



Association for Planning & Development of Services
for Children and Youth at Risk and their Families
Established by JDC-Israel and supported by the Government of Israel,
JDC-Israel and UJA-Federation of New York

Ashalim 2006 Year-end Review

Table of Contents:

Year-end Message	1
JDC News	1
UJC General Assembly	2
New Initiatives	2
Israel Emergency Campaign.....	4
From The Field	5
Ashalim In The News	7
Professional Exchange.....	9
Conferences & Seminars	10
Ashalim Publications.....	14

Year-end Message

March 2007

2006 has been a trying year for Israel, and especially for our young people. In the midst of it all, Ashalim has remained true and committed to its mission to make an enduring difference in the lives of Israel's children and youth at-risk. The beginning of 2006 saw a smooth start, but with the outbreak of war in the summer our work took on unfathomable dimensions. In this year-end review, we have chosen to highlight Ashalim's activities in 2006 to improve services for Israel's at-risk youngsters and our efforts to assist children and youth in war-stricken areas of the country.

Thanks to the resiliency and dedication of Ashalim's staff, and your untiring support, Ashalim succeeded in both achieving strategic goals set for 2006, as well as responding heroically, real-time during the war.

As we look together toward 2007, Ashalim will play a key role in rehabilitating the Galilee as well as in spearheading a number of new important initiatives for very young children, youth and professionals.

*Dr. Rami Sulimani
Director-General Ashalim*

*Ken Witover
Ashalim Sub-Committee Chair*

JDC News

October Board Meetings: Ashalim during the War

At the October 2006 JDC and Ashalim Board meetings in New York, Ashalim's Director-General, Dr. Rami Sulimani reviewed Ashalim's activities to help children and youth at risk and their families during the second Lebanon War and the impact of the war on Ashalim's work plan for 2006-2008.

Among Ashalim's wartime efforts was the relocation of vulnerable children and youth to safer areas of the country. Those who attended the board meetings recall the especially moving tribute from Yasmin Yaari, a participant in the Preparation for Life (Mechinat Knafaim) program (see related article on page 7) for physically disabled young adults, and her mother Shira who came to New York for the meetings. Shira Yaari related how the relocation enabled the program participants to continue helping each other, which in turn was a source of comfort to their family. She closed with the following words of thanks:

"Today is a special day. I escorted you, Yasmin, from Israel to New York as a graduate of Mechinat Knafaim – Preparation for Life – not for a doctor's diagnosis, not to meet and deal with your disabilities, but to stand here beside you and admire your strength and courage, your high morale and the talents which make you so special...I can hear in my mind the words you always say, 'If I can, everyone can. This is what we have and with this we will win.' I applaud you all, and bless you for your vision. You have helped Yasmin and many others like her to achieve their dreams."

UJC General Assembly

Ita Shahr Honored for Professional Leadership

Ita Shahr, Ashalim's Deputy Director-General, Dvora Blum, Vice President, Israel Planning of UJC-Israel and field staff of the Jewish Agency for Israel were honored at the 75th UJC General Assembly in Los Angeles for extraordinary service during the second Lebanon War. The November 13, 2006 recognition ceremony was sponsored by the World Council of Jewish Communal Service, the Jewish Communal Service Association of North America and the Association of Jewish Community Organization Professionals. Ita was recognized for her dedication in coordinating Ashalim's wartime efforts and in visiting families relocated from the north. She recalled the immense strains that the war placed on families with children, especially those with special needs children, and described how Ashalim was able to provide critical respite and support.

New Initiatives

MEYDA – Ashalim's Center for Knowledge

The last months of 2006 saw intense groundwork conducted for the opening of MEYDA-Ashalim's Center for Knowledge in 2007. MEYDA, the Hebrew acronym for 'Ashalim's Center for Knowledge' that also recalls the Hebrew word for information, is an outgrowth of a training center on issues of family-community-residential facilities, that was operated since 2002 by Ashalim jointly with the Ministry of Social Affairs.

The new MEYDA center is being established to centralize Ashalim's professional training efforts and to share its accumulated knowledge in the realms of education, social welfare and health with field professionals. As such, MEYDA also involves two additional government ministries – Education and Health. Contributions to enable the new center to offer state-of-the-art facilities and programming were received from Haggai Avisar and from the Dorset Foundation, with thanks to Martin Paisner who soon will be chairman of the Myers-JDC-Brookdale Children's Subcommittee.

