

MATANEL FOUNDATION

ACTIVITY REPORT

Program: *Employment opportunities for Teens and Adults with disabilities*

Year: 2018-2019

Name of the Program: Employment opportunities for Teens and Adults with Disabilities ages 18-80

Year of activity: 2018-2019

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Number of active participants in the program: **127**

Estimated number of impacted participants: **92**

Where does the program stand at the date of the activity report:

Thanks to the Matanel Foundation, our professional staff was able this year to run a long and intensive learning and experimenting program based on communication, employer-employee relations, accepting authority, solving problems, using money, reading a slip, and more. Every workshop took place in the respective schools and/or employment centers as well as in our group homes or in an outside location. The sessions included the learning of new concepts and skills, therapies, practice, workshops and lectures. During this process, our participants have also participated in culinary courses, computer courses, as well as manual and mechanical sewing courses. And finally, at this date our trainees became involved in many jobs such as in Restaurants, Public Kitchens, Ballrooms, Dorm Kitchens, Offices, Hospitals, Old Age Homes, Schools etc.... We also used this opportunity, to strengthen and remind the essential "rules" of how to behave at a workplace to some of our protégés who already work but were either potential to be fired or didn't behave the way they should.

The main achievements during the last year of activity

Our objectives were to provide our teens and adults with pre-employment preparation and professional in the following areas:

1. Baking and cooking
2. Secretarial posts
3. Sewing and embroidery

The Process

EVALUATION

The first step that was taken in the process was to make a thorough evaluation of all our protégés to see which of them were cognitively and emotionally capable of undergoing employment training and more importantly capable of working at an external work place. We also checked with those who already work if they were happy at their workplace, if they had more potential to either switch to another field or add on another job. This evaluation was done by our professional staff including psychologists, occupational therapists, speech therapists, teachers, headmasters and the director of the employment center also using input by the various employment counselors.

Once we had a group of protégés who were deemed suitable to undergo employment training, we interviewed each member, to discover their preferences and discuss with them which course would be most suitable and beneficial for them, where their strengths lie and which course is most attractive in their eyes. In this way, coupled with a form that we asked our employment counselors to fill in concerning each protégé in this group, we divided up the protégés into the various courses which we will discuss below.

OVERALL EMPLOYMENT TRAINING

The next step was to train the protégés in the fundamentals of holding down a job. To this end several workshops were held in the various aspects which would prepare them for working at an external job beyond the protective walls of the school and the employment center as well as to those who already had a job but were not sure to keep it. To those we actually also gave some training to renew the "how's and the whose" of keeping a job and not being fired.

- a. **Interpersonal Relations** – how one speaks to a superior versus work mates versus customers. Customer relations. What may be said and what not. What should be only said to the nearest and dearest versus general neutral topics of conversation that are suitable to be discussed with other people. The protégés practiced role play, enjoyed quizzes and social games geared to train them in this area of appropriate conversations and actions.
- b. **Hygiene** – This vital topic was covered extensively, with several workshops held by our social workers with slideshows and songs, social games and more training them in basic hygiene skills such as teeth brushing, regular washing, haircare skin care etc. We also had the advantage of using the in house beauty parlor donated to us by L'Oréal, where the beautician gave sessions on skin care and basic make up skills.
We also held a styling sale where each protégé was set up with a stylist who helped her shop for suitable work clothes and accessories so that they can appear well kempt and respectable at the work place.
- c. **Safeguarding**- This important topic was also extensively covered by our social workers in separate workshops geared to training the men and women – and specifically our pupils - in appropriate behavior as well as warning signs and what to do in the event of an attack at the workplace, in the street, on the bus or even at home.
- d. **Money handling** – The protégés learned to appreciate the value of money in general and then we differentiated between one's own money and others', how to budget, how to put away for savings and the importance of doing so. They then went on to learn the importance of transparency when dealing with other people's money at work. They practiced taking money and giving change etc.

EMPLOYMENT TRAINING COURSES

1. Confectionary, baking & cooking section:

The courses were divided into theory and practice.

