

MATANEL FOUNDATION

ACTIVITY REPORT

**Program: Perach Zahav Matanel – Intergenerational Activities at Reuth's
Subsidized Community Housing**

Year: 2023-2024

Please present your activity report according to the following lines. The whole rapport will not exceed 2 or 3 pages (as word document).

Name of the Program: Perach Zahav Matanel – Intergenerational Activities at Reuth's subsidized community housing

Year of activity: 2023-2024 academic year

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Number of active participants in the program: 136 participants (41 senior residents, 51 kindergarten students, 44 high school students)

Estimated number of impacted participants:

About 285 individuals have been impacted by the program. This number includes the program's active participants (residents, high school students, and kindergarteners), parents of the children still attending kindergarten at Reuth, as well as the children and parents from those kindergartens that relocated to our premises at the start of the war and have since returned to their original locations.

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

At present, one kindergarten continues to operate on the premises of Reuth's subsidized community housing. As per the updated program plan presented to the Matanel Foundation in November 2023, the kindergarteners participate in intergenerational activities with the senior residents of Reuth's subsidized community housing. These activities include holiday celebrations, trips, Kabbalot Shabbat, gardening, and more.

We are also pleased to report that, since the Home Front Command eased its restrictions on working with minors, we have begun partnering with a local high school as per the original application presented to the Matanel Foundation in December 2022. We have recently facilitated an intergenerational commemoration of Yom Hashoah, which included meetings between high school students and Holocaust

survivors residing at Reuth and a joint memorial ceremony. The high school students also worked with the residents to build a community garden at Reuth, where the residents and the kindergarteners will engage in joint activities.

The main achievements during the last year of activity (main achievements, number of events, number of participants, etc.):

The main achievement of the last year of activity is the flexibility with which Reuth was able to adjust the program to wartime conditions. We were slated to begin the intergenerational activities with a local high school at Reuth's subsidized community housing after the September - October holidays. Tragically, the unprecedented terrorist attack of October 7 took place before we were able to do so. The Israel-Hamas war broke out and the country entered into a state of emergency.

The Home Front Command issued a series of regulations, including the temporary shutting down of many of the country's educational institutions, limitations on group gatherings, and limitations on volunteering projects involving minors. For the Perach Zahav Matanel program at Reuth, the regulations meant that we could not carry out the planned activities for the foreseeable future.

At the same time, Reuth was able to help four local kindergartens (numbering about 100 children) that were shut down by the Home Front Command due to their lack of adequate bomb shelters. The kindergartens were able to continue their operations by moving to the premises of Reuth, where they had access to shelters. By doing so, Reuth ensured the children's physical safety, enabled them to maintain a sense of routine during a volatile time, and allowed their parents to continue participating in the workforce at a time when many had to go on unpaid leave due to a lack of childcare options.

With the approval of the Matanel Foundation, the Perach Zahav program was then reimagined to involve kindergarteners instead of high school students. During the first months of the war, our elderly residents participated in the daily lives of the kindergartens, which included shared mealtimes and activities. Three of the four kindergartens returned to their original locations after about two months, while one of the kindergartens remains on our premises to this day. The intergenerational activities with the kindergartens continue and have taken on a more structured format (for the full list of activities that took place during the granting period, see the attached evaluation report). Lastly, over half a year since the start of the war, educational institutions in the center of the country have largely returned to routine. As such, we have now been able to incorporate some of the original program elements involving high school students.

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

Despite the unprecedented circumstances of such a prolonged war, the program reached its stated objectives of (i) improving the well-being of seniors living alone in Reuth's subsidized community housing; (ii) easing their loneliness; and (iii) facilitating intergenerational transfer of knowledge. During one-on-one check-ins with Reuth's in-house social worker, program participants expressed feeling a deep sense

of purpose when working with the children and youth. Instead of being passive recipients of Reuth's services, they experienced a sense of empowerment as their knowledge and life experience proved useful to others. Even those residents who were not active participants in the program expressed that the presence of young children at the community housing provided much-needed distraction during the dark days of the war. Given the success of this year's somewhat impromptu program, we want to continue working with young children in the coming years while also working with high school students as originally planned.

Provisional guidelines for the advancement of the program in the next year:

In the coming academic year, we aim to expand our programming with the high school while continuing to foster relationships with kindergartens through a revised initiative we are calling the "Neighborhood Intergenerational Project." We intend to facilitate joint activities between high school students and seniors, as outlined in the original application, including digital literacy, gardening, and arts & crafts classes, while also coming together to observe important days in the Jewish and Israeli calendar, such as Yom HaShoah. With regards to the kindergartens, we plan to continue the most successful activities from this year, including joint holiday celebrations, trips, and gardening activity days.

This year, we noticed that hosting intergenerational communal activities to which all are welcome provides seniors, children, and youth with a relaxing way to engage in activities they might not otherwise consider, leading to enriching encounters with new people. During these activities, relationships between and among seniors and youth develop naturally – easing the loneliness of our elderly residents and enabling them to feel meaning and purpose in their daily lives. The model we have previously suggested in which specific seniors are paired with specific youth for a set number of hours of activity throughout the year is a big commitment that many seniors and youth are unwilling to make, forcing them to miss out on a program from which they would benefit. The focus on pairing specific individuals for one-on-one encounters can also diminish the communal spirit we aim to facilitate and impede the organic development of relationships. As such in the coming year, we wish to steer away from the pairing model in favor of the communal model we have seen to be successful this year.

Please join the Evaluation Report, the Financial Report and the list of the participants to the program (as PDF documents)

Attached

Please join photos – as JPG files – and any link or any other document connected to the program which will seem to you relevant – as PDF document.

Attached

Please join a 5 minutes movie which presents your institution and the particular project supported by the Matanel Foundation. The movie should be accessible to the philanthropic world and to other potential donors.

Attached