



Year 2 Report, Period 1

September 30, 2011 – February 29, 2012

The Access for All Project

Support for the Access for All Project has been provided via the Matanel Foundation
in partnership with Ben-Gurion University of the Negev



אוניברסיטת בן-גוריון בנגב
Ben-Gurion University of the Negev



אוניברסיטה
הידע מגיע לכולם

Table of Contents

<u>Abstract</u>	3
<u>The Operational Model 2011-2012</u>	Error! Bookmark not defined.
<u>PART 1- The PUP's Participants</u>	7
<u>1.1 Background and Characteristics</u>	7
<u>1.2 Recruitment</u>	8
<u>1.3 Statistical Data – Characteristics and Segmentation</u>	9
<u>1.4 Collaboration with the Welfare Authorities</u>	13
<u>1.5 Study Groups' description</u>	15
<u>1.5 Special Project – Parents and Children</u>	15
<u>PART 2 - The Educational Program</u>	18
<u>2.1 The Educational Model</u>	18
<u>2.2 The Study Fields</u>	19
<u>2.3 Attendance and Persistence</u>	21
<u>2.4 Evaluation</u>	21
<u>2.5 Participants' Testimonies of Satisfaction</u>	23
<u>PART 3 -The Instructing Students</u>	24
<u>3.1 The Operational Model</u>	24
<u>3.2 The Students' Recruitment</u>	24
<u>3.3 Training the Instructors: The Preparation Period and the Academic Course</u>	25
<u>3.4 The Operational Team</u>	28

ABSTRACT

Access for All (AFA) is an original and innovative initiative whereby Ben Gurion University (BGU) opens its doors to disadvantaged populations and allows them to acquire essential and useful knowledge in study fields taught at BGU. The AFA's participants, young as well as adults, all referred to the project by social welfare agencies, take part in special introductory courses tailored especially for them and taught by BGU's outstanding BA students.

The 2011-2 school year is the AFA's second year of operation at BGU. During the previous school year, 2010-1, about 280 participants have studied with the AFA. This year the number of participants is about 470. (Further details about the AFA's participants can be found in section 1 of this report).

The AFA's target populations are individuals that would have never acquired any education otherwise. These adults and youth have dropped out of almost any educational system and endure tremendous ignorance in numerous and diverse areas. The AFA provides them with essential and basic knowledge in order to enable them to better cope with their daily lives. Beyond that, it seeks to restore their curiosity and joy of learning and provide them with the will and the tools required to keep on learning – to keep developing.

The AFA's participants are inflicted with many hardships, but a major component results from living in an environment that does not encourage learning and does not recognize the importance of education. Most of them have experienced disappointments and failures from their learning experience resulting in frustration and bitterness toward the educational system. The AFA allows them to benefit from a different and positive learning experience, during which they acquire educational tools and develop thinking abilities while learning the meaning and importance of education in general and studying in particular. Most of the adult participants in the AFA are parents who indicate that only now, for the first time ever, they acknowledge the importance of persistence and success in studying. This new perception is something they now commit to pass on to their own children. A detailed description of the

AFA's participants, their unique characteristics and their personal information can be found in sections 1.1 and 1.3 of this report.

The AFA consists of 470 participants divided into 5 groups (an average of about 95 participants per group) who study in introductory courses belonging to one of the three project's departments: business, medicine and psychology. The psychology and business departments consist of the groups while the medicine department consists of one group. A detailed description of each department's curriculum can be found in section 2.2 of this report.

Beside knowledge and educational tools, the AFA seeks to raise the participants' self-image, providing them with a sense of competence and a personal as well as social strength. Through the change in the participants' self perception and society's perception of them, the AFA seeks to encourage the participants into bringing about a significant change in their personal and professional lives and make them full and active members of the Israeli society. Information regarding the participants' commitment to the AFA and the contribution they attribute to it in their lives can be found in sections 2.3 of this report.

The AFA's introductory courses are taught by BGU's BA students studying in the corresponding departments at BGU who receive special training for working with disadvantaged populations. The students receive academic credits for their work based on the belief that academic education should encourage, initiate and advance dialog between different populations within the Israeli society. 20 students participate in the AFA this year - every 4 students teach a study group. The 4 students construct the instructing team, which formalizes the courses' curriculum and each lesson's outline. The actual teaching is carried out by each instructing student separately, facing an audience of 20-25 participants. The instructing students' training program including their personal information can be found in section 3.2 of this report.

The AFA is managed by a professional team, headed by Dr. Adi Koll, the project's initiator and founder, also acting as its academic instructor and overall director. The AFA's BGU