MEYDA will serve a broad cross-section of Israel's professional community with a range of resources, courses and seminars on issues relating to care of children and youth at risk. Through its website (in Hebrew), www.merkaz-lemida.org.il, MEYDA will also offer Israel's professional community online access to articles, field reports and learning opportunities.

New Beginnings for Early Childhood

Early childhood education in Israel will be receiving greater attention and funding, as a result of the findings of the Schmid Commission on the situation of children in Israel. In accordance with the commission's recommendations, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's government will allocate over 50 million NIS annually to early childhood education.

Several months ago, the Prime Minister's wife, Aliza Olmert, initiated an early childhood program called New Beginnings, which will now be part of this national initiative to invest in early childhood education. In some 40 cities,

including some of those cities where PACT (Parents And Children Together, for Ethiopian immigrant communities) and ECHAD (Early Childhood Achievement and Development for the Israeli Arab sector) are implemented, New Beginnings will expand the models and create a city-wide coordinating body to address the needs of the entire birth-six population in the given city. Due to its expertise and long-term well-regarded success in developing and implementing the PACT and ECHAD models, JDC has been chosen to coordinate and implement the launch of the New Beginnings initiative.

Eshkolot: Inter-Ministerial Training Course

Ashalim's new 10-month course Eshkolot course on partnerships for senior government, municipal and non-profit managers began in September 2006. The course, run jointly with JDC-ELKA - The Association for the Development and Advancement of Manpower in the Social Services in Israel, aims to foster inter-office cooperation and enhance professional capability. The 27 course participants include senior officials at the Ministries of Education, Social Affairs, Immigrant Absorption, Industry, Labor and Trade;

the National Insurance Institute; Israel Police; Jerusalem and Rosh Haayin municipalities; Myers-JDC-Brookdale; the non-profits Beterem, Efshar, Dror, Elem, the Branco-Weiss Institute; Alwaha of the Negev; and Ashalim.

During the monthly intensive 2-day meetings, participants have the opportunity to explore case-studies, engage in simulations, learn from successes and conduct site visits. Special days, such as the one dedicated to Bedouin children, draw attention to the needs of minority populations.

Ashalim Launches New Youth Entrepreneurship Program

The success of the "It's a Deal" program inspired The First International Bank of Israel to commit annual financial support for an expanded youth employment and entrepreneurship program, which Ashalim is embarking upon in 2007 in partnership with the US nonprofit NFTE - The National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship.

The "It's a Deal" program, which gave 250 detached youth a chance to take part in running business ventures, demonstrated



First teacher-training course in December 2006: Victor Salame, NFTE Partnership Director from New York (seated fourth from right), Itzik Zehavy, Ashalim Area Head for Youth Programs (standing left), Ashalim program managers and course participants

that the enticing world of business offers effective tools for rehabilitating school dropouts and inducing them to complete high school studies (see related articles on page 8).

Ashalim's new program, "Turning Point," will work with vocational schools, alternative frameworks for school dropouts and support programs for detached youth nationwide. The program will benefit from NFTE's extensive experience working with over 150,000 youth and training 3,700 entrepreneurship teachers in the US and other countries. It will create a variety of avenues – courses, employment opportunities, job counseling, and "Bizcamp" experiences – for high-risk youth to gain real life and business skills, thereby preparing them to integrate into the workforce and become productive adults.

Turning Point is being piloted with the Ministries of Education, Social Affairs and Industry, Trade and Labor, Israel's National Insurance Institute, the nonprofits Matan (Israel's United Way) and Elem, and with the support of the First International Bank of Israel, NFTE and Dan Hoch.

UJC Israel Emergency Campaign

Helping Children and Families Return to Normalcy

In the first few months after the second Lebanon War, Ashalim reached out to thousands of children and youth, parents, teachers and caregivers, helping ease the return to a normal routine. In both school and after-school programs, Ashalim ensured that tension-reduction and therapeutic activities were in place. Ashalim also worked with the Ministries of Education and Social Welfare so that field staff would receive training and support in identifying symptoms of post-traumatic stress.



Hibuki "Huggy" therapy helps preschoolers process war experiences, overcome trauma and regain sense of control.

Ashalim to Lead School-Based Child and Youth Programs

As part of efforts to address the human toll of the second Lebanon War, the Israel Emergency Campaign has allocated \$10 million a year for two years to JDC-Israel towards the rehabilitation of thousands of children and youth at risk in war-stricken areas. Beginning in 2007, Ashalim, in coordination with the Ministry of Education, will provide trauma relief and will implement proven programs within the school system in the north of Israel and in Gaza border communities. Ashalim will be working in more than 40 localities serving approximately 25,000 kids. Ashalim programs will focus on:

- Trauma relief
- Enhancing school efforts to prevent dropouts and to promote educational success
- Equipping kindergarten playgrounds so as to enable the implementation of detection and treatment programs
- Increasing enrichment initiatives for children with special needs
- Professional training for educational staff in various frameworks

In the course of our work, we see the effects of the war not only in school environments, but also in welfare settings. The stresses of the war increased the numbers of families in

need of guidance and support and also exacerbated problems faced by many families already in the care of the welfare services. Looking ahead, Ashalim seeks to implement additional programs to build and fortify service infrastructures and strengthen families in war-stricken areas. In this way, vital support services, such as parent-child centers, will be in place – able and ready to perform effectively both in times of calm and in times of crisis.

From The Field

Residential Facility Family Event: "Healthy Living Happening"

On May 23, children in residential facilities and their parents enjoyed a fun-filled day, sponsored by Ashalim, the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Yeladim - Fair Chance for Children association. This year's Healthy Living Happening included a guided hike in the Latrun region, a ceremony to award prizes and scholarships for excellence in sports, moon bounces, and performances by residential facility dance and song troupes and by professional acrobats. This annual event is both an opportunity to reinforce the year-round learning in residential facilities about nutrition, health and physical fitness, as well as to strengthen parent-child relations through shared, memorable experiences.



Acrobats from the Reaction Circus entertain residential facility children and parents

Parent-Child Centers

Two new centers opened in 2006 in Migdal Haemek and Nazareth, bringing the total number of parent-child centers nationwide to 28. These new centers were opened through a process of shifting budget allocations from out-of-home residential facilities to prevention and treatment services in the community. The ability to re-allocate funds is part of the new "Looking Towards the Community" Social Affairs policy which Ashalim was intensely involved in shaping to keep children at home in their communities.



Waiting room in new Eilat Parent-Child Center, designed to make clients feel at home

The Eilat Parent-Child Center, in its second year of operation, inaugurated its newly renovated facility on the 16th of July. The renovation project and the center's operations received support from the Gilbert Foundation, the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, the Jewish Federation of Greater Hartford, UJC and the Sacta-Rashi Foundation. The opening ceremony was attended by Managing Director of the city of Eilat, representatives from the

Ministry of Social Affairs, the contributing foundations, the "Or Shalom" foundation responsible for the center's operation, Shachar Schuman, Ashalim Area Head for Children's Programs and Ashalim's program management staff.

The Woolf Child and Family Campus



Signing certificates at site of future Woolf Child and Family Campus

In a novel effort to unite a variety of child and family services in one location, the Woolf family is embarking on a new Child and Family Campus, located in the northern town of Afula. The groundbreaking ceremony was held on June 26th. The Campus, modeled on a similar one in Beer Sheva, will house a parent-child center, young adult center, and a family well-being center which includes three units: family counseling, visitation (for parents denied custody of their children), and domestic violence prevention and treatment.

Dropout Prevention: Expansion of MALEH Program

MALEH, the Hebrew acronym for Alternative Learning Spaces, which began as a pilot in a handful of junior high schools in 2002, is now being replicated in cooperation with the Ministry of Education in Israel's school system. This year, MALEH is operating in 50 schools nationwide, reaching an estimated 800 high-risk students. MALEH is also now being implemented in elementary schools and in the Israeli Arab sector. In addition, eighteen coordinators from around the country are participating in a new year-long training course at the new MEYDA – Ashalim Center for Knowledge.

The program's innovative approach for helping schools deal with their most difficult students has succeeded not only in preventing high-risk students from leaving school, but even more so, in returning them to the normative classroom setting.

MALEH's success has generated demand among educators, exceeding expectations and available resources. Certain local authorities are themselves finding new resources with which to expand the MALEH program in their jurisdictions. For example, the Yokne'am-Megiddo region is undertaking a 3-year MALEH program in two new schools with the support of the Jewish Federation of St. Louis and the Jewish Federation of Atlanta.

