



BEIT DANIELLA ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Our Growth

16 students attending Beit Daniella (full capacity)

35 graduates returned to their communities

12 applicants on the waiting list

We went from:

10 students (on average) at any given time
to full capacity at **16 students** - a **60% increase**

2 parallel classes to **3 parallel classes**,
including *kita nafshit*

An eat-in kitchen to a kitchen AND dining area



Many of our students are musical and it is common to see them with their instruments during breaks, serenading us with their friends.



We were privileged to have Beit Daniella Steering Committee member, Prof. Pesach Lichtenberg to enrich, educate and inspire our staff. Prof. Lichtenberg shared his journey as the Director of the Psychiatry Department at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, to Director of Psychiatry Wards at Herzog Hospital to founding Soteria Israel, a bayit meazen- a short term group-home hospital alternative for people struggling with psychosis. The staff learned about approaches to mental health in Israel - past, present and future - and about what it takes to innovate within the establishment. On a practical level, they had the opportunity for questions and answers on dealing with complex situations that arise in their work.

Before



After



To accommodate our increase in numbers and our additional class, we renovated a horse stall and connected it to our kitchen, providing us with a dining room which serves also as a third classroom for our new class.

Strategic Partnerships

As the good word is spreading about Beit Daniella's critically needed work, the government agencies that we have been lobbying since Beit Daniella's inception are beginning to turn around, notice...and get involved. In one year, we created 3 important strategic partnerships: with the Ministry of Education, Bituach Leumi and the Ministry of Health.



Ministry of Education, Special Education

Until this September our education program was provided through Tochnit Hila, a small project of Hevrat Hamatnasim. Hila's management was super-dedicated and they operated according to a rolling registration model which suited Beit Daniella. However, they were severely under budgeted and it was hard to attract and retain teachers on such low pay, without providing them with any Ministry of Education benefits. In an unprecedented move, this year Beit Daniella opened a new class - a *kita nafshit* under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, Special Education Department.

Why weren't we supported by the Ministry of Education until now?

The Ministry of Education's mandate is to service ALL citizens under 18. As such they have also been charged (and budgeted) for servicing youth with a mental health profile- through small, specialized classes called Kitot Nafshiot. As youth with this profile have many complex

needs, and they require a higher staff to student ratio, the budgets allocated to kitot nafshit are significantly higher per student than for the mainstream student/class/school.

The critical problem is that struggling kids are not capable of going to school- even when the classes are small. At the same time, a rehabilitative day center like Beit Daniella does not qualify for Ministry of Education funding because it is not an official education institution, it does not fit the basic qualifications and it does not operate according to academic year etc.

However, the ministry is keenly aware of the growing numbers of youth struggling with mental health for whom they are responsible - those who are prisoners in their own homes (along with their parents), who are in danger, who are incapable of going to school and have nowhere to go and no reason to get up in the morning. They know that their classes and schools are not providing their population with a solution whereas Beit Daniella is.

This is what finally motivated the change in attitude towards us. That being said, for the Ministry of Education to accommodate Beit Daniella's opening of a *kita nafshit* was like fitting a square peg into a round hole. This unprecedented move happened largely thanks to the creativity and perseverance of our steering committee member Edna Texler, the Ministry of Education supervisor of special education for Jerusalem and its environs.

We have partnered with a wonderful mainstream high school across the street from the ranch called Tichon Or. As they have a "*semel mossad*", our class is officially part of their school structure even though all teaching and learning in the Kita Nafshit takes place at Beit Daniella. Our educational coordinator, teachers, one a *madrach* and one *bat sherut* are registered with Tichon Or and thus able to receive payment directly through the Ministry of Education for serving Beit Daniella's *kita nafshit*. *Mabruk!!*

What is a Kita Nafshit?

A *kita nafshit* is a class that caters to students with a mental health profile. In order to be eligible for this class, each student had to be approved by a committee in the Ministry - called a *vaadat zakat v'ifyun*. Not all are deemed eligible and it can be a cumbersome process.

The budget per student is larger than that of a

mainstream student- the package includes small classes, personalized help, an assistant and other extras. Most importantly, it includes transportation for the student to and from



Cabs sponsored by Misrad Hachinuch waiting at the end of the day in the parking lot of the stables, to transport the students from the Kita Nafshit back to their homes - From Anatot in Binyamin to Mod'in and every where in between.

Beit Daniella - a game changer for parents who do not own a car, who live too far or cannot manage to drive their child back and forth with their work schedule.