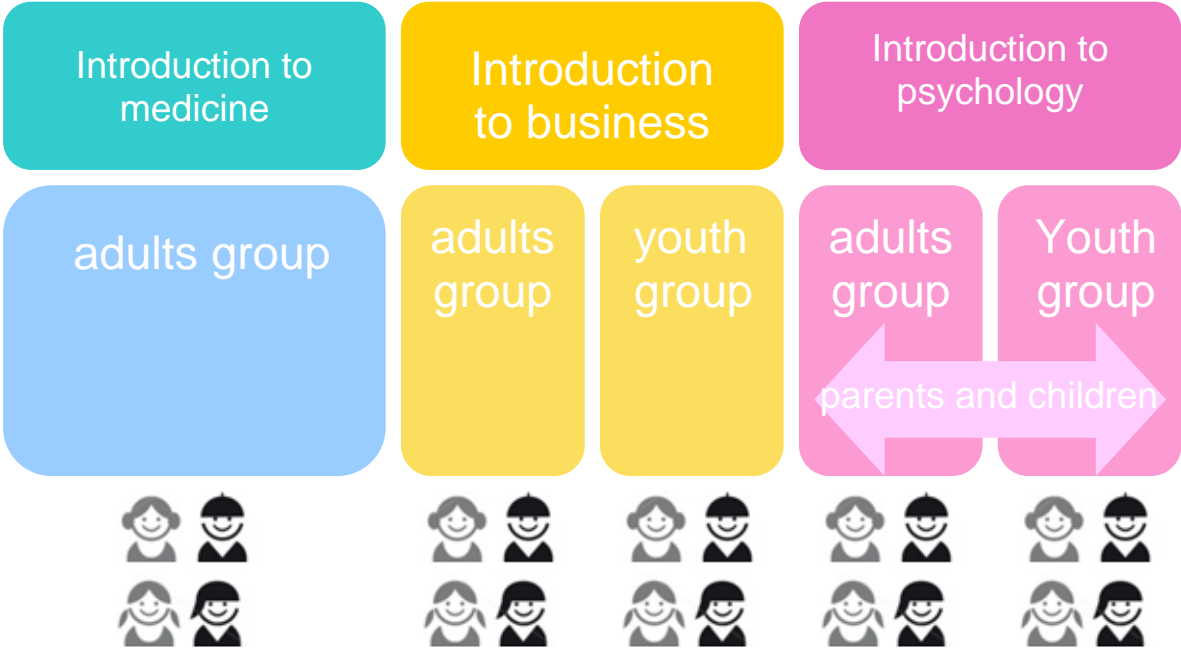
branch is managed by Mrs. Lior Emuna. Under her responsibility is the AFA's ongoing operation, managing its human resources, its relationship with the welfare agencies as well as the university. A role added recently due to the project's expansion is the instruction coordinator in charge of the curricula, improving the instruction and supporting the instructing students. Heading each department is the department coordinator. The coordinators assist the students in formalizing the curriculum, creating the lessons' outlines and mainly tailoring them to the participants' populations. The coordinators also accompany the instructing students in every lesson and act as their confidants. Further details about the coordinators can be found in section 3.4 of this report.

The social workers who refer the participants to the AFA also accompany its activities throughout the year: starting at the recruitment phase; through ongoing accompaniment until the end of the year. The different welfare agencies we work with send a representative to each lesson. The social workers' participation in class contributes to the participants' motivation and commitment and allows the caregivers to view their constituents in a different, more positive light, and in a different environment than in the labeling treatment framework. The social workers also assist the instructing students when dealing with behavioral problems and submit weekly feedback reports regarding the instructors' performance, especially the tailoring of the study content to the participants' abilities and requirements. The AFA's organizational structure and the guidelines to its collaboration with the welfare agencies can be found in section 1.4 of this report.

On January 2012, Dr. Adi Koll and the AFA have been awarded with the prestigious Knesset Chairman Award for minimizing social gaps.

THE AFA'S ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, THE 2011-2 SCHOOL YEAR

The AFA at BGU



3 departments
headed by the 3
department
coordinators

5 groups –
each consists
of 95
participants on
avg. and a
team of 4
instructing
students

20 instructing
students, each
teaches a small
group of 20-25
participants

PART 1- THE AFA'S PARTICIPANTS

1.1 BACKGROUND AND CHARACTERISTICS

Social exclusion is a process in which certain population groups are pushed aside to society's brim and are prevented from fully participating in the social life in which they live. This exclusion is manifested in social seclusion; lack of integration; minimizing of collaboration; lack of influence and power of certain social groups; and in ongoing multidimensional deprivation causing the loss of the sense of belonging and identifying with the excluding society and its institutions.

On a personal level, social exclusion causes a discretion or total loss of the sense of belonging to society. On top of the objective reasons causing exclusion, the person internalizes labels and weakening images and thinks the ostracism he or she feels are real, natural and just. These people's isolation is doubled since they firstly feel ostracized by their fellow-men, secondly they disqualify themselves and accept responsibility to the exclusive state in which they, and often their family, live in.

Furthermore, people suffering from exclusion may feel weak, dependent and with no influence. In their consciousness, these people are invisible and voiceless. This conception brings about a 'silence culture' within the voiceless ones, a very different way of thinking and expressing oneself when compared to those whose voices are heard.

The AFA's participants belong to different Israeli populations; common to all is their existence on the edge of the Israeli society, so they must struggle in order to survive their daily reality. From interviewing and knowing the participants we learn that the problems and obstacles they face include severe financial distress; unemployment or temporal employment; lack of education and knowledge; physical and learning deficiencies; mental stress; lack of stable relationships; seclusion and alienation. All these influence their sensations and functioning and keep them on society's edge.

From questionnaires distributed to the AFA's participants, we learn they share several similar personality traits. Most of them report that they find it difficult to stick to their daily commitments and persist with activities in their personal lives or relationships. We realize they feel instability in their lives leading to bitterness, seclusion, social alienation and mostly lack of faith in their ability to bring about a major change which will carry them out of the

poverty and distress cycle. Furthermore, we realize from analyzing the questionnaires that most participants suffer from poor and low self-image; from a sense of guilt and lack of personal capability; and as a result suffer from frustration and emotional and mental stress. In addition, according to the AFA's team's impressions, its participants mostly suffer from lack of basic life skills - damaging their daily functioning.

Large percentage of the AFA's participants reported that they were expelled from educational systems at a very young age. Some of them can't read or write (about 7%); however they all speak and understand basic Hebrew. In preliminary interviews most participants admit that their past study experiences were paved with disappointments and failures and that they feel deep frustration over it, along with a sense of loss of opportunities to overcome these wide gaps.

