

First Year Evaluation Report to the Matanel Foundation

Kfar Zeitim Residential School for At-Risk Haredi Youth

Give the actual state of the program (where the program stands at the date of the activity report, no more than ten lines):

The Kfar Zeitim Residential School for At-Risk Haredi Youth has finished yet another full and challenging year. This year, the school served 130 boys from Haredi families throughout the country – a 30% increase from last year. Most were formally diagnosed with learning disabilities, often compounded by complex emotional difficulties. In response to the needs of these youth, we more than doubled the hours of our therapeutic staff this year, expanding their hours from 60 hours a week to 140 hours a week, including the welcome addition of psychological therapy. In addition, thanks to the Matanel Foundation and other generous donors we built a new basketball court, which benefits all the students as an outlet for exercise and release of energy.

The main achievements during the last year of activity:

1. The yeshiva grew from 110 students to 130 students.
2. There was an increase in the number of students – from 80% last year to 95% this year – earning their final “professional certificate.”
3. Intensive workshops for classroom staff (homeroom teacher, counselor, and social worker) resulted in a significant improvement in the overall performance of both students and teachers, better connection between classroom staff and dormitory staff and, and better relationships between students.
4. Over 20 students received intensive remedial instruction through the Learning Center, a 50% increase from last year. These students have in turn achieved improved results on tests and other schoolwork.
5. The yeshiva has expanded several of its vocational departments, including the addition of equipment that enables students to apply the skills they are learning to serve paying local customers. For example, the Computer Department established a new computer lab that provides repair services. Likewise, the Carpentry Department expanded its workshop, which increased its ability to serve external customers.

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

As mentioned above, the school has expanded significantly this year in the area of individual instruction. An evaluation of learning-disabled students, conducted over the course of the year, indicated that their academic performance improved significantly after receiving remedial instruction through the learning center.

In addition to hours of instruction, we employed the services of an expert in the field who trained and mentored Learning Center staff throughout the school year. During the first two months of the school year, before the professional stepped in, Learning Center staff expressed frustration and a lack of preparation for addressing the complex needs of the students. After the mentoring process began, staff expressed (in evaluation meetings) that they are better equipped to provide individual instruction. In light of the positive response from the Learning Center staff, we concluded that all school staff should undergo training in the field of remedial instruction. This specialized training will increase their sensitivity to the needs of the students.

After observing consistently low enrollment in science and technology courses (such as computers), the yeshiva partnered with the Nes Technology Company to make the subject more exciting. A group of students participated in courses at the Lehava Center in Tiberias (a project of the Israeli Ministry of Science, Technology, and Space) where they were exposed to the world of hi-tech and the horizons that it opens. As a result of this exposure, enrollment in computer courses has increased. We are pursuing a similar for next year.

Provisional guidelines for the advancement of the program in the next year (please give the number of students, the number of classes and the main guidelines of the project in case where such project is implemented in your school):

1. Grow to 140 students.
2. Increase therapeutic staff, including social workers and a director of the therapeutic staff who will coordinate and develop the therapeutic program.
3. Expansion of Learning Center activities in order to serve more than 30 students next year.
4. Expansion and deepening of the connection with parents.

Main Achievements of Matanel Beneficiaries

Matanel Social Aid

Many of the Kfar Zeitim students come from poverty-stricken backgrounds. At the Kfar Zeitim Residential Facility, they are placed on a rich nutrition plan, the costs of which exceed government allocations. Through the Matanel Social Aid grant, we were able to provide a significant discount on tuition, clothing, as well as a full exemption from medical expenses for 10 students in need. This critical assistance enabled the parents of these students to send their sons – boys at risk of falling through the cracks of Israeli society – to Kfar Zeitim, without the extra weight of financial considerations.

Matanel Scholarships for Excellence

We took the concept of the scholarship fund one step further through “The Dance Toward Success,” an incentive program introduced at the beginning of the year. Every two weeks, small prizes for excellence were awarded to students who made significant efforts and progress in prayer, academic study, and behavior in the dormitory. The incentive program greatly improved the atmosphere at the school and inspired students to change their behavior and delve more seriously into their learning in order to receive their certificates. At the end of the year (July 15), the Matanel prizes for excellence (500 nis each) will be awarded to the 6 students who achieved the highest number of weekly excellence prizes during the year.

Matanel Scholarships for Excellence Recipients:

Aron Oshri
Malkiel Kaufman
Shimon Wolf
Yedidya Isick
Yitzcak Rokach
Moshe-Natan Shore

Matanel Grant for “the Principal’s Dream”

The support of the Matanel Foundation played a significant role in the construction of a new basketball court on the school campus. For the 130 students at Kfar Zeitim, a basketball court is not an "extra" form of recreation, rather an essential need. All youth need sports, but for our students, most of whom struggle with classroom learning, a positive outlet for releasing energy is critical. The basketball court gives them a space to exercise, release frustrations, develop healthy social dynamics, and have fun. This is an essential part in the therapeutic process taking place at Kfar Zeitim.

הוקם לרווחת תלמידי "כפר זיתים" בעזרת קרן מתנאל



With the encouragements
of the Matanel Foundation