It is important to mention that Beit Daniella's *Kita Nafshit* program this year is also a testing ground for the Ministry of Education. If they like what they see, they have said that they will consider opening up more classes and eventually consider granting us an independent school status. That would also open the possibility of scaling to different locations, while riding upon the existing Ministry of Education infrastructure. In addition to opening branches in different parts of the country, it also holds the possibility of providing grounds and buildings, free of charge. That being said, these are all our hopes and our prayers there are no guarantees. We are doing our part and we are sure there will be many twists and turns along the way...and we will keep you posted.



Funds of Social Security (Kranot Bituach Leumi)

We applied to a special fund for youth in danger under the auspices of the Bituach Leumi Funds (Kranot Bituach Leumi) These funds are designed to act as an incubator to cultivate and develop promising NGO's who are providing solutions to needs within Israeli society. The rationale behind the investment is not only to provide financial support for the NGO's important work but to guide and grow the organization to a state that will enable them to qualify for government support.

The application process was a year in the making, with exhaustive paperwork and multiple stages. (We laughed that it required a full time staff person just to meet their requirements :-)) We were initially rejected, we appealed, we fought back. In the later rounds of the application process, they provided us with professional consultants to help us develop a logic model, a project card, and a business/work plan with built in reporting, milestones and benchmarks. We eventually won in a very competitive process- the result of which was a 3 year grant.

As grateful as we are for the financial support and for the vote of confidence, we are equally excited by the prospect of Bituach Leumi providing us with years of professional guidance towards our growth.



Our dining room decorated expertly by our Bnot Sherut for the Hag Hasigd where we made a buffet of Ethiopian foods as part of our window into Ethiopian Culture.



Ministry of Health (Misrad HaBriut)

From the very beginning of our journey we tried to lobby Misrad Habriut, meeting multiple times with the chief psychiatrist and once with the then- Health Minister, Yaakov Litzman. We hit a brick wall once Corona set in, and we realized that we had to pivot and invest our efforts instead in the Ministry of Education. However, we did not give up altogether and we did apply for support from the Health Ministry, through an RFP (Request for Proposals) in the area of mental health. The government ministries occasionally publicize RFPs for NGOs to apply for support in specific areas.) We won a grant to provide targeted aid for trauma victims who developed a diagnosed emotional disorder as a result of their trauma. Although this particular project is specific and contained, we believe that our qualifications and professionalism has brought us one step closer to wider, more substantial support from the Health Ministry in the future.



כל המציל נפש אחת מישראל כאילו הציל עולם מלא

מסכת סנהדרין, פרק ד', משנה ה

Our Kids

Our numbers are important. Our strategic partnerships are critical in enabling our vision. At the same time, we never lose track of what is most important to us: the individual metamorphosis of each one of our children. Here we zoom in on one of our many remarkable graduates.



S. was our most challenging kid in our first year. Cutting, suicide attempts and daily dramas threatened to rock our program. There were many times when she drove the staff to the brink. Her lovely middle class parents were at a loss, calling the police when necessary. At staff meetings, the question arose repeatedly: Could Beit Daniella help S.? Perhaps she was not suited. She not only shook the staff, she shook her fellow students and the sensitive balance within the group dynamic.

Yet we did not give up on her...and she decided not to give up on us. Hadassa's husband, David Pardes came to visit one day and upon being introduced, she choked up and blurted out, "You don't know....You saved my life."

We maintained our belief in her, creating personal goals and accountability charts with her. And indeed, she checked the boxes and ended up being our first "graduate"!

A few months ago, Hadassa went out to a Cafe and who should come up to her table to wait on her...but S.! The meeting was emotional on both sides, because not only is

S. thriving in her new high school and getting on in her family, she is also working and taking financial responsibility for herself.

This picture was taken a few months ago when she came to visit Beit Daniella. That same day, the chair of our professional advisory board, Prof. Yoav Kohen, the Director of the Youth Department at the Psychiatric Hospital of Eitanim happened to be visiting too. She turned to him and asked, "Do you recognize me?" Pre- Beit Daniella, she had been hospitalized at Eitanim. Guess what? He said "No." I was bursting with pride and I asked her if she minded if I took a picture of her - and she said yes and flashed me the proud/shy smile you see in the picture!

S. and the rest of the kids at Beit Daniella owe their lives not only to David Pardes, but to you- to the people who believe in them. And to those who believed in us enough to help us create (and sustain) something from nothing.