psychologists on a regular basis. Each member of staff receives an individual one hour training session every week. The direct staff (teachers and care givers) attends a one hour supervision session with the psychologist once a week. In addition the steering committee for each group, which consists of the psychologist, the social worker and the group coordinator, receives supervision from a senior psychologist on a weekly basis. This intensive training program accounts for the unusual longevity of our staff members.



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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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