Alongside MALEH's rapid expansion, seven veteran schools have reached the point where they can operate the program independently, enabling Ashalim to phase-out and invest its energies in new schools. In order to ensure MALEH's successful internalization by the many new schools implementing the program, the steering committee seeks to expand the budget for ongoing staff training.

Better Together Expands to Migdal Haemek with Support of Steinhardt Family Foundation

Ashalim's Better Together program to marshal low-income communities on behalf of their children and youth was launched in the northern town of Migdal Haemek in December 2006, with the support of the Michael and Judy Steinhardt Family Foundation in Israel. The Foundation's Israel Director, Tova Dorfman, saw how the trauma of the war exacerbated existing problems of Migdal Haemek's children and sought a suitable child-focused initiative that had proven successful elsewhere.

The new Better Together program is focusing on Migdal Haemek's western neighborhood, a demographically diverse low-income neighborhood that is home to an estimated 3,000 youngsters from birth to age 18. Better Together is mobilizing residents, city officials and service providers to assess the needs of these children and youth. Based on the results of this assessment, the Better Together program will soon begin work planning and implementing appropriate programs for children and youth of all ages in the neighborhood.

Ashalim In The News

Ashalim's programs are receiving coverage in the Israeli media, as noted below. The Israeli media interest reflects the impact that Ashalim programs are having and is also important in positioning Ashalim as a lead program development organization.

"What did you do mom? Why are you in jail?"

Haaretz Passover Supplement, Vered Lee, April 12, 2006

Feature article about the Incarcerated Mothers program to help incarcerated mothers reestablish badly damaged relationships with their children and learn mothering skills. Program began in hostels for newly released women and will soon expand to the Neve Tirza women's jail. (Program partners: Ashalim; National Insurance Institute; Israel Prison Service, Treatment and Rehabilitation Division)

Anat Gur, Program Manager and Area Head for Rehabilitation of Women Prisoners:

"It is customary to think that for all women, motherhood is instinctive...but for women who were injured in childhood, raised by parents who neglected or abused them, worked as prostitutes in adolescence, used drugs and were in and out of jail, there is no internal maternal model...We work with them on their mothering skills. They do not know how to do things that are seemingly obvious. We hear from them that here, for the first time, they have sat on the floor and put together a puzzle with their child."

N. describes her situation upon returning home from jail:

"When I was released from jail I had trouble coping and cried constantly. Suddenly I had to collect the children who had scattered, live with a husband and be a mother, responsible for four children."

"It's just that the physical disability should not become my whole identity"

Haaretz Newspaper, Vered Lee, June 7, 2006

Article covers the Preparation for Life communal living program in the Galilee named Mechinat Knafaim (translated as Wings Preparatory School) for physically disabled young adults who all their lives had been included in mainstream institutions. (Program partners: Ashalim; Ministry of Social Affairs, Rehabilitation Division; National Insurance Institute; Kivunim: New Directions for Special Needs Youth in Israel)

Asher, program participant:

"I was accepted socially and had friends, but everything ended when I finished high school. All my friends enlisted in the IDF and suddenly I found myself without a framework, sitting at home."

Gidi Zur, Director of Mechinat Knafaim:

"At Mechinat Knafaim, when the young people volunteer in the National Service program, they are freed from the restrictive awareness that they are needy, and they receive compensation for their work. This is an opportunity for them to build an identity of a person who can give to others and not just be helped."

Ayelet Shofti, Disabled Adult on program staff:

"Mechinat Knafaim enables people with special needs and disabilities to feel that they are part of the social dynamic and able to dream and reach great heights."

"Between feeding monkeys and donkeys, youth will try to rehabilitate"

Haaretz Newspaper, Yuval Azulai, June 8, 2006

Front page article reports on the "It's A Deal" youth employment opportunity – zoo management at Kibbutz Kfar Menachem – being used by the "Wing of Love" hostel to rehabilitate troubled and delinquent 14-17 year old boys and return them to society. (Program partners: Ashalim; Zionism 2000; Ministry of Social Affairs; Youth Protection Authority; municipal Youth Advancement Units; local nonprofit organizations)

Boaz Miller, Director of Wing of Love hostel:

"The group knows that they are taking upon themselves a big responsibility, but that this is an excellent opportunity for them to begin to lead a normative lifestyle....I believe in them."

