

Ligdol V'Lifroach – Child and Family Services

- a non-profit organization

Ligdol V'Lifroach is dedicated to helping children of all socio-economic backgrounds in the greater Bet Shemesh area with developmental challenges reach their potential through the provision of quality therapeutic intervention and educational enrichment services in a timely manner.

May 2008
Issue No. 2

Upcoming events

May – visit from Partnership 2000 representatives from all over Israel



June - Registration for Summer Language Enrichment programs



July – August
New activity program with art, drama and therapeutic sport



September
Parenting workshop - Empowering Adults in coping with violence in elementary school children – RBS

1. Ligdol V'Lifroach – Update

Toy Drive in all city ganim

With the support of Keren Shemesh, a foundation for the advancement and development of our city, we have just completed a city-wide toy drive to help establish our Toy Library. This facility will be the first of its kind in Beit Shemesh to allow children to borrow toys and games and develop their play skills. We also plan to provide training sessions to parents to teach them how to play games to get the maximum result out of their playtime with their children.

We distributed over 2000 flyers to children in all city ganim. We collected an overwhelming amount of toys and games at our drop-off points at local matnasim and Mercaz Rakefet.

Many helped distribute the flyers to the 70 ganim. Special thanks to Chedva Mor who telephoned 70 gannetot and to Rena Palmer, Michal Glatt, Miriam Galdor and Merav Dagan who took envelopes or posters. Also thanks to our amazing secretarial staff, Maya, Liat, and Shir (bat sherut) who also helped with delivery in their areas.

We now have the task of organizing it all and would welcome any donations of shelves, bookshelves or cupboards to house the items. In addition, if you have time to give, we are recruiting volunteers to help set up the toy library. Contact Emma Link if you are interested in giving a couple of hours a week initially with the possibility of a longer term commitment.

Empowering Adults in coping with violence in elementary school children

We completed the first part of our parenting workshops. The program is supported by Partnership 2000 and was run over three weeks at the Pisagot Hasheva Matnas in Migdal Hamayim. D'vorah Klein, a child development specialist at Mercaz Rakefet, together with Ariella Lichterman, a senior lecturer and expert on learning difficulties, presented the program. There will be another parent workshop run in September in RBS.

We commenced the first of four lectures on 25 March to

Give a child in need the chance to succeed....



Sponsor a project



Sponsor a child in therapy



Encourage your child to donate a percentage of their bar/batmitzvah gifts to LVL.



Volunteer in our Toy Library



teaching staff at the Uziel Elementary School. Thirty teachers attended the training session presented by D'vorah Klein who taught the staff methods to cope with children with learning disabilities and AD/HD.

Ushi Gross performance – We partnered with Midreshet Beit Shemesh in hosting Ushi Gross, an adult who tells of his childhood coping with learning disabilities. His performance "There is no such thing as a bad child" was attended by approximately 250 people. The performance was in the auditorium of the Eshkol HaPayis in Migdal Hamayim and was followed by a panel discussion with Mercaz Rakefet staff. His book is now in our library in both English and Hebrew.

Money Box project – drop into the Center to collect a colorful money box to collect your small change and help raise money for LVL. *Children giving to children* is a wonderful concept for your kids to feel they are helping other kids receive the assistance they so need.

Library renewal – with the help of Valerie Zwiren we have overhauled our lending library. We have over 100 books in English and Hebrew specifically on parenting and child development issues. This is an excellent resource and we encourage you to take a yearly membership offered at a reduced rate to parents with children in therapy at Mercaz Rakefet. It is also available to the wider community.

Other programs run by LVL –We now work with the Beit Shemesh municipality to provide subsidized evaluations for youth at risk. By formally diagnosing any learning difficulties we can help these kids stay in the school system with the assistance they need.

Our Afternoon enrichment program for Special Needs Children runs in all 10 special education kindergartens. The program is funded by the Helen Bader Foundation and provides story telling, drama, sport and music therapy to 150 children on a weekly basis. The children look forward to our staff coming and have progressed and developed their skills throughout the year through these fun activities.

Overseas Visitors - We would like to make contacts in overseas communities and build relationships with people to participate in our fundraising activities. If you have visiting family please consider a short visit to Mercaz Rakefet to explain the activities and where their overseas communities or individuals can help.

2. Profile : Staff at the Front Desk

Our front desk staff is really the heart of Mercaz Rakefet. There are 5 staff members working shifts from 8.00am to 19.00 five days a week plus Friday morning till 12.00. With the phone ringing constantly and people always needing something, it a wonder we were able to get these short profiles. Introducing.....

Maya Douglan – our Office Manager. Maya was born in Israel to English speaking parents. She has worked at MR for 5 years, lived in RBS for almost 8 years, and has three children. Maya not only loves working at Mercaz Rakefet but also enjoys the professional services for her own children.

Rochel Black has lived in RBS for 8 years and made aliya from the States in 1976! She is a mother of ten and grandmother to two. She is known with many different hats in the area working part time for other local organizations. Rochel has been working at MR for a year and half, is a real computer whiz at Mercaz Rakefet and feels she knows almost everyone in Beit Shemesh!

Liat Levitt completed her sherut leumi at Mercaz Rakefet and then stayed on as a secretary. She is a resident of BS having lived her for many years. Liat is a native Hebrew speaker but has excellent English. She hopes to combine working at MR with her university business studies from September 2008.

Rut Mermelstein may have a familiar face to BS/RBS families. She completed two years of sherut leumi working in Ulpanat Gila and now works at MR as a secretary. Rut comes from Nof Ayalon and is the 7th of 9 children. She loves anything creative and is currently learning hairdressing in her spare time.

Shir Amar is our "bat sherut" in her first year of sherut leumi. She is the only full time worker on the front desk! Shir lives in Beit Shemesh and completed high school at Ulpanat Fierst. She enjoys working in MR and feels she is learning skills to help her with life in the wider world.

3. How to give..

To contribute to LVL – a tax deductible organization (Tax ID no. 580436863) send checks made out to “Ligdol V’Lifroach”, Sderot Tzeelim 6, Ramat Bet Shemesh or by credit card by calling our Center on 02-9920947 to give your details.

To sponsor a project or volunteer please contact Emma Link, Development Coordinator–
Emma@mercazrakefet.co.il

4. How to contact us

Ligdol V’Lifroach – Child and Family Services - Mercaz Rakefet Child Development Center

Sderot Tzeelim 6, Ramat Bet Shemesh

Phone: 02-9920947

Email: info@mercazrakefet.org or visit us online at: <http://www.mercazrakefet.org>