1.2 RECRUITMENT

The AFA's operation is enabled due to a close relationship and fruitful collaboration with the welfare and educational authorities referring their constituents to study in the program and accompany them and the students throughout the study period.

All of the AFA's participants keep in touch with social workers working in their communities' social services departments. The marketing efforts and getting in touch with the different social workers are carried out by the AFA's management, following which the social workers spread the information among their constituents and offer the relevant candidates to take part in the project.

Candidates' referral to the program is done according to clear criteria of socio-economical background, social exclusion and a major distress. All of the AFA's participants come from "multi-problematic" families undergoing intense treatments by the social welfare authorities, some for as long as several generations. The family's definition as "multi- problematic" is derived not only from the multitude of hardships and their complexity, but also from them being intertwined, with one trouble often influencing the rest.

Following the AFA's candidates referral to the program by the community's social workers, the candidates go through a sorting and approval procedure which includes a short personal interview designed to test their commitment and willingness to start an educational process.

The participants' acceptance criteria were formulated by the caregivers' team as well as representatives of the AFA. As a rule, acceptance to the AFA does not require any previous education or qualifications, but it does require long-term seriousness and commitment, high motivation and the will to study and progress. These elements are being tested during the interviews conducted by the AFA's coordinators team.

Candidates who pass the initial interview (about 94%) are requested to pay a one-time fee, called "seriousness fee", nonrefundable in case of participation cancellation, for an amount of 150NIS (80% of the project's participants have already paid the full amount). Upon paying, the candidates are requested to sign a commitment contract in which they state that after missing 4 lessons they will be requested to leave the program. A participant fulfilling all of the AFA's requirements can continue studying in the program for as long as 3 years.

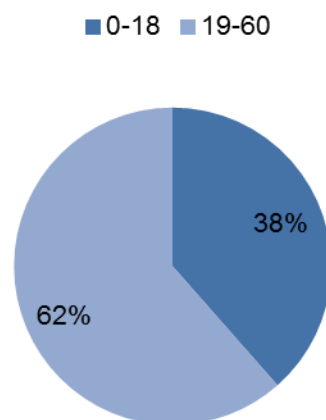
1.3 STATISTICAL DATA – CHARACTERISTICS AND SEGMENTATION

The AFA's participants are divided into two age groups:

1. Youth – ages 14-18.
2. Adults – ages 20 and up.

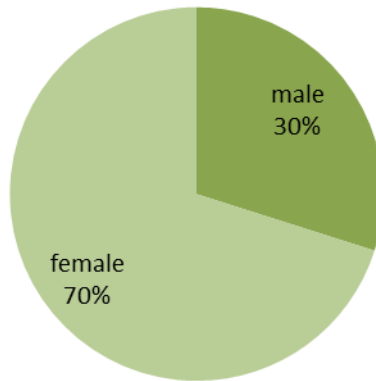
The average age of the participants is 36.5.

participants' age segmetation



Following is the participants' gender segmentation:

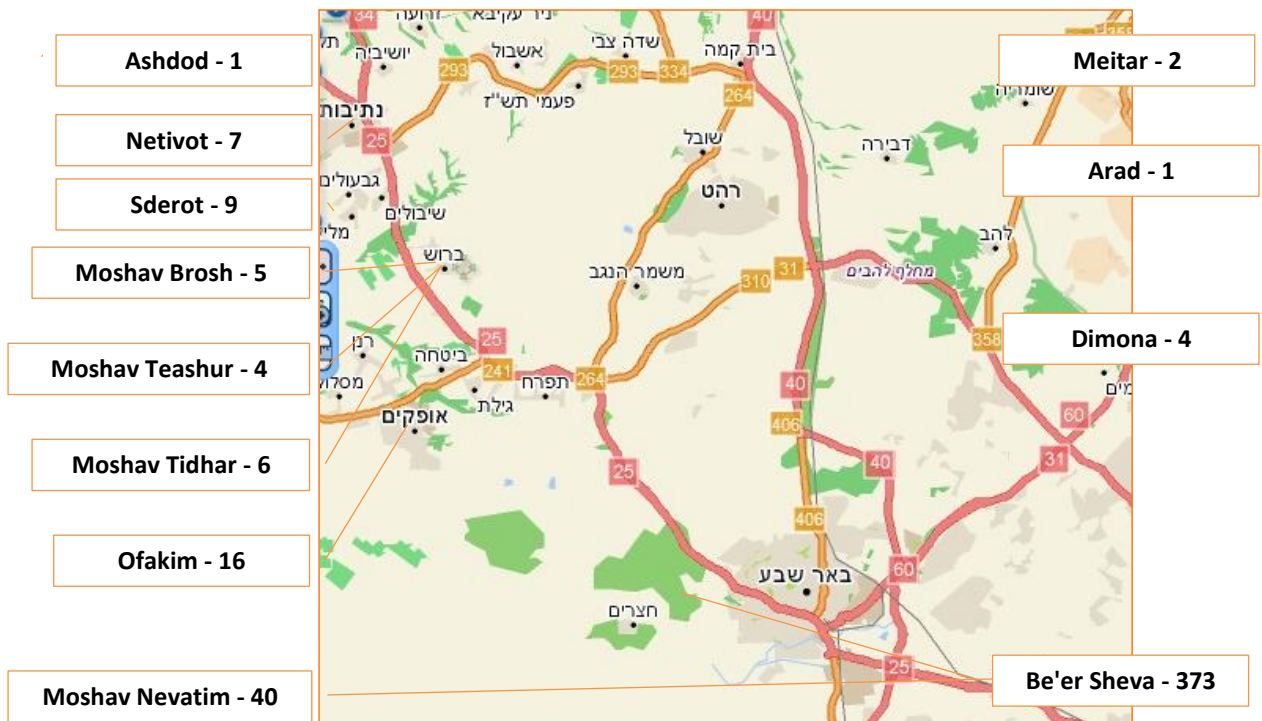
participants' gender segmentation



The participants' division into study group is mostly done according to age or gender, with the youth studying in separate groups. The mixed adults groups consist mostly of parents, and one of the groups consists only of parents of youth participating in the AFA.

