

July 2010

Activities report Rebecca Sieff center for the Family Beit Hakerem

The current school year has come to an end, and Day Care Center year is about to end as well. It is time for a summarization, and to plan a new beginning.

We began the school year under the shadow of the financial crisis in WIZO, and with heavy fears for the future. Despite this, we all knew that WIZO, which is celebrating its 90th anniversary, is built on firm foundations, and I am not referring to the financial foundations, but to the vision that is measured in human capital and not in monetary terms. In the Rebecca Sieff Center for the Family we decided, unanimously, to make every effort so as not to affect the services that we provide for our pupils in the school and the Day Care Center, nor any other services that we provide in the Rebecca Sieff Center. During the course of the year we raised many resources from the community and from our partners, we cut our costs and streamlined every department. Today, at the end of the school year, we can say that we kept to the mission that we set out for ourselves.

We are just completing all the tests of the IQC Institute, and we have received the **ISO 9001-2000** quality award, which points to correct procedures in all departments – the school, Day Care Center and administration.

Parallel to our streamlining efforts we discussed ways of developing new programs and services in the Center. During the previous year we had already seen a significant rise in the number of children from the Bet Hakerem neighborhood and its surroundings, and an increased demand for the Day Care Center. After checking out the issue in detail, we decided to open another babies class – the tenth class in the Day Care Center, which, even before this extra class is added, was the biggest Day Care Center in Israel. In addition, next year there will be a special project operating the in babies and other classes of the Day Care Center, which necessitates additional, professional, personnel in the babies classes.

Despite this extra class we still had to turn down one hundred babies and toddler, for lack of space in the Day Care Center.

Our school also underwent a revolution during the last year. A new managing director took office, and we were called upon to implement a new course for vocational training, which meant that the pupils could no longer work outside the

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 school, and full responsibility for their progress, was solely within the walls of the school.

The new program put a heavy burden on the professional workshops and the classrooms, and of course, upon the teaching staff. The school went over to a five day learning week, and Friday is devoted to activities for enrichment, and to bring down the cultural gap. At the end of the school year, we were happy that the pupils were successful in their external, vocational examinations.

We thought a lot about the subject of office administration, which is becoming less and less relevant with time, and as working procedures progress. It was decided, together with the Ministries of Industry, Trade and Labor and Education, that we would set up a new trend, Sound Design and Amplification, which will prepare the pupils for a vocational certificate in the field of electronic sound and communications. The program involves creating a radio studio, studying the technical aspects of recording and designing sound, and in addition, studying the written media. The program is due to begin during the next school year and will become an matriculation trend within two years.

The school, which is the only vocational high school of its kind in Israel, for special education, is in high demand. Youth from Jerusalem and the surrounding areas



compete for every free place, and the space in the school is very limited. With the help of WIZO uk, we have extended the school and provided the pupils with a new complex for enrichment and sport activities, thereby vacating some of the classrooms in the school. At the beginning of the coming school year, we

will open a new enrichment center for the pupils which will include a handiwork room, an exercise room, and a workshop for designs made out of wood.

In addition, two months ago, we inaugurated Rosemarin, a dining room for pupils in the cookery trend. Rosemarin is in the staff parking area, next to the teaching kitchens.

A number of summer camps will take place, at the same time, during the summer. Besides the school summer camp, which will continue throughout July and the Day Care Center summer camp, which will be held in August, another two summer camps for children of Jerusalem, in which 200 children will participate, will also operate. One of the camps will be held in the new enrichment and activities center, which was renovated thanks to a generous donation from WIZO uk.

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In conclusion, I would like to wish all the staff of the Rebecca Sieff Family Center a pleasant holiday period, and wish us all ongoing, fruitful and flourishing endeavors in the coming year.

Kobi Hillel
Rebecca Sieff centre
Director

Cosmetician Course for Single Mothers

The Cosmetician Course for single mothers successfully ended in May. The course, which lasted for six months (800 learning hours), is under the professional supervision of the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor, and 20 women participated, mostly single mothers who wanted to joint the labor force, and forge a way forward to self realization.

All the participants successfully completed the course, in both the practical and theoretical examinations and received the revered certificate. During the course the women learnt not only the professional side of cosmetics, but also the basics for running a small business, personal communications, and took part in an empowerment workshop for women, as well as a workshop aimed at how to find work. At the end of the course, most of the women found work, and some are in the stages of opening their own businesses as cosmeticians.



Awards for Excellency at the Rebecca Sieff WIZO Center for the Family, 2010.