One of the boys interviewed:

"In addition to the salary, I also need work experience. When I leave here, I want to have recommendations that will help me move up elsewhere."

"Fridman shows young windsurfers the way"

The Jerusalem Post, Joseph D. Robbins, June 28, 2006

Article reports on Olympic Gold Medalist Gal Fridman's windsurfing activities with underprivileged Israeli, Arab and new immigrant youth from the Better Together program in the Hadar neighborhood of Haifa.

Gal Fridman:

"It gives the kids the kind of self-confidence they wouldn't normally have."

13-year-old Shalom Hizgilov, participant, about Better Together program:

"It's like a family."

"A. does not see soldiers' bodies at night anymore"

Haaretz Newspaper, Limor Tevet, July 12, 2006

This article appeared the day before the outbreak of war on Israel's northern border and recounts the success of the Prolonged Exposure method for treating former soldiers with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Ashalim introduced this cognitive-behavioral therapy program to Israel in 2002, with the outbreak of the last Intifada, and it is now in use by Mental Health Clinics, the National Insurance Institute, the IDF, the Emergency Resource Center in Kiryat Shmona, the Rehabilitation units of the Ministry of Defense, and by psychologists and counselors with the Ministry of Education. It is now being used by hospitals and public services across the north to help soldiers and civilians alike recover from the traumatic experiences of the second Lebanon War.

Dr. Edna Foa of the University of Pennsylvania, who developed the method, reports that success in Israel is in line with research results worldwide:

80% success rate, with an additional 10% of patients reporting partial improvement and the remaining 10% unchanged, though unharmed.

Dr. Nakash of the Psychiatric Rehabilitation Unit at Sheba Tel Hashomer Hospital:

"In recent years, with the increasing number of people exposed to trauma in Israel, we decided to accept people for treatment without payment – people who were in terror attacks, or others who were in wars but were not recognized as disabled veterans..."

"From lost to working"

Yedioth Ahronoth, Tamar Trabelsi-Hadad, November 29, 2006

Article reported on how the It's a Deal program has successfully set up 28 youth-run businesses that are rehabilitating hundreds of detached youth, getting them out of bed in the morning and keeping them off the streets. (Program partners: Ashalim; Zionism 2000; municipal Youth Advancement Units; local nonprofit organizations)

Dalit Roditi, manager of Cookiot bakery:

"These are youth who wandered the streets aimlessly and were drawn into fights, drugs and theft. Here they get a chance. The second they take responsibility, they understand for the first time that they have self-worth. A youth who became marketing manager and handled negotiations with customers said to me: 'I feel like I'm worthy.'"

"Having difficulty establishing relationships? Maybe you have Asperger's Disorder"

Haaretz Newspaper, Ruti Sinai, September 14, 2006

Article reports on the success of the "Reim" program (meaning 'friends' in Hebrew) that was initiated five years ago to offer 15-18 year old youth and 19-30 year old young adults with Asperger's Disorder a setting where they can develop their social skills and build peer friendships. (Program partners: Ashalim; Israel Association of Community Centers; National Insurance Institute)

Udi Bornstein, program manager at the Israel Association of Community Centers:

"The disability centers on understanding social codes and norms...People with Asperger's Disorder are not normative enough to fit in with regular society, but also do not belong in frameworks for the mentally ill or retarded."

Professional Exchange

Ashalim Professional Mission to Israel

Each year, Israeli and New York members of Ashalim's professional committees meet to learn together and share their perspectives and experience. The May 2006 mission to Israel centered on the issue of: **From Prevention to Rehabilitation: Coping with Violence and Abuse**. The planned schedule of site visits and sessions was quite full so as to enable the group to view and examine the many aspects of the Israeli risk continuum over the course of the exchange.



Professional Mission visiting Old City

For a full report of the Exchange, see www.ashalim.org.il/news.htm.

Seminar on Children and Youth at Risk in Turkey

In April, in collaboration with JDC's country director for Turkey, senior Ashalim and JDC staff members were key speakers at a 4-day seminar in Istanbul on concepts, methods and programs for working with children at risk, especially those who take to the streets. The seminar included joint learning sessions on issues of risk and responses, discussions of universal treatment methods, and practical workshops. The seminar was attended by 70 social workers, professional staff and directors of treatment centers for "street kids" from different regions in Turkey.