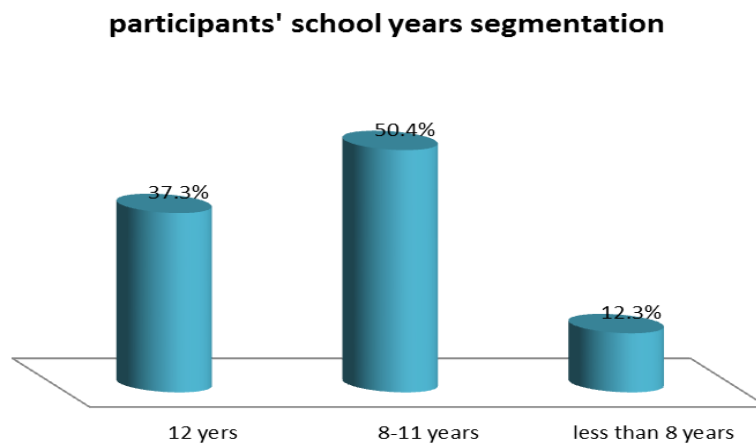
The AFA's participants arrive from the town of Be'er Sheva and its surrounding area. They arrive at BGU with organized transportation picking them up at several locations around town and on the moshavs (small towns) belonging to the Bnei Shimon regional council. This year, as part of the project's expansion, a group of youth (both females and males) was recruited from the townships of Ofakim, Sderot and Netivot.

Following is the participants' geographic segmentation:



The AFA's participants lack formal education. Most of them haven't finished 12 years of school. The average school years of the AFA's participants are 10.2.

Following is the participants' school years segmentation:



Most of the AFA's participants define themselves as employed. About 40% of them do not work at all, while the rest are employed in non-professional jobs such as housekeeping (cleaning and taking care of children or elderly), manual labor (construction, factory work, carpentry etc.), office odd jobs, deliveries and transportation, and sales.

Following is the participants' occupation segmentation:

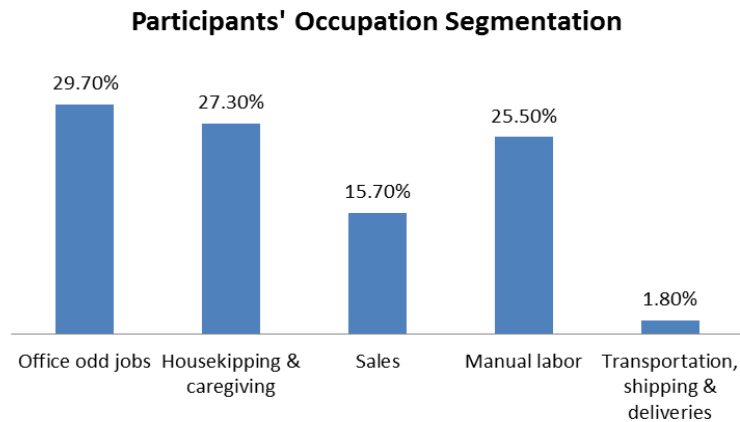
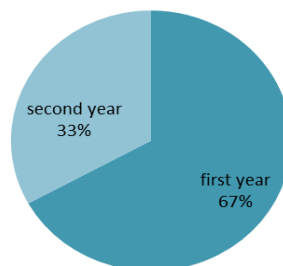


Exhibit A includes a detailed list of the AFA's participants, divided according to their groups and study fields, including their names, ages, addresses, marital status, occupation and number of school years.

The AFA's participants can choose to continue studying for an additional year in a different study field. This year, about 33% of the participants study for the 2nd year in the medicine and psychology departments, among them are both youth and adults.

Following is the AFA's school years segmentation:

Participants' Seniority Segmentation



1.4 COLLABORATION WITH THE WELFARE AUTHORITIES

The AFA's operation is possible thanks to a close relationship and fruitful collaboration with the authorities referring participants to the program. The AFA's instructors are BGU BA students and most of them don't have therapeutic background or previous familiarity with the project's target communities. Most of the participants have led lives full of hardships and quite often these hardships float and return while confronted with the university.

The previous year's experience proves that the more the welfare authorities and the treating social workers are recruited to the project and commit to its success, the more the participants are committed to it and therefore benefit. In the cases where a close and intensive collaboration between the welfare authorities and the AFA's team was kept, the satisfaction, attendance and persistence rates were rising and the positive influence of the studies became obvious in other areas of life. Therefore, in order to guarantee the AFA's success, we formed several guidelines for this collaboration.

Prior to the beginning of the school year, the referring welfare authority is the one trusted with publicizing the AFA between its constituents and formalizing the initial participants list. Later on, the welfare authorities accompany the participants' recruitment stage starting from the AFA introductory events and ending with participating in the acceptance interviews and assisting in collecting the "seriousness fee" from those accepted.

As the school year begins, the welfare authorities are requested to choose a representative to accompany both the participants and the instructing students. This representative acts as the students' liaison and assists in their initial training for working with the participants' groups as well as actively accompany the annual operation. The representative also acts as the mediating entity between the instructing students and the referring social workers in case of questions, problems, difficulties and successes.

The accompanying professional keeps in constant touch with the students' representative (the student teams' external relations manager) and receives weekly attendance reports, reports about the studied content and about any special problem. As part of his or her role the representative passes the attendance reports and the special problems to the treating social/educational workers working with each participant.