On Jerusalem Day, 11.5.2010, three awards for excellency, and two awards of recognition, were presented to personnel in the Rebecca Sieff WIZO Center for the Family.

Award for Excellency

- Ms. Ronit Goorny – Social Coordinator and teacher in the school
- Ms. Avital Barkat- Auxiliary staff member
- Ms. Ayala Cohen – Teacher/Nursery Caregiver in the Day Care Center.

Award for Recognition

- Ms. Yafa Uliel – Cleaning services
- Teacher and caregiver following retirement age.



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The ceremony began with a farewell to Sigal Hershkovitz, who has moved to Nahariya. Sigal, the Coordinator of Resources, was responsible for enrolling students, marketing and advertising, organizing the Friends of WIZO, Quality Coordinator, and, in addition, a talented photographer, who photographed thousands of pictures during different events at the Center.



Ms. Miriam Zerfati

Two staff long time staff workers in the Day Care Center, who began to work here several decades ago, were singled out. Ayala Cohen, who came to the Babies Home, when she was 16, learned the profession here, and became a top nursery caregiver and kindergarten teacher, who demonstrated her talents in theatre and storytelling, and became the guiding force behind

our theatre in the Center. Miriam Zerfati who immigrated to Israel, prior to the declaration of the State in the Maapilim ship, was deported to Cyprus, and has worked in WIZO for decades, retired and came back to work as a nursery caregiver. Miriam shows us all that life after 70 is still full of optimism, love and motivation.

The film, Taxi to Gondar, who was made by a graduate of the Babies Home, Mr. Eli Tal-El, was screened at the end of the ceremony

An Emotional Meeting

Mr. Eli Tal-El, a well known, and successful film producer and director, arrived at the Center, a few months ago, to look for his personal file, from when he was a baby in the Baby Home. Eli Tal-El told me about his personal story as child in the Baby Home fifty years ago, the time he spent with foster families and his army service as an officer in the paratroopers. In due course, Eli married the daughter of Esther Matelow, a past president of WIZO Canada.

Eli is full of gratitude to WIZO, and said that he owed all his successes to the organization.

He is, at present, completing a full length, script of his life., for a drama. The Babies Home, and the meeting that he held a few months ago, are an important part of the film.

Eli Tal-El was asked to screen his film, Taxi to Gondar, in the event celebrating the Awards for Excellency, presented to the staff of the Rebecca Sieff Center for the Family in Jerusalem, which was held on Jerusalem Day. The film tells the story of young Ethiopian Jews who go back to visit their roots in Ethiopia. The film is highly emotional, and has won many prizes, viewed as one of the best documentary films

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 in Israel during the last forty years. Especially interesting was the viewpoint of Eli
 as someone who suffered loss from his family at an early age.

Aviv Challenge.

We had an unforgettable experience this year with the Aviv Challenge group, which is the next generation of WIZO uk, who came to work in the Center for one week. The program to host the group had been under preparation for a number of months – and the program included painting the walls with murals, preparing a therapeutical garden for the children, working in the teaching kitchen and in the literary workshop, etc. This week, which we spent together, showed us the devotion and love that our WIZO members have for Israel and their strong connection with the Rebecca Sieff Center for the Family. The success of the visit will pave the way for new initiatives to strengthen the bon between Israel and the Diaspora, and our WIZO facilities with its federations abroad.



Rosemarin



During the visit of Aviv Chilling and in the presence of the Chairperson of WIZO uk, Loraine Warren,, the group from England and the Director of the Rebecca Sieff Center for the Family, Mr. Kobi Hillel, the director of the School, Mrs. Michal Gottesman, Mrs. Janine Gelley from World WIZO and pupils of the school, a dining room was inaugurated for the pupils in the Cookery trend. In the past the dining room served as an oil storage room, for the central heating system, and was due to demolition. The renovating of the



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 storage room into a dining room, had to be funded which took much effort and we hope that the pupils in the trend will enjoy Rosemarin for many years to come.

The School

A Visit of Soldiers

Soldiers in a Youth Training Course came to the school to present a lesson on 'Preparing for the Army'.

The soldiers provided the pupils with information about their first enlistment papers and a lecture on, ' Army Slang'.

After the lesson the soldiers shared their impressions with us:

Daniel: I was impressed at how much the school invests in its pupils, we can see that the pupils are helped, on an individual level, and it is very nice to see the support that they have.



Amit: I agree with every word of Daniel and want to add how much I loved the hairdressing and cooking facilities. It is here that we can see the investment in the pupils both from the resources entailed and on a personal level.