Over the course of the seminar, Ashalim staff was able to help the Turkish attendees define ways to improve treatment of high-risk youth by focusing on inter-service coordination, work with parents and community institutions, understanding of immigrant issues, and development of professional-client relationships with street kids. Dr. Flora Mor and Mrs. Rachel Ladani presented examples of Ashalim and JDC community development, immigrant integration and alternative youth programs that were designed in response to needs in Israel, but that have universal elements which can be adapted to benefit children and youth at risk worldwide.

Cooperation with JDC's Children's Initiative in the FSU

Adina Friedman, project manager for Ashalim's Health and Nutrition Enrichment programs, was invited by JDC's Children's Initiative - welfare, educational and community support program for needy children in the FSU - to lead a workshop in Moldova on nutrition enrichment with underprivileged children.

Adina worked with two Russian-speaking dieticians to adapt the Nutrition Program manual culturally and linguistically for use in the FSU. The dieticians also joined Adina in leading the seminar, which was an enormous success. As the Children's Initiative currently reaches 23,000 children in 90 locations throughout the FSU, this sharing of Ashalim's experience with Nutrition and Health Enrichment will make a significant contribution to children's health and wellbeing internationally.

Conferences & Seminars

April - August 2006

MALEH

Seminar, attended by 100 principals and staff implementing the MALEH program, enabled school staff to share experiences and learn from the successes of other program participants. Attendees noted that the seminar also motivated them further, as they now feel part of a larger movement making an impact on the educational system.

Family Group Conference Training Seminar

During May and June, twenty-two new facilitators participated in a 7-day training course, conducted as part of the dissemination of the Family Group Conference program by the Ministries of Social Affairs and Public Security. This program seeks to restore juvenile offenders to society and prevent future criminal activity by creating family support networks.

Care of Very Young Children in Foster Care

Two hundred social workers and psychologists participated in a seminar on early childhood foster care. The seminar is part of Ashalim's efforts to upgrade foster care services and concluded a year-long process of learning about at-risk populations by foster care social workers. The seminar was sponsored by Ashalim, the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Sacta-Rashi Foundation and The Summit Institute.

Otzma Violence Prevention

Seminar on the Otzma violence prevention program, sponsored by Ashalim, the Pratt Foundation and Tel Aviv University Bob Shapell School of Social Work, brought together over 100 education professionals and focused on 1) research findings on children's violent behavior, 2) how these findings guided the development of the Otzma model, and 3) presentation of the model's hands-on tools and its success in schools and with parent-child groups. The highlight of the day was when children and parents from Otzma groups shared their personal experiences.

Educational Interventions for Students at Risk

The seminar focused on psycho-social educational methods for reaching out to under-achieving students at various risk levels within the formal school system. Over 200 field professionals and academics from around the country learned about how schools can be a nurturing and less frustrating environment and about how parental involvement can be used as an asset, and were introduced to various Ashalim publications.

Ms. Judy Ben Ezra, Director of School Counseling Services at the Ministry of Education described how Ashalim has been instrumental in the internalization of the psycho-social approach in the Ministry's work. Dr. Anna Russo, Director of The David Yellin College

of Education, recognized Ashalim's role in developing training curriculums for educators and welfare professionals on advancing children from weaker socio-economic groups.

Home Accident Prevention

Ashalim and Beterem – the National Center for Children's Safety and Health sponsored a national conference for the Ultra-Orthodox sector to present the successful Home Accident Prevention program that was piloted in Bnei Brak. Speakers discussed the types of accidents prevalent among Ultra-Orthodox children, and presented programs that could be implemented in local communities to prevent injuries and drowning, to improve road safety and to utilize local volunteer power.

After-School Enrichment Centers – Moadoniot

As part of the efforts to upgrade the After School Enrichment Centers (Moadoniot) for children at risk that are operated countrywide jointly by the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Education, Ashalim and the ministries initiated the first national conference for staff of the centers. The conference focused on inter-office cooperation and was attended by an estimated 500 Ministry of Social Affairs social workers, Ministry of Education advisors, and truancy officers.



Seated in front row: Mr. Motti Vinter, Director of Department for Social and Individual Services, Ministry of Social Affairs, Mr. Shachar Schuman, Area Head for Children's Programs at Ashalim.