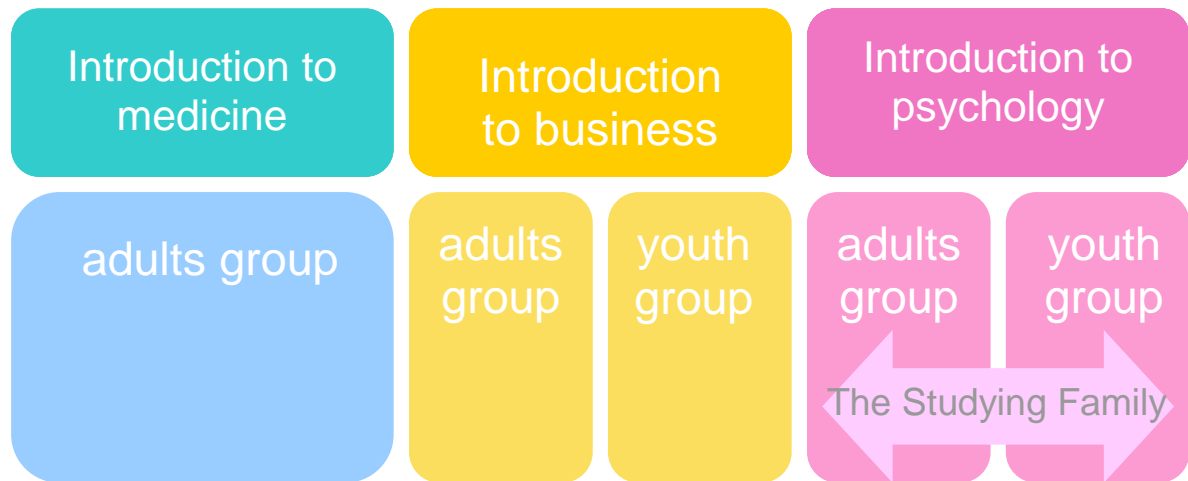
In addition, during the training month (the first month of their studies, before they start to teach) an introductory meeting is conducted between the instructing students and the referring welfare

authority. This meeting's goal is to present to the students the unique characteristics of their participants' group and to assist them in formalizing a syllabus that will comply with the groups' interests and capabilities.

During the school year, the social workers referring the participants to the AFA accompany its operation closely and send a representative to each lesson. The social worker's participation in the lessons (sometimes few in each class) contributes to the participants' motivation and their commitment and allows the caregivers to view their constituents in a different, more positive light, and in a different setting than in the labeling treatment framework. The social workers also assist the students in dealing with behavioral problems and submit feedback reports regarding the instructor's performance and particularly the tailoring of the study content to the participants' abilities and needs.

Exhibit B includes a list of the welfare authorities collaborating with the AFA.

1.5 THE STUDY GROUPS



The AFA's participants are divided into 5 different study groups. 3 of those groups are adults groups (over 20 year old) and two are groups of youth (ages 15-20). The groups' division was based on shared characteristics and on their qualification with the study fields. In the psychology department two special groups take part, constituting together a special project we call "The Studying Family" in which parents and their children study together.

Following are the groups' characteristics:

- **Women studying Medicine** – this group constitutes mostly of women who are violence victims referred to the program by the family violence prevention center or by the Be'er Sheva welfare agencies. Most of the women in the group have suffered before and some still suffer ongoing violence by their partners or other relatives. All women are still welfare dependents today. The AFA seeks to create a supporting environment for those women and to provide them with strength, command and belief in their own abilities.
- **Welfare dependents from Be'er Sheva studying Business** – this group constitutes of adult welfare dependents of many years due to variety of financial, social, mental and other hardships. The group constitutes of in-rehabilitation ex convicts from the Prisoners Rehabilitation Authority; ex addicts from the Drugs,

Alcohol and Gambling Addicts Treatment Unit; and welfare dependents suffering financial hardships which cause them several other problems. Most of the existing programs in Israel treating those populations do not deal with education and knowledge but with aid and welfare and thus perpetuate the social gaps. The AFA seeks to provide them with knowledge but also to emphasize the importance of education as means for social mobility. The AFA constitutes of adults who dropped out of the educational system at a very young age, some can hardly read or write. Through the professional content taught the project encourages those participants to complete their studies and re-integrate into society.

1.6 – SPECIAL PROJECT – PARENTS AND CHILDREN

Following last year and in light of the parents and children group's success, we opened a similar group in the psychology department this year. The parents and children project involves two groups of unique characteristics - a group of youth (ages 15-20) and a group of their parents. These groups study psychology on different weekdays (the parents study on Tuesdays, their children on Mondays), but also participate in joint lessons and activities (tours, joint volunteering days, group quizzes and more).

On top of the AFA's general goals, these two groups share their own unique goals:

1. Starting a dialog between the parents and their adolescent children around subjects taught in the AFA as well as subjects related to their daily lives.
2. Building a bridge between the parents and their children derived from mutual achievement and study.
3. Creating "The Studying Family" – more educated, more committed to its members' education.
4. Recruiting parents and children toward the rehabilitative effort and collaboration with the youth probation services and the welfare agencies.

The recruitment of the youth and their parents for the group is a particularly complicated process. At times, when we found committed parents, their children refused to cooperate, and at times it was quite the opposite. We therefore combined into those two groups people from four different populations:

1. Young men under supervision of the Be'er Sheva probation service and their parents.
2. Young men and women treated by the Be'er Sheva youth promotion unit and their parents.
3. Families treated by the child & family center in the community anchor.
4. Families referred to the AFA by the welfare agency of the Bnei Shimon regional council.

