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Leo Baeck Moadoniot Four After School Care Centres for Arab & Jewish Children at Risk

Haifa's Kiryat Sprinzak, Shaar Ha'Aliyah, Neve David and Hadar areas are all plagued by poverty and chronic unemployment, vulnerable to crime, drugs and delinquency. Nearly 40% of the residents – Arab, new immigrant from Ethiopia and the FSU, are consistently unemployed, living on government benefits. More than 50% of those who are employed earn below the minimum wage, too often limited to menial jobs due to their poor Hebrew and literacy skills. As always it is the children who are the real victims.

The Need



Without educational, developmental and therapeutic intervention, combined with motivation and positive role models, the children are doomed to failure. Leo Baeck established these centres in cooperation with the Department of Welfare for children whose parents are unable to provide a nurturing home environment due to unemployment, drug abuse, lack of stable family life, and other acute economical hardships. The four centres provide 66 children, all victims of negligence, hunger and/or poverty, with a daily "home away from home" between 13:00 and 18:30.

The Leo Baeck Response – Safety, Support & Full Stomachs for 66 Children

The Neve David Clubhouse in western Haifa serves 20 Ethiopian and native Israeli children ages 2½ – 5 years old. The Sprinzak Clubhouse is "home" to 16 *sabras* and children of FSU parents ages 6-12. The two Gan Hashalom centres in the mixed Arab-Jewish area of Hadar serve 30 Arab children ages 6-12. All four centres provide a welcoming, safe place for the children whose expectations of life are minimal and whose appreciation is so great. After an evening meal at the centres, most of the children simply go home, brush their teeth and go straight to bed. When parents forget to collect their children, the house mothers and Leo Baeck volunteer aides, have to walk them home.

The Centres

The centres provide the "homey", safe atmosphere essential to the emotional wellbeing of the children. In 3 of the 4 centres the outside areas are unsafe and ill-equipped resulting in indoor-only activities. All centres have kitchens and separate eating areas, computer stations, living-room and study areas. Thanks to a local corporate project, the Gan Hashalom storeroom has been converted into a beautiful "Time Out" room.

The children receive a daily hot lunch followed by homework help and learning support. Enrichment and recreational activities are designed to stimulate development, build self-esteem, motivate and help the children understand that education is their key to the future. At the end of the day the children have a light dinner and take home leftovers. Every month, and at holiday times, the children from all four centres gather together at the Leo Baeck Community Centre for special activities and excursions.

Vacation Time

Year-round enrichment and recreational programming including summer vacation when the children attend the Leo Baeck Arab-Jewish Summer Camp and community centre activities free of charge.

Professional & Volunteer Staff in Each Centre

One social worker-counselor, house-mother/cook, German student volunteers, Leo Baeck high school students, University of Haifa and Technion art and speech therapy Masters degree students.

Playground Refurbishment, Equipment, Developmental Toys, Computers - £59,763/340,650 NIS