Kids in Conversation Training Course

A 5-day inter-disciplinary course was held for 35 trainers and supervisors who will lead in-service training courses for preschool staff as part of the new "Kids in Conversation"



Israeli Arab training course participants learn techniques for early language acquisition

early childhood program. The program aims to develop literacy friendly environments in Israeli Arab kindergartens and to raise awareness of the importance of children's emergent language and literacy ability amongst parents and professionals and is part of the ECHAD Partnership with the Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin, and Sonoma Counties.

Effectiveness of Early Childhood Home Intervention Programs

Ashalim and the National Insurance Institute sponsored a learning day at JDC-Israel headquarters for 60 professionals who operate home intervention programs for families at risk. Dr. Yael Dayan of The Hebrew University discussed her research on the subject and participants discussed common professional dilemmas.

Parenting in the Shadow of Violence

The conference, sponsored by Ashalim, the Bob Shapell School of Social Work at Tel Aviv University and the Ministry of Social Affairs, presented intervention models, research results and publications generated by Ashalim's program "Parenting skills of abusive fathers and battered mothers." The conference was attended by 330 domestic violence field professionals.

Beit Issie Shapiro's 4th International Conference on Developmental Disabilities: Policy, Practice and Research

At the 3-day conference in July attended by 500 professionals from Israel and around the world, Rivka Shai, Area Head of Ashalim's Special Needs Programs and her staff presented the following Ashalim programs:

- "From Risk to Opportunity" for mainstreaming toddlers in daycare
- "Mishlavim" for inclusion of special needs young adults in Israel's National Service program
- Ashalim programs on sexual abuse of young people with special needs
- Early identification and rehabilitation of hearing-impaired children in East Jerusalem.

Abuse of Children with Special Needs

Ashalim hosted Dr. Nora Baladerian, a leading figure in US for her work on issues of abuse and disability, who has been in professional contact with Ashalim staff for the past two years. During her July visit to Israel, Dr. Baladerian presented to the professional community - including school staff, rehabilitation and treatment staff, police investigators, and child investigators - at a number of forums:

- Lecture on sexual abuse in special needs schools and workshop on treatment methods
- Lecture on investigations of children and people with special needs, "Making the Criminal Process Accessible to People with Disabilities," and
- Lecture on "Violence and Disabilities - 30 Years of Research and Treatment in the United States" and two sessions sponsored by Ashalim at Beit Issie Shapiro's 4th International Conference on Developmental Disabilities.

A Look to the Future

This seminar day reviewed Ashalim's three-year early childhood intervention with Kavkazi immigrant families in Or Akiva, Sderot and Kiryat Yam, presented results of the Myers-JDC-Brookdale evaluation, and discussed the needs going forward. The seminar was attended by heads of education and welfare departments, supervisors from the ministries of Education, Social Affairs and Health and field professionals.

September - December 2006

A Community Approach to Preventing Child Abuse

Ashalim hosted Dr. Gary Melton, Director of the Institute on Family and Neighborhood Life and professor of psychology at Clemson University at a workshop about building caring, strong communities as a strategy for protecting children at risk of abuse. Dr. Melton presented his "Neighbors Helping Neighbors" approach, whereby communities reach out and take responsibility for weaker families.

Sexual Abuse of Children in the Arab Sector

Ashalim sponsored a seminar attended by 75 professionals about the treatment of young female victims of sexual abuse in the Arab sector. The seminar introduced a treatment model implemented at a girl's residential facility in I'billin and the new publication in Arabic, "Sexual Abuse of Children in the Arab Sector: The Problem and Solutions."



Professionals from Arab sector at I'billin.

Transition to Independent Adult Life among At Risk 16-25 Year Old Youth and Young Adults

At this seminar sponsored by the Myers-JDC-Brookdale Institute and The Engelberg Center for Children and Youth, Dr. Michal Komem of Ashalim moderated a forum on unique responses for young women who still face distress despite turning eighteen. At the forum, four pilot programs were presented: Independent Living for Arab Young Women, Girls for Girls mentoring program, Young Mothers groups, and Employment groups.

A Friend to the Family

Ashalim hosted a conference on the "A Friend to the Family" volunteer support program for families with children with special needs. Findings of the Myers-JDC-Brookdale research evaluation and personal vignettes were presented. Conference participants included senior officials from the Ministry of Social Affairs, representatives of local welfare departments and non-profit organizations involved in the program's implementation.