The majority of the parents studying in the project meet the general criteria of the AFA's participants – a difficult socio-economical status, lack of education, a sense of helplessness, alienation and low self esteem. The welfare dependent parents deal with financial and existential hardships immensely affecting the inner-familial relationships, among others, and maybe most significantly – their children. Furthermore, the youth under probation service's supervision deals with an utmost complicated and crucial period in their lives, while their parents, who often feel as if they're paying for their children's sins ten times more, completely change their way of life in order to take care of the children and hence lose more of their financial and mental strength, which was limited to begin with.

As indicated, the two groups study separately, so that each group's study content is tailored to its interests and needs. Although the content is not identical, the subjects are parallel – each week the groups study the same subject but with different particular highlights. Moreover, once every five or so meetings a joint study group is taking place.

In Appendix C is the full questionnaire given to both the parents and their children and the answers' summary to both the quantitative and qualitative questions.

PART 2 - THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

2.1 THE EDUCATIONAL MODEL

The AFA operates according to a unique educational model, developed especially for its participants out of consideration of their interest areas and needs and according to the program's goals. The AFA's lessons are based on a dialogic educational philosophy built around the relationship of “a teacher who's a student and a student who's a teacher” and on reciprocity, listening and responsibility. John Dewey, Martin Buber and Paolo Freire are a few of the thinkers inspiring the development of the AFA's educational pedagogy wishing to bring back curiosity and joy of learning to the participants and provide them with the will and tools to keep on growing and developing.

In order to fulfill that goal, our curriculum is based on the participants' personal experience and on the subjects that stimulate them, encourage them to think and challenge them to do so. The curriculum is based on problem-solving which expands horizons and encourages critical investigation of different social problems. The participants are required to be active collaborators in the learning process and together with the students to form a community – a studying, thinking and creating community.

The knowledge transferred in the AFA focuses on strengthening the learners and improving their ability to remove obstacles delaying them and to influence their lives. This is an essential and practical knowledge which alongside general knowledge is designed for enrichment and stimulation. At the same time the participants receive tools that increase their will and capability to acquire further knowledge on their own (study skills; discussion capabilities; behavior in a group atmosphere and in places like the university; listening to others; accessing resources of information; introduction to different educational environments etc).

Major attention is given in the AFA to the relationships between the instructing students and the participants. As stated, in order for a dialog to develop the study environment must be supporting, open, accepting and patient, and the instructing students must display sensitivity, openness and responsibility. The instructing students should know the participants, their lives' circumstances, their contexts, their histories, where they come from, and to aspire to create relationships with them even outside the classroom's walls.

The chosen study fields: medicine, business and psychology, and the subjects they cover, comply with this educational ideology and its goals. The lessons' structure was also developed according to

that philosophy: The lessons are conducted in small groups (about 20 participants), and mostly while sitting in a circle. The curriculum is formalized in advance but is going through many changes according to the participants' requests and as the familiarity between the instructing students and the participants becomes more personal and intimate. The examples given in class relate to the content world and the daily lives of the participants and in every meeting a significant portion of the lesson is dedicated to a discussion between the group members.

The process undertaken by the AFA's participants is gradual, structured and perennial. During their first year in the program the participants are active collaborators in everything done inside the classroom but are not required to do any homework and their responsibility for learning is limited. During the second year, they are requested to perform different tasks between the lessons and even to teach some content to the group. In addition, the whole group is asked to deal with the practical meaning of the acquired knowledge and to think of their way of action and implementation. During the third year the participants will be expected to formalize personal and group goals inside and outside the study environment and to initiate activities designed to motivate other group members to improve their daily reality and act toward their future.

2.2 THE STUDY FIELDS

During the past school year the AFA has been operating three departments: medicine, business and psychology. Each department offered an introductory course aiming to provide the participants with useful and practical knowledge required for their lives. The courses take place during two semesters and each course is comprised of a total of 24 meetings of 4 hours each.

A separate and tailored syllabus was formed for each group according to its characteristics, the abilities and needs of its members. The syllabus was formalized by the courses' instructing students' teams.

The Medicine Department: The participants in the medicine department study in the "Introduction to Medicine" course dealing with clarifying basic term in various medicinal areas: anatomy, physiology, pharmacology, etc. At the beginning the students conduct an extensive introduction with the human body, its systems and their operation and also common diseases, their treatment and the medical research conducted in order to find cures to those diseases. During the course the participants learn about preventive medicine, hygiene; proper nutrition and first aid and are also introduced to the Israeli health system and the patient's rights law. During the year the participants

conduct tours to hospitals, to different labs in the university's medical school and meet with doctors and professors from the medical school.

The Business Department:

The participants in the business department study in the "Introduction to Business" course exposing to them the market's mechanism and the different components of the Israeli market. They learn about the banks, their operations and how to deal with them, about smart consumerism, how to manage their own family budget and how to start a small business and manage it wisely. The course offers the participants basic knowledge in economy and basic financial terms. It also deals with marketing, advertising and business entrepreneurship and offers guidance regarding the job market, how to look for a job, how to write a CV etc.

A participant graduating the Introduction to Business, adults group, tells:

During the Business course I realized that my family and my life are just like a small business – there are incomes, expenditures and I need to know how to manage them.

I finally realized what are my rights as an employee, how I can find a better job. We learned things that everybody should know...

