

Through the Eyes of the People we Serve

The Joint's Impact on
Older Adults in Israel



JDC Israel Eshel
Touching Lives, Transforming Communities

Est.
1969





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**According to Israel's
National Economic
Council, aging is one
of Israel's six main
strategic challenges
in the social
economic field.**



JDC-Eshel

Founded in 1969, JDC-Eshel is Israel's social research and development incubator, tasked with developing comprehensive responses to the complex challenges faced by Israeli society with the aging of its population.

JDC-Eshel has served as a leader in the planning and development of services for older adults in Israel for the past 50 years.

JDC-Eshel brings together and serves as an "honest broker" between government ministries, prominent stakeholders, and professionals involved in the care of older adults.

In partnership, these groups work to ensure older adults may continue to live independent, satisfactory and dignified lives at home in the community, while easing the responsibility of care on the family and welfare and health systems.

Many of the 976,000 individuals aged 65+ living in Israel today benefit directly and indirectly from a rich variety of services and programs that were developed and nurtured by JDC-Eshel, and then disseminated throughout Israel.

A Message from the CEO

Since 1969, JDC-Eshel has been planning and developing services to enable Israel's older adults to age independently at home. I am proud to say that today, over 97% of older adults are living at home within the community, with numerous services and interventions available to them.

Yet the aging of Israel's population remains one of Israel's most pressing and complex social issues and one of Israel's primary strategic challenges in the social economic field. We stand ill prepared ahead of one of the most dramatic demographic transformations in Israel's history forecast over the next two decades – the doubling of the older adult population to two million citizens, and the increase in the proportion of older adults to the overall population, from 11% to 15%.

JDC-Eshel is tasked with formulating comprehensive responses to the complex challenges facing Israeli society as its population ages.

The individuals highlighted in this book are just some of the hundreds of thousands of older adults and their families who are impacted by JDC-Eshel annually.

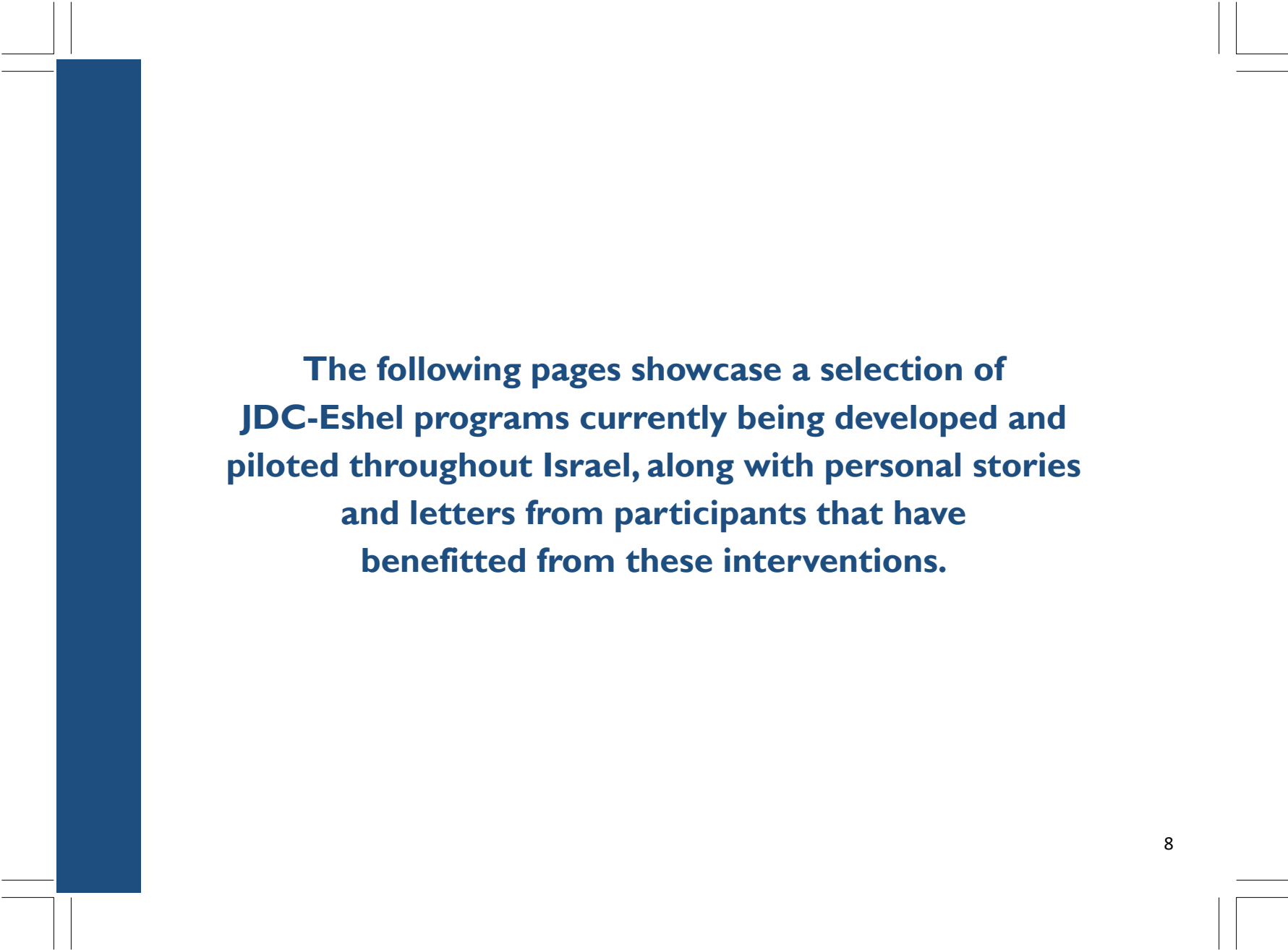
On this note, I wish to acknowledge and thank our philanthropic partners, whose dedicated and generous support enable us to perform this important work.