Preparing Youth at Risk for the Working World

This conference presented the success of "It's A Deal" youth-run business ventures and discussed the education system's role in preparing youth for integration in the workforce. The conference was sponsored by Ashalim, the Ministry of Education, Zionism 2000, Tel Aviv-Yafo municipality, and the Ichpat - Advancing Children and Youth in Tel Aviv-Yafo organization.

Girls - Theory, Policy and Practice

The seminar, attended by 150 academics and field workers, focused specifically on policy-making and practices on behalf of adolescent girls and was sponsored by Ashalim, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, The Ministry of Social Affairs and the Beer Sheva municipality. Guest lecturer Prof. Michelle Fine, Distinguished Professor of Psychology at the Graduate Center of City University of New York, shared her method of Participatory Action Research, where clients play a key role throughout all stages of program development.



pictured from left: Prof. Ruth Josselson, Prof. Ariela Friedman, Keynote lecturer Prof. Michelle Fine, Prof. Tamar Rapoport

Ashalim Publications

During 2006, the following publications were produced (in Hebrew and Arabic) for Israel's professional community.

Tom and Guy

Video and accompanying booklet, cooperative effort of Ashalim and Israel Educational Television, for use by counselors in residential facilities and after-school centers, teachers, parents and others working with children.

By Aliza Bar

It Is Possible Together

Program for integrating children from special education with children from regular schools.

By Maayan Blum

Much More than "Tipat Chalav"

Well-baby clinic nurses initiating change, innovation and leadership in work with families at risk.

By Hanita Brill, Tzippy Stein

A Home with a Window: Emergency Centers for Children at Risk and their Families

Work methods customarily used by Emergency Centers, as they have developed over the years.

Edited by Shlomith Cohen

To Eat and to Grow

Guide for feeding babies, toddlers and children in educational frameworks.

By Adina Friedman, Rakefet Arieli, and Ministry of Health dieticians

Abuse and Neglect of Children in Israel

The victims, law enforcement and the courts, medicine, education and welfare.

By Devora Horowitz, Yoram Ben Yehuda, Meir Hovev

Children and Parents in the Center

Central aspects of work in parent-child centers.

By Zehava Katzir

The Power of the School Counselor School as a nurturing-educational environment

By Flora Mor and Itamar Lourie

Seeing the Children

A guidebook for creating a nurturing-educational environment for students at-risk.

By Flora Mor

The Trauma Journey

Continual coping with victims of stress and trauma within the school setting.

By Flora Mor, Itamar Luria, Shai Hen-Gal, Yochi Siman-Tov (published by the Ministry of Education)

Talking with Youth at-Risk

An Educational Psycho-Social Perspective

By Flora Mor and Itzhak Mendelson

Fathering and Violence

A group intervention model for men who abuse their partner

By Einat Peled and Guy Perel

Mothering in the Shadow of Violence

A group intervention model for women abused by their partner.

By Einat Peled and Guy Perel

Guide for Group Work with Children of Addicts

By Yaffa Sapir

Educational Intervention Program for Students at Risk

By Dr. Rami Sulimani, Director-General of Ashalim.

The Group as a Treatment Tool for Families in Transition

By Ronit Tzur

Healthy Steps

Activities kit for early childhood parent-child groups.

By Sivana Valfer, Nira Baram, Zehava Naveh, Mia Davidson

Guidebook to the Rights and Services for People with PDD/Autism

In the Haifa and northern region.

By Liora Yudlevitz

Biblio-therapeutic Reader for High School Students

For coping with situations of injury, distress and risk.

By Shosh Zimmerman, Rioka Berger
Edited by Rioka Berger

Detection Kit for Child Victims of Abuse for Community Health Services

By Nirit Pesach, Ruti Levi, Devora Itzik, Alona Berman, Vered Amir, Itai Pesach

Includes:

- Identifying Child Victims of Abuse and Neglect – Adapted for Ultra-Orthodox Community
By Gita Laufer, Shmuel Goldstein, et al. (based on book by Nirit Lavi Kotzick)
- The Jewish Perspective on Injuries to Children
By Doron Agasi
- Guidebook for Identifying Children at Risk – Translated to Arabic
Translated by Haled Abu Asba (based on book by Nirit Lavi Kotzick)
- Cultural Aspects in the Identification of Child Victims of Abuse and Neglect in the Arab Sector
By Haula Abu Bakar
- Cultural Aspects in the Identification of Children at Risk Among Ethiopian Immigrants
By Malka Shabtai and Mamoya Zara