

MATANEL FOUNDATION

ACTIVITY REPORT

**Program: Safe Haven STARS Science, Technology, and Academic Readiness
Year: 2018**

Please present your activity report according to the following lines. The whole report will not exceed 2 or 3 pages (as word document).

Name of the Program: Safe Haven STARS: Science, Technology, and Academic Readiness

Year of activity: 2018

Name of the report's writer: Idit Codish

Function of the report's writer: Donor Relations Manager

Mail: iditc@orr-shalom.co.il

Phones: 054.610.3183

Website / Facebook address of the organization: Orr Shalom is in the process of redesigning and rebranding our website. Our English Facebook page may be found here: https://www.facebook.com/orrshalomisrael/?ref=br_rs and our Hebrew Facebook page may be found here: <https://www.facebook.com/orrshalomorg/?jazoest=26510012212111497104110539778545312189955711956501151161098681112112108741196866866811565495611750121106568767815865100122113737311411466110106120118694599109499552751218810477501098312175875312011182904512190101111112109517581>

Number of active participants in the program: Safe Haven STARS ran for 3 weeks over the summer for 67 children; 1 week of Sukkot for 30 children; and 1 week of Chanukah for 23 children.

Estimated number of impacted participants: The number of impacted participants was higher than the 60 originally proposed. Aside from the Safe Haven STARS camps, our Safe Haven staff also learned about how to make educational activities fun, engaging, and interactive.

Give the actually state of the program (where the program stands at the date of the activity report, no more than ten lines): With tremendous thanks to the Foundation, we were able to implement science, technology, and English activities in three of our four 2018 Safe Haven Overnight Camp sessions, for the benefit of over 60 children. The Camp Director, the Counsellors, and most importantly, the children, are all very satisfied with how STARS came together and ran, and we would very much love to continue this program for 2019's four sessions of Safe Haven. We learned many lessons especially as regards the continuation of the English program – please see below, evaluation.

The main achievements during the last year of activity (main achievements, number of events, number of participants, etc.): Orr Shalom's Safe Haven Camp is the only solution for the children in Orr Shalom's 21 Therapeutic Family Group Homes with nowhere to go during vacation periods. Children and youth who are able to pursue science education in an informal setting are able to ignite their latent spark of curiosity, and become more motivated and able to improve their performance in the traditional classroom setting. The children at Safe Haven represent Orr Shalom's "weakest links": These children have no biological family support, they all have extremely traumatic histories, the majority come from a low socio-economic background, and many have some form of learning disorder only diagnosed once they have been referred to Orr Shalom. The overwhelming majority of the children attending Safe Haven face a wide educational gap, a gap that will only widen without the proper intervention. At Orr Shalom we must provide them with further opportunities not readily available to them.

Summer 2018 STARS: In the summer of 2018, 67 of Orr Shalom's most vulnerable and at-risk children ages 8-18 were able to spend their summer vacation in Kfar Silver, enjoying the safe, structured, educational and enriching environment of Orr Shalom's Safe Haven Camp. This summer was the first implementation of Safe Haven STARS: Science, Technology, and Academic Readiness. Thanks to a partnership with Park Carasso in Be'er Sheva, science was presented as fun and interactive – which was a whole new learning experience for our children! At Park Carasso, all of the exhibitions have been designed as games; fully interactive, fun and thought provoking, pushing children's imaginations in efforts to deepen their love of Science through the use of a unique educational model. Our entire camp visited Park Carasso three times over the course of camp, for three full-day (8 hours per day) immersive science experiential learning. In addition, Park Carasso came to Safe Haven twice, for two 5-hours sessions. In addition to various interactive science experiments, our campers also had the opportunity to learn all about 3D printing, its technologies, processes, and techniques. All campers designed and printed something for themselves, from start to finish. Our Camp Director said that before the sessions there was negativity from the children about doing educational activities, but that once they had participated their attitude changed and they all participated and reported back that it was a good experience that encouraged them to think differently about learning. Our proposed partnership with Kol Hanearim was unfeasible as the students were unable to join our camp at the appointed dates and there was no time to train them. Thus the summer focused on science and technology as we found another solution for English, which led us to hiring two English teachers to implement the activities for the next two sessions. Over the summer, English was presented in a more informal manner through several English-speaking activities including a full day Judo class with a Judo master from Korea, a breakdance class, and a spa day. As part of their English exposure they also learnt a song in English which they sang at the visitor's day.