At first we held workshops to teach them the theory of cooking which were run alternately by a teacher, an occupational therapist, an employment counselor and a chef. These covered the following topics:

Risk Management – safety in the kitchen, allergies, sharp appliances, fire safety etc.

Hygiene – how to handle food, their own appearance when handling food (gloves, hair covered etc.) and the appearance of the food (appetizing and aesthetic) as well as how to check best before dates etc.

Control and supervision – when and what to keep, when and what to throw, how to check best before dates, quantities: too much = waste, too little = not enough, quality.

Planning – how to stick to a timetable, planning preparation time, preplanning for events and regular meals.

Once they had learned a portion of the material we started the practical course which was held in our brand new industrial kitchen at the employment center as well as in different apartments and also in the brand new kitchen at the Gesharim school for the grown-up pupils; here the women could practice what they were taught while learning the ropes of how to prepare food, peel and chop vegetables, use various electrical appliances to chop, mix and blend, and lastly how to sauté, cook, fry, simmer and the differences between them.

The sessions in the kitchen gave the women enormous pleasure and satisfaction as they helped the chef prepare the lunches for all the women at the center and the girls at school, by peeling, chopping and cooking as well as clearing away the mess, washing dishes and putting away all ingredients. They also took some food home to impress their families. These vital skills were drilled into them as it is part and parcel of any kitchen job and the women were trained to check themselves at every point to make sure they have everything they need on hand and once they used all their ingredients and have finished preparing the dish, to put away all ingredients, wash the dishes and leave a sparkling clean counter.

Each week the women and the girls were taught a different dish. At first simple salads, then various side dishes and lastly mains and desserts. They can now prepare a full-fledged meal with all their recipes written down with clear instructions so that they will be able to always refer back to them when necessary.

2. **Secretarial section:**

This course was also divided into theory and practice.

The courses were taught by a math teacher, a language teacher, a speech therapist, a psychologist and then a computer teacher. The topics covered were:

Conversation Practice – The women practiced how to speak distinguished and clear, how to use correct and appropriate language, how to hold phone conversations, how to moderate their tone and speed and more.

Mental Arithmetic – Here they practiced simple sums using addition, subtraction and multiplication giving them the skills to cope with various challenges they could face on the job requiring them to be able to make quick oral math exercises.

They then started the practical courses where they were taught basic computer skills how to type, how to use Microsoft Office – Emails, Word, Excel and Outlook. They practiced writing letters and learned how to send and receive emails. They practiced making phone calls using correct phone etiquette, and were taught and trained how to go to the post office, to send mail, buy stamps and other similar jobs. They learned how to check inventories and make lists and how to print labels, how to prepare mail

merges for mass campaigns, how to insert letters with head letter in an envelope, how to fold letters, how to record online, how to scan etc.... They also learned how to receive stock orders and send out goods too. The training also included on hand training in our offices giving them the opportunity to make phone calls, type letters and help send out receipts and letters in the mail.

An example of a success story from this course is Dassy, a high functioning member of our employment center. Dassy had a phobia of working off site and insisted on staying all day at the employment center. As a result, instead of progressing she started regressing; behaving childishly and not fulfilling her potential. Using Ohel Sarah's Behavior analyst, the evaluation he made was that her fear of changes was inhibiting her progress and this caused her to fail again and again at her jobs. We decided – thanks to the Matanel grant - to give her some intensive one on one employment training with slow exposure to the workplace so she could overcome this fear. The first step was to inform Dassy that the Supervisor of Ohel Sarah demands her receiving employment which left her no choice but to cooperate and start the process. She was enrolled by her choice in the secretarial course and slowly but surely gained confidence that she could leave the center. Each training session and "field day" saw her resistance slowly melting. Towards the end of the course we received a job offer highly suitable to her strengths, as a secretary in a stationary store where she would do secretarial work as well as inventory checking. She started out for just one or two hours a day, with an employment counselor on site to help her ease into the job. As she got acquainted with the superiors and workmates, with her counsellor on hand to relay her fears, the phobia started receding and she learned to enjoy her work. She is doing very well at this job and is learning to be flexible and work extra hours when necessary and best of all we can see how she has matured and no longer clings to her childish ways which she used as her coping mechanism. She now has acquired better and more mature coping mechanisms and is progressing beautifully becoming truly integrated into society.

