

Activity Report and Children's Feedback

Safe Seasons – Holiday and Summer Camps for Asylum-Seeking and Status-less Children

Reporting Period: 2025–2026



Program Overview

During the school holidays of the 2025–2026 school year, Elifelet implemented its **Safe Seasons – Holiday and Summer Camps** program for asylum-seeking and statusless children in South Tel Aviv. The program was designed to provide children with a safe, stable, enriching, and supportive framework during periods when schools and Elifelet’s regular educational frameworks were closed.

For the families Elifelet serves, school holidays present a particular challenge. Many parents work long hours in low-wage and unstable employment and cannot afford private childcare or holiday programs. Without an accessible alternative, children may spend long periods without adequate supervision or meaningful activities. The Safe Seasons program responds directly to this need by offering camps **at no additional cost to families**, allowing parents to continue working while knowing that their children are in a safe and supportive environment.

This approach reflects the objectives presented in Elifelet’s original proposal to the Matanel Foundation: to provide children with protection and meaningful engagement during school breaks, promote their social-emotional development and resilience, and strengthen their sense of belonging and connection to the wider community.

The original program was planned to operate during the major school breaks—Sukkot, Hanukkah, Passover, and the month of July during the summer vacation. During the reporting period, the program had to adapt to the security situation due to the war with Iran in March–April, particularly during the Purim and Passover period. Rather than discontinue support when regular camp activities could not take place as planned, Elifelet adapted the program so that children could continue to receive educational, recreational, and emotional support under changing Home Front Command restrictions.

Camp Activities and Educational Approach

Throughout the camps, children participated in a varied daily program combining recreation, learning, creativity, physical activity, and social interaction. Activities included arts and crafts, music, drama, sports and movement games, educational activities, and opportunities for group play. Children also received nutritious meals and snacks.

Visits to the host kibbutzim, Mishmar Hasharon and Ha’ogen, gave the children opportunities to experience a different way of life, enjoy the natural surroundings, and swim in the kibbutz pools. These visits enabled them to spend time beyond their urban environment, explore nature, enjoy outdoor activities and recreation, and share positive experiences with their peers.

The camps were intended not simply as childcare, but as an extension of Elifelet’s educational and emotional work throughout the school year. Creative activities encouraged self-expression and confidence; sports and movement offered opportunities for teamwork and stress relief; educational activities helped maintain engagement during school breaks; and shared celebrations and special events gave the children opportunities for enjoyment, connection, and a sense of belonging.

Special activities and outings were incorporated whenever circumstances permitted, including workshops, performances, swimming pool visits, excursions, and encounters with children from



other Israeli communities. These experiences **were particularly** important for children whose families generally have limited access to recreational and cultural opportunities.

A video clip of the camp activities can be found here:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1G9SdYjNT7jmAvGdo-Xx23AWiYXHegWnK/view>

Sukkot Camp

Date: October 5, 2025

Number of participating children: 174

The Sukkot Camp only consisted of one camp day (allowing Elifelet to dedicate the remainder of the school vacation to much-needed staff training).

Activities:

- Regular camp activities, including creative, recreational, and group activities.

No additional special event was organized for this camp day.

Hanukkah Camp

Dates: December 16–22, 2025

Number of participating children: 176

The Hanukkah Camp served 176 children and provided a full holiday framework combining the camp's regular creative, educational, recreational, and physical activities with special Hanukkah events.

A central feature of the camp was the festive holiday programming at both Elifelet campuses. Interactive activity stations, organized and led by volunteers from **Remitly Israel, a technology company**, gave the children an opportunity to celebrate Hanukkah together through games and shared activities. Creative flower-arrangement workshops also enabled children to prepare flower arrangements for their parents, adding a personal and family-oriented element to the holiday program.

The older children also participated in an educational excursion outside their immediate neighbourhood, visiting the Botanical Garden.

Activities and highlights Summary:



- **Flower Arrangement Workshop for Parents – December 16, 2025, Gvanim Campus:** Children participated in a creative flower-arrangement activity and prepared arrangements for their parents.
- **Hanukkah Activity Stations – December 17, 2025, Bialik Campus:** Festive interactive activity stations were organized as part of the Hanukkah celebrations.
- **Hanukkah Activity Stations – December 18, 2025, Gvanim Campus:** Children participated in festive holiday activity stations, creating a joyful shared celebration.
- **Flower Arrangement Workshop for Parents – December 21, 2025, Bialik Campus:** Children created flower arrangements to take home to their parents.
- **Botanical Garden Excursion – December 22, 2025:** Children in grades 4–6 from the Bialik Campus visited the Botanical Garden.