Sukkot 2018 STARS: 30 children attended our Sukkot session. One full 8-hour day session was held at Carasso, which included visiting 20 different stations. Each station was interactive and the children particularly enjoyed the DNA station and the station where they got to virtually dissect a heart. English activities were led by a creative and energetic professional English teacher. The English sessions were held for each of the three different age groups, centered on games and music, movement and drama, and food and cooking. As this was vacation, and as our children oftentimes struggle in school, we did not want to focus on frontal teaching, but rather on fun, interactive approaches to improving English-language skills. For instance, in a workshop centered on song, the children watched children their own age on the television show

“America’s Got Talent,” and then were challenged to write their own songs using new words they had learned. In the cooking workshop, the children made cookies in the shapes of English letters and tried to write out words before eating them. In this way, our English teacher felt that she was reaching the children, and making it an enjoyable, non-school-like environment conducive to learning new skills and ensuring a level of comfort for practicing these skills.

Chanukah 2018 STARS: Chanukah’s English activities were run by Kara Aharon of English if Fun (<https://www.englishfun.net/about-he.html>); these were more successful than the Sukkot sessions English activities (which themselves were an improvement on the summer’s activities – showing positive growth and movement to developing a comprehensive English program). Wherever possible we introduced English, movies, songs and games throughout the sessions. Chanukah’s science activity was a day outing to the Science Garden at the Weizmann Institute where they enjoyed a guided tour as well as hours spent exploring the exhibits.

The evaluation (methodology, results, comparisons with the precedent year, and conclusions for the future...): As this is our first year implementing real educational content within our Safe Haven Camps, we were able to get very positive feedback. There were some challenges along the way. One main challenge was that the children were very reluctant to study but once they understood that all of the activities had a fun element, they were happy to participate and were always satisfied afterwards. Our staff learnt to talk a new language to them to encourage participation and it paid off in the end. Our internal staff evaluation has led to some conclusions both regarding Science and English, which will guide the advancement of the program in the future (see below). Our external evaluation – in terms of formal and informal reports from the campers themselves – is heartening, and is attached as our Evaluation Report (PDF) to this document. On the whole, the feedback from the children was enormously positive regarding Science and Technology, which English was more challenging to entice the children but we found interactive ways to ensure that we taught English as well.

Provisional guide lines for the advancement of the program in the next year: 2018 STARS was a highly successful opening in terms of developing our campers’ interest in and affinity to science and technology and academic readiness. We now know more about how to interact educationally with the children while ensuring a fun vacation experience. Safe Haven cares for Orr Shalom’s most vulnerable children, and while caring for their material and emotional needs we were also able to considerably upgrade the camp in order to impart valuable knowledge, skills, and tools -to the children who would most benefit from this type of upgrade. We exposed them to subjects that they had not previously considered interesting, and engaged them in new and positive ways.

Pending a renewal from the Nitzan Matanel Foundation for Safe Haven STARS in 2019, we would love to run with this opening and use it to delve deeper into the world of technology and science *and* English, together in one program. We are currently in discussions with Big Idea to develop a comprehensive program that will combine English studies together with science and technology at their campus. We are investigating a program which will allow us 3-4 full days of English at Big Idea, and 6-8 days of Science and Technology at Big Idea. In order to maximize our campers’ interests whilst still remaining a safe haven and a fun place to be during vacation. In 2019 we plan to spend maximum of 15 days dedicated to Science, Technology, and English, out of the 42 days of Safe Haven (over 4 sessions throughout the year).

Please join the Evaluation Report, the Financial Report and the list of the participants to the program (as PDF documents) Please see attached; we cannot provide names of participants as they are minors and their privacy is ensured via the Ministry of Welfare, with whom we must legally comply.

Please join photos – as JPG files – and any link or any other document connected to the program which will seem to you relevant – as PDF document. Please see attached.

Please join a 5 minutes movie which presents your institution and the particular project supported by the Matanel Foundation. The movie should be accessible to the philanthropic world and to other potential donors. Please see attached.