As well as a meeting with the soldiers, the pupils in the school met with Maayan Stritzel, a soldier who is a graduate of the WIZO school in Bet Hakerem, and studied in the office management course two years ago. At present she is serving as an army clerk in an army base, of the navy, in Haifa.

'I have come from the army base to speak to you and to try to help you from a different angle, from that of the teachers. I tried to show you that not all the hardships were never ending, and they should not give up so easily, and not let one small thing stop them from moving on'.

As a pupil here I had many difficulties, but the teachers always knew how to deal with them, and to help me.

Towards the end of my education I had many dilemmas, whether to learn for matriculations or work for a vocational certificate, whether or not to try both and not to give in to pressure.

My advice is that you turn to your teachers, they will support you, and always be there for you.....'

A Different Lesson

The 'Different Lesson' non profit organization works as a bridge, involving the public with the educational system, through citizens, with different vocations working with the pupils in the school. The meeting with the volunteers of the non profit organization, come to the school, and show the pupils different field of interest, showing the importance of voluntarism, social involvement and citizenship.

In the school we combined the volunteers from the organization with the eleventh grade pupils, in a scheme called, 'the rules of the game'. This program is given by lawyers and lawmakers, and shows the different aspects of the law, whilst stressing those involved in being a democratic society. At the end of the program, which included 12 meetings, once a week, each meeting lasting for an hour and a half, a mock trial was staged by the pupils, in which they discussed the famous case of the farmer who shot a burglar and killed him when he was trying to steal farming equipment, and animals, from his farm. The pupils who took part in the mock trial took the parts of the judges, defense and prosecuting counsels, witnesses and experts. In addition, the pupils toured the law courts in Jerusalem, and participated in discussion and talked with the judges.

This project, is in its second year, and it contributes to the personal development of the pupils.

Personal Commitment

It has become a tradition in the school for the pupils to volunteer their time, talents and energy for the benefit of the community. This year the pupils helped in the Hazon Yeshayahu Soup Kitchen, and a Center for Public Health.

It was gratifying to see how much these boys and girls dedicated themselves, and showed caring and enthusiasm. As well as giving, they felt that they were receiving.

The pupils shared their reactions with us:

Shlomi, 11th grade

During my personal commitment I was happy to see how the Center for Public Health provides services and help the public by sharing knowledge and increasing awareness on matters concerning health, all free of charge.

I, together with my class friends, enjoyed our volunteerism and prepared gas masks for children in the kindergartens, packing them in cardboard boxes.

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In addition, we helped to organize the storage room, and to tidy up all the papers and equipment.

The voluntary work gave us pleasure, I felt their reliance upon me and that they believe in me.

Li, 12th grade

During my personal commitment I helped the needy to fill food parcels, I enjoyed volunteering, and it gave me a good feeling.

Dal, 12th grade

During my personal commitment I felt as if I was helping others and I understood that I, too, benefit. It gave me a good feeling.

I helped to fill food parcels and I cut up vegetables in the kitchen. I enjoyed giving of myself.

Receiving Identity Cards

The subject of citizenship is taught in the 10th grade. During the framework of the program the pupils have lessons on the privileges and obligations in the State of Israel, and the definition of being a citizen and holding an Identity Card.

The climax of the course is a visit to the Knesset, and learning about legislation and government in Israel.

From the Ceremony:

Every citizen has an identity card, which shows his belonging to the State of Israel. Today, you too, become a citizen of Israel.

This demonstrates your rights and loyalty to the State of Israel, and its laws.

You are the future of the State.

I look forward to your being involved and contributing citizens, who worry about the population, and not just about yourselves. Citizens who show empathy with others and know what friendship means, are loyal to their principles, love our country, are proud to carry this identity card.

We wish you luck.



Sport in the School

Pupils in every school love sports. In our school sports has an educational element, beyond that of physical strength, and contributes to a healthy way of life. Through sports the pupils learn the importance of winning, training and excellency, movements, etc. During the year the pupils competed in a number of sports events, and were quite successful, winning the inter school basketball and football championships in Jerusalem.

Shlomi, 11th grade, describes his feelings,

I was happy to be on the basketball team and be part of the school championships. I felt as if I helped to bring the team members closer to one another. The games were challenging and it was not so easy for us to win.



The team was professional and succeeded in overcoming all the problems and win the games.

Since the competition I feel closer to all the other team players.

I am very involved in the school, and love the relationship that I enjoy with the teachers.

They are very attentive towards the pupils, show love towards them and help them with their problems, accepting us for who we are, and always being positive with us.

The teachers help the students to learn from their mistakes.

Arts Day

This year, the Art Day, was devoted to Art and the Community. The purpose was to promote community commitments through art projects.

In preparing for 'Art Day' every class chose a subject that they could change, improve, and add to the school. The aim was to improve the atmosphere of the school, and the identification of the pupils, with WIZO.



The choice was made according to artistic parameters. The results were displayed at the beginning of a 'Happening' in the school.

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The ideas were varied and creative, for example:

- Chocolate Bar
- Theory Lessons
- Ways of Warming Freezing Students in the Corridors of the School
- Good Words
- Tips for a Healthy Life

And others.

During the course of the day, the pupils participated in various workshops, such as: Rhythm workshop, theatre, meditation, circus, sounds and drumming, etc.

The whole day was documented on camera, by a number of pupils, some of whom are attending the community television workshop.

At the end of the day an assembly was held in the school. Everyone saw snippets of the workshops and enjoyed performances that the pupils had prepared for, in advance.

The Arts Day was enjoyable, and brought out the talents and creativity in each one of us.

End of Year Party

This took the form of an 'Assembly of Graduates in 30 Years Time.'

Three pupils meet together, in a future world, and bring up memories of WIZO.

Films, songs, dance routines and thank you speeches, were prepared in advance by representatives of the Ministry of Trade, Labor and Industry, the Education Division of World WIZO, and the administration of the Rebecca Sieff Center for the Family.

We were all moved by the closing words of Ms. Hanni Abucsis, mother of Liron, who graduated from the one year course:

'My name is Hanni and I am the mother of Liron who is completing her studies here in the Avivim course, Liron came to WIZO from a high school that was thought to be a good school, but the question is, 'in what?

*The warmth and love that we got here, we never got there
The caring and investment that came with it, we never got there
Top class teachers – only here, and of course, the Director:*

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Please understand, the high school was close to our home. The eight o' clock morning bell would ring in the school, but there is no enthusiasm.

Today, at seven o' clock Liron is already on the bus on the way to WIZO, as she dare not be late for Batsheva, who is worried about her. If Liron is late, the national service soldier in the school, calls. 'Is everything OK? Is Liron coming today?'

Her average was barely six. Yet within one year, at WIZO, she received a certificate of excellency. That could only happen in WIZO.

As a parent, I want to congratulate you on your successes where other schools failed, and for bringing our children into a place that they love, instead of a place where they want to drop out and stay at home.

I thank you for your efforts and your determination for our children to arrive where they are today.

I pray that many more children have the privilege to learn here, and to receive the unconditional love that you give'.

Day Care Center

Nursery Caregivers Day

On 13.7.2010 the staff took part in Nursery Caregivers Day. Following morning coffee and cake, the girls enjoyed a number of treats including: make up and cosmetics, reflexology, pedicure, hair styling. At lunchtime they assembled in the central lobby, and the staff enjoyed a spread of delicacies that were prepared by the kitchen staff. We danced and sang, and each kindergarten presented the addresses that had been prepared by the parents of the children in that kindergarten.



Events and Exhibitions

The WIZO Day Care Center posts exhibitions during the course of the year. An exhibition of menorahs, at Chanukah time, an exhibition of flora for Tu B'Shvat, we decorate the lobby as Purim approaches and hold a colorful and jolly fancy dress parade.

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At the approach of Independence Day the lobby becomes an Israel exhibition, in blue and white, and the children have a big event in the grounds, at the end of which they release balloons in the air, printed with congratulations to the State of Israel.



Jerusalem Day was celebrated in all the kindergartens with song and dance, to the background of the walls of Jerusalem, and Shavuot was celebrated with the children and staff dressed in white, who were joined by their grandparents, who were given baskets of fruit from their children in a special tabernacle that was built for the purpose.

This year we celebrated Mozart's birthday.

The older children learned Mozart's pieces, and the children danced to the notes of Mozart.

The father of one of the children in the kindergarten, who lives in Germany, surprised us by donating 170 Mozart discs.

End of Year Party – Day Care Center

There are end of year parties in all the classes. Each kindergarten chooses its theme for the party. Amongst the themes chosen were:

- Gan Hadar – The Creation of the World
- Gan Narkis- Naomi Shemer
- Gan Shita – Colors

Each child will receive a photograph album and a portfolio of his work during the course of the year.

Summer Day Camps

We are presently preparing summer day camps which will operate from 9.8.2010-15.08.2010. We expect many registrants, and are preparing an impressive, and challenging, timetable for the children.

We are presently engaged in preparations for enrichment activities such as: a cookery workshop, a music course, and others.

