

MATANEL FOUNDATION

ACTIVITY REPORT

Program: Perach Zahav Matanel – Intergenerational Activities at Reuth's Subsidized Community Housing
Year: 2024-2025

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

Please Note: We have made the decision to refer to our services as “affordable housing” rather than “community housing” in order to avoid ongoing confusion. The previous term often led people to assume that we are a senior home, prompting frequent inquiries from those seeking nursing care for their family members. For the remainder of the report, we will use “affordable housing.”

Year of activity: 2024-2025 academic year

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Number of active participants in the program: 302

Estimated number of impacted participants: 416

This number includes the residents, kindergarten children, and young professionals who actively engage in various aspects of the program as well as the children's parents who, while not directly involved, benefit indirectly through their children's participation. Their children receive a richer educational experience by virtue of participating in the program, which benefits the parents for whom their children's welfare is of the highest priority.

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

The intergenerational program continues to operate according to the successful model we have developed last year, with certain adjustments made due to the ongoing war. One kindergarten is permanently based on Reuth's grounds, which allows the elderly residents to see the children daily and benefit from the energy and joy that they bring. We continue to organize intergenerational holiday celebrations and have structured activities in the community garden with additional kindergartens with whom we partner. We also launched a new initiative in which a small group of children visit residents on their birthdays. Lastly, we began to collaborate with a high-tech company whose employees volunteer their time to bring companionship, conversation, and warmth into the lives of our residents.

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

In the program's second year, we focused on implementing the most successful elements from its first year, namely holiday celebrations and gardening activities with local kindergarteners. We partner with two kindergartens in addition to the one that is permanently based on the grounds of Reuth. Unfortunately, due to the ongoing war, we were unable to establish a partnership with a local high school. Both the director of the affordable housing, Mr. Moshe Weiss, and the project manager, Mr. Ido Mazuz, were called to reserve duty at the start of the school year—a critical window during which schools plan and commit to external collaborations. By the time they returned, the schools had already committed to other programs. In response, we pivoted to build a partnership with young professionals from a local high-tech company.

Over the past year, both Ido and Moshe each completed more than four months of reserve duty – a significant period that took them away from their families and their work at Reuth. Despite their prolonged absence, most elements of the project were able to take place. Below is a detailed description of the main achievements of the program over the past year. See the attached evaluation report for the full list of activities and participants.

Hosting a kindergarten: One kindergarten is permanently based on the premises of Reuth, with whom the residents sometimes engage in shared gardening activities. The impact of the children's presence, however, extends far beyond the shared programming. Simply hearing their laughter, seeing them play, and exchanging greetings with their parents and teachers brings life and energy to the residents of Reuth. Many seniors struggle with loneliness and social isolation. This daily connection to the outside world reminds them that they are not hidden away, but are part of a living, breathing community – a powerful boost to their mental and emotional well-being.

Holiday celebrations: Over the past year, children and their parents came to Reuth for a joyful Hanukkah celebration, featuring a festive parade and communal candle lighting. For Tu B'Shvat, the children and the residents planted herbs and fruit trees in our newly constructed greenhouse. The communal Passover Seder was generously led by a local family and included a full reading of the Haggadah. With the family's six children taking part, the event created a warm, home-like atmosphere that deeply moved the residents. For Lag Baomer, we held a neighborhood party for the residents, kindergarten children and their parents, which included dancing, singing, and a children's candlelit parade. This year, we also introduced a new tradition: on the resident's birthday, a small group of kindergarten children visits their apartment to present a gift, a handmade card, and a drawing. For many residents without nearby family, this gesture offers a meaningful moment of warmth and connection. Although the planned Rosh Hashanah celebration was canceled due to Ido and Moshe's reserve duty, residents still received holiday gifts to mark the occasion.

Gardening activities: Last year, we built a community garden on the premises of Reuth's affordable housing, which brought tremendous joy to the residents and the visiting kindergarteners alike. This year, we expanded the project by constructing a greenhouse so that we can carry out gardening activities year-round, regardless of the weather. Each week, children from one of two partnering kindergartens visit Reuth to join the residents in taking care of flowers, herbs, vegetables, and trees in the greenhouse and the garden. The residents teach the children about the lifecycle of plants and everyone enjoys the therapeutic and health benefits of connecting with nature. Some sessions are led by a professional gardening consultant, who shares gardening best practices with the residents and the children.

Young professionals: Young professionals from a local high-tech company have begun visiting Reuth's to spend quality time with the residents. In small groups of a few volunteers per resident, they share refreshments and meaningful conversation, offering our residents the chance to tell their life stories and enjoy personal attention. For many seniors, loneliness poses a serious threat to their mental health. These

visits provide not only companionship, but also a renewed sense of dignity and purpose—reminding them that their life stories, wisdom, and experiences hold meaning and value for the next generation. One of the meetings was held around the holiday of Purim, so the visiting volunteers also distributed traditional gifts (*mishloah manot*) to the residents.

Yom HaShoah Ceremony: This year, officer cadets from an IDF Officer Training School joined Reuth's annual Yom HaShoah ceremony. Prior to the ceremony, they met with two survivors residing at Reuth to hear their first-hand accounts of the war. During the ceremony itself, they lit six candles in memory of the six million Jews who perished in the Holocaust.

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

The main difference between last year's program and this year's is that instead of partnering with a local high school, we partnered with a high-tech company. The activities with the kindergartens remained largely the same. Despite some changes, the program continued to achieve its core objectives of (i) enhancing the well-being of seniors residing at Reuth's affordable housing, (ii) easing their loneliness, and (iii) fostering the intergenerational transfer of knowledge. These outcomes are reflected in the positive feedback the in-house social worker collected during her wellness checks with the residents. The program's structure, which includes activities with both young children and young professionals, ensures that all residents can find a meaningful way to engage. Those who enjoy the liveliness and spontaneity of play with young kids can participate in activities with the kindergartens, while those who prefer more reflective conversations with adults can spend meaningful time with the visiting young professionals. Regardless of which program component they pick, all of the participating residents experience a deep sense of purpose in seeing the next generation find value in their life experiences and insights.

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

In the upcoming program year, we will continue to facilitate intergenerational activities to alleviate loneliness and enhance the well-being of the elderly residents living at Reuth. We will maintain those elements of the program that have been successful in the past two years – namely, the gardening activities and holiday celebrations with the kindergarteners and meetings with young professionals from the nearby high-tech company. We also plan to reintroduce the high school element of the program, which was paused this year due to the prolonged reserve duty of key staff. This component will include both meetings between students and residents, similar to the model we currently use with young professionals, and group activities involving the entire class.

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