

MATANEL FOUNDATION

ACTIVITY REPORT

Program: JRV's Hope and Healing Retreats

Year: 2025/2026

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

Name of the Program: Hope and Healing Retreats

Year of activity: 2025/2026

Name of the report's writer: Ms. Ris Even

Function of the report's writer: Resource Development Director

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Number of active participants in the program: 133 children living with serious illnesses and 504 accompanying family members directly participated in JRV's therapeutic camp and retreat programs during the reporting period.

Estimated number of impacted participants: Approximately 1,317 individuals were impacted through JRV's Hope and Healing Retreats, including children with complex medical conditions, their family members, and the medical and gap-year volunteers who supported the program.

Give the actual state of the program (where the program stands at the date of the activity report, no more than ten lines): The Hope and Healing Retreats program continues to operate successfully and remains a central component of Jordan River Village's therapeutic support for children living with serious illnesses and disabilities and their families. During the 2025–2026 grant period, JRV conducted eight specialized family weekend retreats tailored to children living with epilepsy, Prader–Willi syndrome, rare syndromes, cerebral palsy (CP), intestinal failure, and Down syndrome. One additional retreat for ventilated children was postponed due to the security situation and ongoing war in Israel and is scheduled to take place in June 2026. Despite ongoing operational challenges related to the war, the program continued adapting to changing circumstances while maintaining high standards of medical safety, accessibility, and emotional support.

The main achievements during the last year of activity (main achievements, number of events, number of participants, etc.): During the reporting period, JRV successfully delivered eight therapeutic family retreats serving 133 children living with serious illnesses and 504 accompanying family members. The retreats provided medically safe, fully accessible environments where children and families could experience emotional respite, social connection, and therapeutic recreational activities tailored to their specific medical needs. The program included adapted sports, arts and crafts, music, adventure activities, family workshops, and emotional support frameworks. The program also engaged medical volunteers and gap-year volunteers who provided personalized support throughout the retreats. Despite the challenges posed by the ongoing war, JRV maintained continuity of operations and continued serving vulnerable families experiencing heightened emotional stress and uncertainty.

The evaluation (methodology, results, comparisons with the precedent year, conclusions for the future...): Program evaluation was conducted through participant feedback questionnaires, staff observations, and ongoing internal assessments carried out by JRV's professional and therapeutic teams. Families consistently reported high levels of satisfaction with the retreats, particularly highlighting the emotional relief, sense of community, and opportunity to experience normalcy within a medically safe environment. Staff evaluations also reflected strong participant engagement and meaningful emotional and social interaction among children and families throughout the retreats. Compared to previous years, we observed increased emotional needs among participating families, largely associated with the prolonged impact of the war and ongoing national instability. These findings reinforced the importance of maintaining and expanding therapeutic family retreat frameworks that combine medical safety with emotional and psychosocial support. The human impact behind these findings is captured in the words of one father following one of the retreats:

"From the moment we arrived, we felt we had entered not a village but a home... we left with tears of happiness and a sparkle in our children's eyes".

Testimonials such as this reflect the profound sense of safety, inclusion, and emotional renewal experienced by families participating in the program. Moving forward, JRV intends to continue strengthening trauma-informed programming and adapting activities to meet the evolving needs of participating families.

Provisional guidelines for the advancement of the program in the next year: In the coming year, JRV aims to continue expanding and strengthening the Hope and Healing Retreats program while maintaining the highest standards of medical care, accessibility, and emotional support. Priorities include completing the postponed retreat for ventilated children, deepening trauma-informed therapeutic components, further adapting activities to the emotional and developmental needs of participating populations, and strengthening staff and volunteer training.

The retreat for ventilated children represents one of the most complex and medically intensive programs conducted at Jordan River Village. Due to the specialized medical, logistical, and safety requirements involved, it can only be held once every few years and requires optimal medical and security conditions. Families caring for ventilated children often experience profound isolation and limited opportunities for respite or travel, making this retreat especially meaningful and deeply anticipated. Following its postponement due to the security situation, families and staff look forward to welcoming participants in June 2026 under conditions that will allow the retreat to take place safely and fully.

As the psychosocial impact of the ongoing security situation in Israel continues to affect vulnerable families, the Village remains committed to providing safe, restorative, and inclusive experiences for children and their caregivers.

Attached:

Evaluation Report

Financial Report

List of the participants

Photos – as **JPG files**

Movie that presents the particular project supported by the Matanel Foundation: