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Midrasha Lemaaseh-2014-2015

Name of program

Midrasha Lemaaseh

Year of activity

2014-2015

Name of the report's writer

Dani Zamir

Function of the report's writer

CEO of the Joint Council of Pre-Military Leadership Academies (Mechinot)

Phones & Emails

Mail: Dani@mechinot.org.il

Phone: 052-2657830

Status of program

For the second year running the 'Midrasha Lemaaseh' program was held in the 'Hadar' neighborhood of Haifa. Every Tuesday a group of some 20 young people, after army service, convened in the neighborhood for a meeting that lasted three hours. The meetings included a studying as a group (Hevruta), and meeting with activists from the neighborhood. There were also two seminars held at weekends during which activities were conducted for group consolidation as well as in-depth and continued study sessions. In April the group decided to establish a community (called Nachshon) whose members will settle in the Hadar and will reside nearby. The group continued to meet on a weekly basis, to study together, and decided to maintain a communal lifestyle (celebrating Israeli holidays together and sharing lifecycle events). Moreover, it was also decided that the community members will work in 'Mechinot'. As of today, the Group continues to function and to meet the goals it set for itself.

Main achievements during the last year of activity

- 27 study sessions were conducted on a regular weekly basis.
- Establishment of the Nachshon community, which will promote development of the Hadar neighborhood and whose members will continue to be active in the lives of Mechinot alumni.
- Acquiring municipal support for the group's activities, through the allocation of a community center in which to hold their activities.
- Holding peak events during Sukkot, Passover and Shavuot holidays. During Sukkot, activities were held for the neighborhood children. During Passover members of the community participated in a neighborhood 'Seder' and at Shavuot they attended 'Tikkun Leil Shavuot' – a night-long study session – in collaboration with the the religious nucleus and veteran communities in the Hadar neighborhood.

Evaluation

Evaluation of the project included two components: questionnaires and feedback conversations. No external evaluation was conducted.

Two feedback questionnaires were delivered – in the middle and at the end of the year. These were designed to compare expectations and actual realization of the program, achievement of the group's objectives, and the satisfaction experienced by the participants.

Also, at the end of each weekly meeting, time was devoted to feedback regarding the program and the progress of the group in action. These conversations helped the group to determine the steps required in order to meet the objectives of the program.

From the feedback process and the conclusions drawn this year it appeared that there was a correlation between the objectives of the group and the expectations of the participants, and a high level of satisfaction with regard to the project and how it functioned. Attendance was high (95% at every session); and there was considerable desire to be part of the various activities that the group participated in within the neighborhood (90%). 85% of participants indicated that the program provides a high quality of important and targeted information with regard to social activities. Participants in the group indicated during the feedback conversations that the program has great potential for success among young people newly released from the army, and students who are seeking a social framework for personal development; as well as being a warm and friendly environment in which to conduct public and social action, with the emphasis on entrepreneurship, growth and communities.

As part of the conclusions drawn from the previous year's project it had been indicated that there was no correlation between the goals of the program and the target audience to which the program had been directed; and that the designation of the project had not been defined. This situation led to difficulties in finding a suitable audience wishing to participate in the program. This year we identified the fact that the suitable target audience for the program is young people after military service, and the recruitment of candidates was targeted at Mechinot alumni / Year of national service alumni, and young people from Hadar neighborhood. Screening for the program included personal interviews to clarify the degree of availability and the commitment that the candidates were willing to invest. In addition, this year a clear objective was defined for the project, and that is communal life group. As a result, demand for the program was high; there was a strong level of commitment throughout the year; and there was a high level satisfaction from the objectives of the project.

Others

Provisional guide lines for the advancement of the program in the next year:

- It is important to clearly define what the purpose of the group is, and to publicize the program among the appropriate target audience accordingly. This, in order to coordinate expectations among group members, as well as to channel allocation of resources for the development of the group – rather than to invest contemplation and indecision regarding the common goal.
- It is important to initiate and sustain large-scale neighborhood activities based on cooperation and familiarity between the group, the activists and local residents in the neighborhood from the beginning of the year. This year most of the activities took place within the group, and there was not enough involvement and activity within the neighborhood.

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