Together, these activities offered children opportunities for creativity, celebration, learning, and recreation while ensuring that families had a dependable framework during the school holiday.

Camp Activities During the War – Purim and Passover

Purim: Camp cancelled due to the war

Passover program dates: March 24–31, 2026

Number of participating children: 178

The Purim and Passover holiday period coincided with the war with Iran and therefore took place under exceptional circumstances. The planned camps could not operate in their usual format. Elifelet nevertheless continued to provide activities for the children, adapting the program to Home Front Command restrictions and the changing security situation.

During periods when in-person educational activities were prohibited, Elifelet maintained contact with the children through home visits and Zoom activities. When conditions permitted, children were brought together for activities in locations adjacent to protected spaces.

Once the Home Front Command approved the gradual reopening of educational activities, Elifelet resumed in-person programming in locations adjacent to protected spaces. This enabled children to return to a safe and supportive environment, reconnect with their friends, and experience a welcome respite from the stress and anxiety of the ongoing conflict. Through this flexible approach, Elifelet ensured continuity of educational and emotional support while reinforcing the children's sense of stability, security, and resilience throughout the emergency.



Although the regular Purim camp was cancelled, the children were still able to celebrate the holiday once schools reopened by making masks and dressing up in costumes.



During the Passover period, Elifelet organized special performances and workshops as part of its adapted wartime activities. These offered children opportunities for laughter, movement, musical expression, and shared enjoyment at a particularly stressful time.

Activities and highlights:

- **Zoom Activities – during the wartime restrictions:** Remote activities helped maintain regular contact between the children, their peers, and Elifelet staff when meeting in person was not possible.
- **In-Person Activities Near Protected Spaces:** As restrictions eased, activities resumed in locations adjacent to protected spaces, enabling children to meet safely and regain some sense of routine.
- **Mime Performance – March 30, 2026, Bialik and Gvanim Campuses:** A special mime performance was held for children at both campuses, providing a joyful and engaging shared experience during the wartime period.
- **Percussion Workshop – March 31, 2026, Bialik Campus:** Children participated in an interactive drumming workshop using percussion instruments.
- **Percussion Workshop – April 16, 2026, Gvanim Campus:** Children participated in an additional interactive percussion workshop following the main Passover camp period.
- **Purim Celebration – April 16:** Once schools reopened, children made masks and dressed up in costumes so that they could still experience and celebrate Purim despite the cancellation of the planned camp.



The wartime period demonstrated an important strength of the Safe Seasons program: its flexibility. Even when the normal camp format was impossible, Elifelet continued to create opportunities for children to meet, participate in enriching activities, and receive the educational and emotional support they needed.

Summer Camp

Dates: July 1–31, 2026

Number of participating children: 179

The Summer Camp was the largest and most extensive component of the Safe Seasons program, serving **179 children throughout July 2026**.

Summer vacation is an especially challenging period for the families Elifelet serves because children are out of school for an extended period while their parents must continue working.

The month-long program combined the camp's regular arts and crafts, educational activities, sports, games, and group activities with a varied schedule of special workshops and physical activities, performances, and swimming days.

The summer program placed particular emphasis on experiential activities. Movement and Capoeira gave children opportunities for physical expression and active participation; creative workshops enabled them to work with different materials and develop their imagination; thinking games provided a playful form of cognitive enrichment; and the circus performance offered a special cultural and recreational experience.

Swimming days in the hosting kibbutzim Mishmar Hasharon and Ha'ogen were among the highlights of the summer, giving children the opportunity to enjoy one of the activities most closely associated with summer vacation in a supervised and supportive setting.

Activities and highlights:

- **Tribe Day – July 12, 2026, Gvanim Campus:** Children participated in outdoor activities focusing on nature and group belonging.
- **Swimming Day – July 13, 2026, Bialik Campus:** Children enjoyed a supervised swimming day as part of the summer recreation program.
- **Tribe Day – July 15, 2026, Bialik Campus:** Children participated in outdoor activities focusing on nature and group belonging.
- **Movement Activity – July 15, 2026, Gvanim Campus:** A structured movement activity gave children an opportunity for active physical expression and group participation.
- **Capoeira – July 16, 2026, Bialik Campus:** Children participated in a Capoeira activity combining movement, rhythm, and physical exercise.
- **Circus Performance – July 16, 2026, Gvanim Campus:** A special circus performance provided an entertaining and enriching cultural experience.



