

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. Chanukah 2007 Issue No. 1

What's in a name?

ר יפוי בעיסוק



ק ליניאת תקשורת



פ זיזותרפיה



ת רפיה



Dear Friends,

I am excited to be sending this newsletter to you, our greatest supporters, those of you who have walked through our doors and those who have cared about our progress and development throughout the years.

The upcoming festival of Chanukah is traditionally the festival of light and giving. Chanukah, meaning “dedication” or “inauguration”, is the time we have chosen to launch our first fundraising campaign. This issue is an update on our organization, finances and activities.

As the financial commitment of Ligdol V'Lifroach – non-profit organization (LVL) is well over one million shekels we will be undertaking new fundraising initiatives to raise much needed funds for the services offered through our projects. LVL refuses to compromise on the quality of its service. However, the cost of therapy is not fully covered by the reimbursements available through government and private insurance payments, resulting in a large budgetary gap between the cost of service and the amount available to pay for the service. Our fundraising initiatives will help to bridge that gap.

Thousands of years ago at this time of year miracles happened for “Am Israel” and it became known as the festival of light. Through the projects of LVL we see light on the faces of children and parents every day with each new step, each new word, and each new achievement.

We recognize our responsibility to meet new challenges and needs. Your children **are** receiving our services. Give your Chanukah gelt a more meaningful cause this year by donating to LVL and let us reach the children less privileged but no less important.

Visit us at one of our information stands Erev Chanukah to show your support and/or give generously when our volunteers call you.

I look forward to reporting on how our organization can continue to help the many children and families in our care and make a difference to those less fortunate.

May we all merit to see our children Ligdol V'Lifroach

Ziva Schapiro
Founder and Director

In This Issue:

- **Ligdol V'Lifroach – An introduction**
- **Facts and Figures**
- **How you can help a child**
- **Toys and Games – More than just Child's Play**
- **Contact us**

1. Ligdol V'Lifroach – An introduction

Many of you will be more familiar with Mercaz Rakefet as almost a household name in our local community. In fact, Mercaz Rakefet is a child development project of a non-profit organization.

Ligdol V'Lifroach (To Grow and To Flourish) Child and Family Services (LVL) is a registered *amuta* (non-profit organization) that serves children with special needs, their families and professionals in the field. LVL takes a holistic approach to treating children with special needs, providing a wide range of coordinated therapeutic and educational enrichment services to children and their families in a warm and welcoming environment.



LVL operates Mercaz Rakefet (MR), a multidisciplinary child development center founded in 2001 to fulfill a vital community need for quality care for children with special needs. MR has grown rapidly from a staff of five therapists serving 30 children a month to a staff of 40 highly experienced professionals serving approximately 400 children a month. MR has also expanded its range of services over the past six years, and today offers a comprehensive range of treatments and therapies. MR is recognized by the Ministry of Health, and it works together with the health funds and the education and welfare departments of the municipality.



LVL was established in 2005 to manage MR's ongoing operation, extend its reach to disadvantaged populations and develop new programs to meet the currently unmet needs of special needs children in the greater Bet Shemesh area. In the short time since its establishment, LVL runs an afternoon enrichment program for special needs preschoolers sponsored by the Helen Bader Foundation, as well as a parent education program consisting of lectures and a lending library of over 100 books on topics related to child development. This year, LVL is participating in PACT, a Joint Distribution Committee sponsored program, providing therapeutic services to kindergarten children of the Ethiopian community in Bet Shemesh, as well as a new early intervention program for developmentally delayed children mainstreamed in a regular day care center.



Our plans for the future include maintaining our current programs and establishing a developmental playroom and toy library to be open to all children and families. We will continue to bring you quality professional care and aim to increase our impact on the greater community.

2. Facts and Figures

- 400 children attend Mercaz Rakefet every month
- 80% of these children receive subsidized services at Mercaz Rakefet, as kupot holim do not cover the full costs of therapies
- An additional 50 children a year participate in our scholarship program providing their parents with financial assistance
- 10,000 therapy sessions each year.

Intervention in early childhood can mean a child integrates into the regular school system. Non-intervention or assistance, at a young age, can mean a child remains in special education with on-going learning differences, possible behavioral issues, and suffer from low self esteem.

3. How you can help a child

A. Sponsor a child – we provide services to children referred through chesed organizations and the welfare department in Bet Shemesh. Many of these children would otherwise fall through the cracks, while slowly failing in school.

Give a child in need the chance to succeed by assisting with the following:

- 1,800 NIS psychological evaluation
- 1,200 NIS didactic evaluation
- 750 NIS a month's psychological treatment
- 300 NIS a month of remedial teaching
- 100 NIS co-payment for therapies
- 50 NIS transportation costs.



Consider a Bar/Batmitzvah project sponsorship – your children can sponsor a project.

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

B. Volunteering – LVL needs volunteers to drive children to and from therapy sessions.

To volunteer or assist with fundraising initiatives contact Emma Link, Development Coordinator– Emma@mercazrakefet.co.il

4. Article - Toys and Games- more than just Child’s Play, by Ziva Schapiro, OTR

With the gift giving Chanuka holiday before us, let’s take this opportunity to discuss developmentally appropriate toys. When choosing a toy for a gift, it is important to think about many factors including cost, durability, safety and age appropriateness. Toys can teach children how the world works, develop motor skills and improve language and social skills. The value of a toy is not measured by its price but rather by how it matches a child’s developmental stage and how much creativity it inspires.

Infants learn by stimulating their senses, especially sound, sight and touch. For older babies, pop up toys teach them about the wonderful world of “cause and effect” while developing their coordination skills. Toddlers are busy exploring the world and learning such concepts as size and shape. Shape sorters and puzzles are good choices as well as nesting blocks and other toys that develop the concept of big and small. Early building toys (like large Lego) work on developing fine motor coordination. The classic Israeli toy car, bimba, works on developing gross motor skills and movement in the legs.

Preschoolers are busy developing fantasy play. Dolls, dishes, cars, animals and toy soldiers are all essential “tools” but their fine motor skills need development too, so playdough, Lego, kinex and kapla are appropriate. They are also beginning to develop their graphomotor skills (pre-writing) so fat markers, finger paints, wikki stix and fat sidewalk chalk are all good choices. Tricycles and balls will get their gross motor coordination going while a mini trampoline, ball pit and hippity hop are all good for sensory stimulation.

Remember when shopping to stop and think what your child likes, what activities are easy for him and which are a little more difficult and use games and toys as an opportunity to help develop their skills.

5. Contact us – see last page of newsletter for contact details