The Psychology Department:

Participants in the psychology department study in the Introduction to Psychology course, dealing with the question – what is psychology? and demonstrating to the participants its major branches: social psychology, cognitive, behavioral and physiological. The course exposes the participants to different theories by psychology's founding father, Sigmund Freud and other known psychologists and illustrates the daily meanings of their theories. Additionally, participants learn about the practical aspects of psychology such as decision making practices, group dynamics and different options for conflict resolutions. During the course the participants learn how a psychological

A participant graduating in 2010-1 from the Introduction to Psychology course tells:

"I learned to look for information about stuff that interests me, I learned new methods to remember things, I realized things about our daily lives I was not aware of. I gathered knowledge, self-esteem and most importantly I learned to accept others. My point of view regarding things and people has changed. I learned to know me, my partner and my children better through the things we learned in class, the whole family went through a change throughout this year".

Exhibit C includes sample courses' curriculum for the various study fields.

different psychological researches.

2.3 ATTENDANCE AND PERSISTENCE

The AFA's participants are characterized by unstable behavior and thus inability to stick with educational or other programs. The AFA's success is therefore measured first and foremost by its ability to cause the participants to regularly attend class and continue their studies throughout the year. The AFA's team is following the participants' attendance and participation closely and provides the accompanying social workers with attendance reports after every lesson. The courses' instructors call every participant who misses a class and make sure he or she will come back. The department coordinators conduct personal conversations with participants who miss several classes. Each participant is allowed to miss only 4 meetings (out of 24) throughout the school year and even then they must inform their instructors in advance. Accordingly, an investigation is conducted following those participants who have left the AFA and their causes for leaving.

	Initial number of participants	Dropouts percentage	Number of participants at the end of 1 st semester	Number of participants missing 0-1 lessons	Number of participants missing 2-3 lessons	Number of participants missing 4 lessons
Psychology adults	98	6.1%	92	50	37	5
Psychology youth	92	4.3%	88	35	45	8
Business adults	106	2.8%	103	61	37	5
Business youth	100	6%	94	28	52	14
Medicine	100	4%	96	52	35	9

As indicated above, the current school year opened with 496 participants studying in 5 study groups. At the end of the first semester 473 participants are left (dropout rate of 4.6%).

2.4 EVALUATION:

Internal Evaluation

The high demand for studies in the AFA and the high attendance of the courses' participants obviously indicate a high satisfaction rate, but beyond that the AFA checks the participants' satisfaction level and the contribution they attribute to the AFA in their lives through feedback questionnaires conducted twice a year—at the end of the first semester and at the end of the year. These questionnaires also aim to test the participants' level of interest in the study materials and the instruction level and performance of their instructors.

Following are the results of the quantitative questions asked in the feedback questionnaire given to all participants at the end of the first semester (on a scale of 1-7, 1 meaning "not at all", and 7 "very

much so"). **Exhibit D** includes the recent questionnaires and a summary of the answers given to the open-ended questions.

Questions	Avg. Responses
How satisfied are you from each of the following aspects in the program you've been participating in this year?	
General satisfaction	6.4
Food and drink	6.1
Transportation	5.8
The field you've been studying this year	6.5
The location - BGU	6.8
The time in which the lessons are conducted (evenings)	6.5
The lessons' duration (2 hours)	6.1
How interesting does the instructor make the lessons?	6.7
How clear and comprehensible is the instructor?	6.7
How satisfied are you with the way the instructor has been treating you?	6.8
How pleasant the class and group atmosphere is?	6.3
Do you feel comfortable to participate and share in class?	6.2
Do you find the lessons interesting?	6.4
Do you feel you learn new materials in the course?	6.3
How useful are the things you learned in the course?	6.2
How beneficial is participating in the course for its participants?	6.2
Would you like to continue studying in the AFA for another year?	6.7

2.5 PERSONAL STORY TOLD BY A PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT PARTICIPANT:

Uzi. T., 63, divorced, father of two. Referred to the AFA by the Beit Yatziv welfare department in the Be'er Sheva municipality. Graduated his first year with the AFA.

"I was born on March 14th, 1948 in Chile, where I grew up, served in the Chilean military and started studying in the university, but never graduated. I immigrated to Israel during the 70s and here's where my children were born. On 2005 I divorced my wife. I was 57 then, had no family in Israel, I suffered from narcolepsy, had no money, I was deep in debts and had no job. All these reasons have led me to live in the street. With God's help and the help of two social workers who fought for me, I was accepted to "Beit-Nathan" (homeless shelter). I lived there for 7 months until I received a public-housing apartment. During that period I thought a lot about my life – its failures and successes. I realized that all my life I was looking for the bad parts of the human behavior and the mistakes people do and that if I want to receive the good – I must search specifically for it. That year I was also hospitalized because of a heart condition and when I recovered I saw it as another sign for the fact that I stayed in this world to do good. I started volunteering at "Be'er Sova" (public kitchen) and in "Koach Latet" (organization providing home appliances to those in need) where I still work today. A year ago I got another chance which I never thought I'll get – to study in the university in the "Introduction to Psychology" course, something I've always wanted to learn. I never imagined that at my age and in my financial situation I'll be able to study again but the AFA gave me that chance and much more... At the AFA I got not only knowledge, but also new friends, attention, personal treatment and lots and lots of love."

PART 3 -THE INSTRUCTING STUDENTS

3.1 THE OPERATIONAL MODEL

This year the AFA's instructing team comprised of 20 students: 4 Medical and Health Professions students, 8 Business & Management students and 8 Psychology students. Each student instructs a group of 25 participants on average. They are divided into teams of 4 who instruct participants with similar characteristics. Apart from teaching the actual lessons, the rest of the activities such as formalizing the syllabi and tailoring them to the target population are done as team work. **Exhibit E** includes a list of the instructing students for 2011-2.