- **Creative Workshop with Ella Zaidman – July 20, 2026, Bialik Campus:** A creative activity offered children opportunity for artistic expression and hands-on work.
- **Thinking Games – July 21, 2026, Gvanim Campus:** Children took part in games designed to encourage thinking, problem-solving, and playful learning.
- **Creative Workshop with Ella Zaidman – July 27, 2026, Gvanim Campus:** A creative activity offered children opportunity for artistic expression and hands-on work.
- **Swimming Day – July 28, 2026, Gvanim Campus:** Children enjoyed a supervised swimming activity as part of the summer program.
- **Circus Performance – July 28, 2026, Bialik Campus:** A special circus performance was held at 3:00 p.m.
- **Movement Activity – July 29, 2026, Bialik Campus:** Children participated in a movement-based group activity.
- **Creative Workshop with Liat Tzomer – July 29, Bialik Campus:** Children participated in a creative workshop.



Participation and Impact

The value of the program extended well beyond the individual activities offered. For children, the camps provided continuity, adult supervision, regular meals, opportunities to play and learn, and a sense of belonging during periods when their normal school routines were interrupted. For parents, the camps provided an essential practical framework that enabled them to continue working without having to leave their children unsupervised.

The variety of activities throughout the year also supported the broader developmental goals of the program. Creative workshops encouraged self-expression; physical activities promoted self-confidence, teamwork, and stress relief; outings and swimming days gave children access to experiences outside their everyday environment; and group celebrations and encounters with other children strengthened social connections and a sense of belonging.

The war presented an unforeseen challenge to the planned program. Rather than discontinuing its work, Elifelet adjusted its approach to meet the security restrictions, first through remote activities and then through in-person programming adjacent to protected spaces. This continuity was particularly meaningful for children living through a period of heightened uncertainty and anxiety.

For the children and families who participated, **Safe Seasons** offered more than childcare during school breaks. It provided stability and supervision for families, while giving children opportunities to create, move, explore, celebrate, form friendships, and experience the pleasure and freedom of a holiday in a safe and supportive environment.

Children's Feedback

Based on five children's responses from different groups, as documented in the **Children's Feedback** Video Clip file: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1jmR4WIOagvfl3fD67neko2YDBs-ORMBf/view>

The children's responses provide a small but valuable glimpse into how they experienced the Safe Seasons camps. **Above all, they describe the camps as fun and enjoyable**, repeatedly mentioning time with friends, swimming and water activities, creative activities, games, and special events.

Learning also appears naturally within these experiences—from discovering new countries through World Cup-themed activities to developing new skills in the swimming pool.

The feedback reinforces an important aspect of Safe Seasons: **enjoyment, play, friendship, and learning are closely connected**. After a demanding school year, the camps give children opportunities to relax, try new things, spend positive time with friends, and learn through experiences they genuinely enjoy.

Child 1:

Hi, my name is Edom.

I had a really good time at the after-school program's camp, because we made all sorts of things and did all kinds of activities.

One of the things we made was cookies, and it was really tasty because it's food.

And it was also the World Cup, so we did, like, World Cup things.

And things related to soccer and countries.

Every day it was a new country that we would learn about, and it was really fun.

Child 2:

Aviti, how was camp?

Fun.

What was fun about it?

That we played in the water.

Did you learn anything, or is there something you remember that was the most fun for you?

Going in the pool, and something I learned?

That we did a lot of activities and I learned during the activities.

Child 3:

And we also went to summer camp and it was really great there.

Like, we played with friends.

It was, like, really fun and we also went to the pool and sometimes there are activities, free time. It was really fun.

Child 4:

Phili, how was camp for you?

Good.

What did you like about it?

I played cards with my friends

Is there anything special that you particularly remember doing?

We went to the pool.

How was the pool?

Fun.

What did you do in the pool?

I jumped.

And is there anything new you learned at camp?

Yes.

What did you learn about?

To swim in the pool.

What else?

To do a handstand in the pool.

Child 5:

I had fun on water day at camp, and that I agreed to be in camp, and the activities we prepared, and everything else, and going to the pool, and that we held an awards ceremony.