

## PERACH ZAHAV MATANEL - ACTIVITY REPORT (2018-2019)

IT HAS BEEN A GREAT YEAR!



We are all excited and already getting ready for another!

There are 200 elderly under welfare care in Mitzpe Ramon, with many more who cannot be reached due to a lack of time, resources, staff, funds and cooperation. Thanks to the **Perach Zahav Matanel** project and the students work, there has been significant change, the project has proven to be highly effective!

The social worker was eager to come to the summery meeting. She concluded that the year was a great success. Some elderly residents that she could not get in contact with for years have been reached thanks to the **Perach Zahav Matanel** project. She explained the complexity of the project and reinforced its importance. She described the students participating as "**my eyes**" for what goes on in the house – giving the ability to know what actions need to take place, which are often crucial. This would have not been possible for those elderly residents who would not let others in otherwise.

The students added that they now understand and connect with the importance of this project. They explained that in many situations they were able to help them in different aspects:

### **RELIEVING LONELINESS**

One of the students regularly visits an elderly woman who cannot move. She described that on entering her house it was always dark. She draws light into the house as the elderly woman gradually opens up to her, telling her life story repeatedly. The student explained that she now realizes how much good it does when she sits beside her and listens.



Another student visits a woman who cannot leave the house. Though she is lively, she lacks things to keep her active. The student decided to organize a cooking spree, making together food delicacies that she enjoys.



### HYGIENE AND HEALTH

One of the students visits an elderly woman aged 96- a Holocaust survivor, she was very lonely, and all her friends have passed away. The students described her house being very dirty, the floor black from filth and the air, stuffy. Thanks to her observations, **Perach Zahav Matanel** and the social worker can continue to take the appropriate action to improve her life.

Another student comes to her elderly woman with her child. She described a great friendship between them, the elderly woman sees the child as if he was her own grandchild. The student realized that the elderly woman was having a lot of trouble with her back, her sofa being the key culprit. The **Perach Zahav Matanel** project is working to provide her with a new and comfortable sofa.

### PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL HEALTH

We are fortunate enough that a student couple visits an elderly couple regularly. The husband suffers from Parkinson's disease and often faints for 20 minutes, he used to put on Tefilin and go to shul every day. Since the disease, he feels very down and stays in bed. His wife, used to be very active, but since her husband's disease, she will not leave him- even when the students come to relieve her. Moreover, she has almost lost her sight entirely. The students described their success in drawing the elderly man out of bed, encouraging him to put on Tefilin, walk around for a bit and even go to shul- which meant a lot to him. The students bring their baby along on their visits, where the elderly couple feel free to give them advice to help raise the young one. These visits make them so happy and eagerly awaiting the next one.

Another student explained that he visits his elderly with his 2-year-old son. The elderly man lives with his daughter who has a son with special needs. The student often likes taking the elderly man out of the house, on a short walk around the Ramon Crater and often drives him to visit his other children who live in the area.

## **LIFE LESSONS AND INTERACTIVE HISTORY**

We have been fortunate enough that the local elementary school has taken upon itself a special project where 16 pupils (aged 12-13) in four groups visited 10 elderly residents once a week throughout the year. Their mission was to spend time with them, help them and document their life stories. They have released a booklet. In return, the **Perach Zahav Matanel Project** has provided their class with one grant (2,500) that was used for special afterschool activities and prizes during the school year.





## PERACH ZAHAV MATANEL (2018-2019) - EVALUATION REPORT



### **SUMMARY**

- 13 academic students
- 16 elementary school pupils (aged 12-13) – 4 groups
- 1 Coordinator – Shira Darmon
- 15 local elderly reached

### **ACHIEVEMENTS**

**Perach Zahav Matanel** has succeeded in:

- Relieving loneliness and encouraging activeness.
- Improving health and living conditions.
- Reaching out to elderly that were not cooperating with the welfare services.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Attendance by the students and elementary school girls was brilliant! 92% over the course of the year.

### **DIFFICULTIES**

Some of the elderly become very sick during the year or can forget about the visits (even after constant reminders) and sometimes it just doesn't suit them.

There were two situations where we had to assign a different elderly resident to students due to a lot of discomfort on both sides. This sometimes takes time, so the students spent a few hours at the "Golden Age Center" entertaining the many elderly there as they awaited their newly assigned elderly resident.



## **FUTURE DEVELOPMENT**

On many occasions, we noticed that the elderly's home could use small renovations that **make a big difference**. Things such as putting up shelves, painting, moving heavy things or removing clutter. This year we opened an experimental project called the "**Youth Scout Renovation Project**". It involved these renovations and of a rundown park for the elderly to enjoy. It is in coordination with the municipality and the youth receive professional guidance before and during renovations.

**The youth in Mitzpe Ramon (including youth at risk) have done an amazing job during the last year! They also really enjoy it! It is an opportunity for them to use their energy in a positive framework and to give back to the town.**

We feel that it would be **most fitting** to put next year's project under the **Perach Zahav Matanael Project**.