3. Sewing and Embroidery section:

We started the training of our younger and older protégés together at our school Gesharim as we opened a new art and sewing room. They were trained from scratch the various skills needed to sew. They first learned to recognize the various tools and what they are used for. They then started by threading a needle and sewing basic stitches. The next stage was learning to sew buttons and then how to thread elastic which brought them to be able to mend clothes.

Slowly but surely they mastered these fine motor skills needed to succeed. all along with encouragement and patience. They learned to be **patient** and **consistent** vital skills needed to succeed in sewing. It was also amazing to see how they youngest helped the older to get over challenges. They learned to check their work at every stage and if necessary to undo and start from scratch recognizing that that is the secret to success and overcoming their feelings of frustration when this happened.

The next stage was mastering the sewing machine; this opened up for them more possibilities such as sewing hems. At this point they were encouraged to bring some clothes from home to be fixed. One of the girls – whose siblings were always rather embarrassed of her - brought her brother's trousers in order to fix them. As she brought them back home fixed, her siblings couldn't believe that she was capable to do so and she became the "queen" of the house.

The next big step was learning to sew with a pattern. This took a long time as it needs intense precision and multiple motor skills but by now they all had already 'stretched' their patience muscles and this helped them to patiently try again and again practicing the tips they received until they succeeded.

The teachers of the pupils say that this training changed and matured them greatly and in general they have become more patient and stable all around, able to postpone gratification and work on long term projects. At this date they are working on the preparation of costumes for the different parties that take place at school (Hanukah, Purim, Bat-Mitzvahs etc). Regarding our older protégés – women and men – thanks to this intense training and preparation, some of them were hired in hospitals and in laundries as well as in local businesses in that field. The cherry on the cake of this new section, was the opening this year of a new employment center where we decided thanks to the donation of the Matanel foundation to teach them – girls and boys - how to "fashion" tziziot. We also used this opportunity to train some of our "older" protégés who worked in some workplaces that didn't fit them anymore to do a "career change" and found them some new workplaces in that field according to their abilities. It also helped them to have a new hobby and to do some sewing and knitting in the evening at home.

RESULTS

The main achievement of this program in our eyes is that we succeeded to integrate our participants into Israel's mainstream workforce, but also to have them participating in "regular" courses that were open to the community together with people that have no disabilities.

We also noticed that this year we were asked by some employees to hire some of our protégés which never happened before as we were always the ones who were "begging them" to offer them a job! Hindy, for example, a manager of a very famous soup kitchen in Bnei Brak, was so happy about the training of our protégés that she told others – who were not part of Ohel Sarah and wanted to work there - to come and get the same pre-employment preparation training at Ohel Sarah – if not she would not hire them."

There is no doubt, that thanks to the Matanel Foundation, our protégés are finally becoming integrated in the local community by being accepted and appreciated in an environment of dignity and respect despite their limitations.

CONCLUSION:

The evaluation (methodology, results, comparisons with the precedent year, conclusions for the future):

Our methodology is that we are training them first of all "in house" where they feel protected and "at home". The participants have received many and varied training over the year which have greatly influenced their personal, cognitive, social and occupational development. Within this very special program, our participants have undergone some training in different frameworks that we have found suitable for them.

The Employment preparation sessions we have offered them were in communication, employer-employee relations, accepting authority, solving problems, using money, and more. Every workshop took place in the respective schools and/or employment centers and/or apartment and/or in an outside location. The sessions included the learning of new concepts and skills, therapies, practice, workshops and lectures.

We gave them lectures about different subjects that were related to their work but also "life tools" as well as a whole safeguarding program which has become crucial today. We also worked with them on one on one simulations, coming up with different challenges and complicated situations. Once we saw that they were ready, we organized further lectures about hygiene, about "styling" namely how they look, how they should get dressed, how to use the money they will earn, how to talk to superiors and to colleagues, how to arrive on time etc.

Thanks to this program, we were able to open two new structures at Ohel Sarah, namely a New Employment Center for men under the name "Mercaz Kedem". The men, who attend the center during the day, come in the morning and enjoy a short adapted study session followed by breakfast. After breakfast, some of the men make their way to their jobs within the community that Ohel Sarah has found for them, some in kitchens of local hospitals and geriatric centers, others at various groceries or other local offices and businesses. Within this arrangement, Ohel Sarah is responsible for the men, keeps in contact with the employers, comes to visit the employees from time to time and is there to solve any problems that may crop up at the workplace.

The remaining men, those who are not yet capable of working off premises, have started this year their "Matanel" training. The men are given guidelines how to regulate their work to ensure precision and neatness, but also encouragement for

diligence, correct time management and proper behavior - skills that are needed for any potential job which they may land once their training and internship period is up.

Once they have mastered the skills needed to move on, Ohel Sarah will help them find employment and continue to provide support to ensure that they maintain their jobs. They will then vacate their spot at the training center allowing new members to join and train just as they did, while performing light jobs on site such as tying tzitziot, packing games and/or other packages.

This program also allowed us to open a New Kitchen in our school and a new one at the Women's Employment Center which is a huge milestone for Ohel Sarah. We have hired a chef with the purpose of establishing a full service training kitchen. He prepares and serves – together with some of our protégées - fresh meals daily, which is a big upgrade from the individually wrapped meals, prepared offsite, that have been delivered at mealtimes up until now. 150 women who have lunch daily in the dining room, all work for a salary either at Beit Batsheva or nearby, but they all come back to eat lunch at the center. The meals are taken in shifts, with all the setting up and clearing up done by the women that have been trained by the Matanel program. A big effort is being made to reduce the amount of sugar, salt and oil in the food prepared in the kitchen, and also on offering personalized menus, such as gluten or sodium free. For training purposes, the kitchen is open to the participants of the Matanel program, under the supervision of the chef, who runs cooking and baking workshops for them. The women are taught how to cook and bake, so they acquire the skills needed to run their own home but and above all to work in halls, restaurants, kitchens and/or cafes. Part of the attraction of having an in-house kitchen, are the aromas and scents which come along with homemade cooking. This, in addition to the usage of real cutlery and plates and to be served like in a restaurant or a hotel, has really upgraded quality of life at Beit Batsheva.

Our professional staff has been involved in the preparation and the implementation of the program, which is supervised by the head counselor, Mrs. Miri Lustig. As part of the learning procedures, all the participants had a pre-internship and internship period with the support and guidance of our professional staff.

Compared to last year, we feel that the generous donation we have received from the Matanel foundation helped us to include also teens in our program and to give to more adults the opportunity to participate to this program. We also were able to give them much more tools to succeed and that they stayed longer at their various workplaces as they felt that they had more experience and didn't land in an "unknown" environment. We obviously also grew in numbers.

We were also able to give to some of our protégés a retroactive training in order to remind them how to behave at work. Thus, we also were able to avoid some firing of a few of our protégés. As a matter of fact, we showed our training program to some of the employers who were happy to see that we invest in our protégés and do the maximum to keep them at a high ethic work level.

For the future, we plan to open a printing and design business, which will be a Social Enterprise initiative to offer high quality products at a competitive price, as well as to provide meaningful, paid work for our protégés and to make a positive impact in our local community. We would like to launch our new initiative at our successful employment center as our costs will be rather low since we do not need to rent premises. We are already working in conjunction with an established printer in Petah Tikva who will subcontract work to us and we already have a pledge from the Bituach Leumi (Israel's National Insurance) to purchase some of the necessary equipment. Thanks to this new initiative we will be able to train new participants to the Matanel program and to provide them immediately with work as it will be mostly "in-house". They will of course do their internship at this established print business in Petach Tikva. Thus we will be able to expand even more the Matanel program and also to continue to train the ones that are already integrated in workplaces in order to keep them all the time updated as they very often need some "push" or refreshment.

There is no doubt, that thanks to the Matanel Foundation many of our protégés are being accepted and appreciated in an environment of dignity and respect despite their limitations.

The Financial Report:

See hereby included!

List of the participants to the program:

See hereby included!

Our 5 minutes' movie which presents our institution and the particular project supported by the Matanel Foundation.

See hereby included!