As part of their AFA's participation the instructing students are required to exhibit high commitment and to invest emotional resources as well as plenty of time in the project. The students are committed to 3 meetings per week throughout the whole year. The first is the academic course taught by Dr. Adi Koll, the second is the team meeting in which all of the "backstage" work and the lessons preparation are done, and then there's the weekly lesson with the AFA's participants.

For their participation the instructing students receive different types of compensations. The Business and Psychology students receive academic credits for their AFA's participation (4 credits in accordance with their department's regulations). The Medical students receive academic scholarship from the AFA of 6,500NIS (they don't get any academic credits since they are exempt from accumulating general credits for their degree).

On top of their training capabilities, their commitment to the AFA and its content, the collaboration and team work - the grades the students receive at the end of the year are also given for their personal tasks and the final assignment – writing a paper summarizing the process they went through throughout the year.

3.2 THE STUDENTS' RECRUITMENT

The students' recruitment began in May 2011. The process included playing a short clip in which students who participated in the AFA last year talked about their experience. In addition, ads around the campus asked students to join the AFA.



The clip can be viewed here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wtZynDOeAMo>

The campaign received great reactions throughout the campus following which we were approached by almost 120 students asking to become part of the AFA. During the month of May we conducted a first round of interviews after which we chose 50 candidates who were invited for another selection round. During the second round the students were required to demonstrate instructional capabilities, originality and creativity as well as team work. At the end of the selection stage 20 students (4 males and 16 females) were chosen to lead the instructing team for the 2011-2 school year.

3.3 TRAINING THE INSTRUCTORS: THE PREPARATION PERIOD AND THE ACADEMIC COURSE

A. The Preparation Period

During the first months of the year the students went through a six-week training period only after which they started their actual instruction. This period was designed to prepare the students in the best possible way toward their first meeting with the participants and it included 4 major components: introduction to the AFA and its instructing methods; introduction to the target population; formalizing the instruction teams; and creating a team work model.

The preparation and training period begun with a 3 days introductory seminar which was held in October in Kibbutz Be'eri in the Negev for all of the instructing students, coordinators and the operational team. Afterwards, the students became more familiar with the AFA's operational team and the educational model behind the AFA. With the assistance of the coordinators team, the students formalized the annual curriculum, learned how to write lesson plans and tailor them to the needs, interests and capabilities of their participants. They went through several instruction workshops with a public-speaking expert as well as several practical tryouts.

As part of the introduction to the target audience stage the students conducted advisement meetings with the accompanying social workers and with past years' instructing students (who graduated from the AFA and completed their academic studies). They toured their participants' residence neighborhoods, met with the AFA's graduates and conducted introductory meetings with the actual participants.

The students conducted 2 additional tours: both to the "Ruach Bamidbar" (wind in the desert) village. The village has two wings – one is a drugs, alcohol and gambling addiction rehabilitation center, the other is a detention alternative for youth. During the tours the students taught several lessons in

their study fields in order to practice their instruction skills and to examine their lesson plans prior to meeting their participants.

B. The Academic Course

As part of their AFA's participation the instructing students are required to participate in an academic course accompanying their ongoing activities and taught by Dr. Adi Koll, the AFA's director and academic instructor. The course is taught in an academic seminar format. The course's instructing method is based on the AFA's educational model and includes, besides discussion groups and joint conversations, reading of academic papers and texts analysis, critical thinking and doubt-casting development.

Exhibit F includes a description of the students' tasks, the structure of their final grades and the academic course' structure and goals.

The academic course "AFA - Access for All" consists of 24 two-hour meetings lasting the entire academic year. The course has several goals, some of which are preparatory but some are aimed for personal development as instructors, citizens and human beings:

- To introduce the students to the target population and to prepare the students for their instructional tasks (teaching skills, interpersonal relationships, team work).
- To introduce the students to educational theories on which the AFA is based upon.
- To examine, formalize and strengthen the students' positions and commitment to social responsibility.
- To critically examine their fields of study and their departments' social commitment as well as acquire tools for mediation between the students' professional world and the participants' world.
- To introduce the students to concepts such as "empowerment", "knowledge as power" and "democratization of knowledge" in several contexts.
- To support the students while dealing with difficulties, questions and problems arising throughout the year.

Following is the academic course's curriculum for the first semester

1

First unit – preparing for the AFA's instructional task

- First meeting: What is the AFA? The AFA's guidelines.
- Second meeting: Instruction workshop
- Third meeting: Introduction to the target population. Social and educational gaps between us and the population.
- Fourth meeting: Dealing with extreme circumstances.
- Fifth meeting: Formalizing the work teams.

2

Second unit – what kind of education do we wish to provide?

- First meeting: Philosophy of education, "Education and Democracy", John Dewey.
- Second meeting: Philosophy of education, "Education as dialog -I and thou", Martin Buber.
- Third meeting: Philosophy of education, "Pedagogy of the Oppressed", Paulo Freire.
- Fourth meeting: The educational framework on which the AFA is based upon.

3.4 THE OPERATIONAL TEAM

The AFA is managed by a professional team headed by Dr. Adi Koll who acts as the project's director and its academic instructor, and Mrs. Lior Emuna, its CEO.

A new role added this year is the instruction coordinator role. Acting in this role is Ms. Noam Izhaki, a former instructing student who previously taught the women group who studied psychology and also acted as the psychology department coordinator. The role was created due to a need in direction regarding the AFA's instruction, since its study content and instruction methods should be tailored to its unique populations. As part of her role, Noam is responsible for approving all curricula, for visiting the lessons and providing feedback to the instructing students.

The operational team also includes the 3 department coordinators:

- Ms. Zlil Rabinovich – 3rd year student, psychology department coordinator
- Mr. Gal Koll – 2nd year student, medicine department coordinator
- Ms. Noa Bar – business department coordinator