Yossi Heymann



JDC-Eshel's Impact in Numbers

- 97.5% of older adults in Israel live independently at home.
- 1-in-5 older adults in Israel require nursing services. 90% of them live independently at home.
- 56,000 older adults, or 6% of the older adult population in Israel are members of 270 supportive communities throughout the country.
- 18,000 older adults attend 174 day-centers for older adults daily.
- 8,000 Holocaust survivors attend 120 Café Europa social clubs for survivors weekly.
- 6,000 abused or neglected older adults turn to 77 units for the prevention of elder abuse and neglect annually.
- 5,000 older adults attend 330 Warm Home social gatherings weekly.
- 3 training centers offer 66 unique courses relating to older adults services. 2,800 professionals and para-professionals working with older adults in Israel graduate from the training centers each year.

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The following pages showcase a selection of JDC-Eshel programs currently being developed and piloted throughout Israel, along with personal stories and letters from participants that have benefitted from these interventions.

Stories from the People We Serve

Integrated Care.....	11
Supportive Communities Next Generation	19
Dementia.....	23
Caregivers	27
Services for Homebound Holocaust Survivors.....	35
Yad I' Yad National Volunteer Network for Homebound Holocaust Survivors	41
Witness Theater	45
Photography with Joy	51
Digital Literacy	61
Preparation for Retirement.....	69
60+ Employment Centers	73
Health Promoting Environments.....	79
Warm Homes	83



Integrated Care

The integrated care program addresses the diverse and complex needs of Israel's most vulnerable older adults through a case management approach. This enables clients to better navigate the fragmented service system by having an individualized care plan centered on themselves and their families.

The program enables the efficient utilization of resources to help older adults maintain their functional ability and health, which in turn allows them to continue living independently and with dignity at home.

A case management team comprising a nurse and social worker take joint responsibility for the client - assessing the client's needs and providing a tailored solution.

The case management team works with each client for approximately six months to ensure that all solutions remain in place and that community services or the client's family members are monitoring the older adult's care.

Batya (80) and Sharon (84)

Integrated Care

Batya and Sharon are sisters. They live together in a poor neighborhood in Southern Israel.

Batya (seated right) is confined to a wheelchair, and her older sister Sharon (seated left) is blind, deaf and dumb.

In addition to regular visits by the case management nurse and social worker to assess their needs, the team is working hard to actualize the benefits provided by various government and municipal agencies, which are due to the women but of which they are unaware.

These include financial benefits connected with their age, disabilities, and socio economic status; caregiving hours; and the provision of appropriate medical attention within their home.

The team has also worked with relevant bodies to provide the women with suitable walking apparatuses, beds suited to their physical needs, a special wheelchair fitted for the toilet, and a wheelchair fitted for the shower.



Batya and Sharon in their home with the Integrated Care nurse

Haim (86)

Integrated Care

Haim lives in Jerusalem and has been a client of the Integrated Care program for over a year. His wife Simcha was also a client of the program before she passed away. Haim and Simcha were married for almost 70 years. Haim and Simcha became clients of the program when Simcha suffered two strokes that caused her mental and physical abilities to deteriorate significantly. She was not able to speak following the strokes and had feeding tubes inserted.

Haim and their son were struggling to provide Simcha with the care she needed. Their health care providers did not train Haim and his son on how to care for Simcha and they did not know the basics of dealing with medications and feeding tubes.

Together, the integrated care social worker and nurse ensured that the family received all the services that they required. The social worker acted as an emotional support system for Haim and his son. The nurse trained their son on how to help Simcha and helped with medical issues within the home, instead of the family having to take Simcha to the hospital.

Simcha's health declined rapidly. Following her death, Haim was extremely depressed, and the team was there to support him.

Soon after, he was diagnosed with inoperable cancer, and since then, the case management team have been available to support him and his son each step of the way.



Haim was born in the old city of Jerusalem and in 1948, at the age of 16, he was given a rifle and tasked with defending the city from the Jordanian army. There were no other men left to fight.

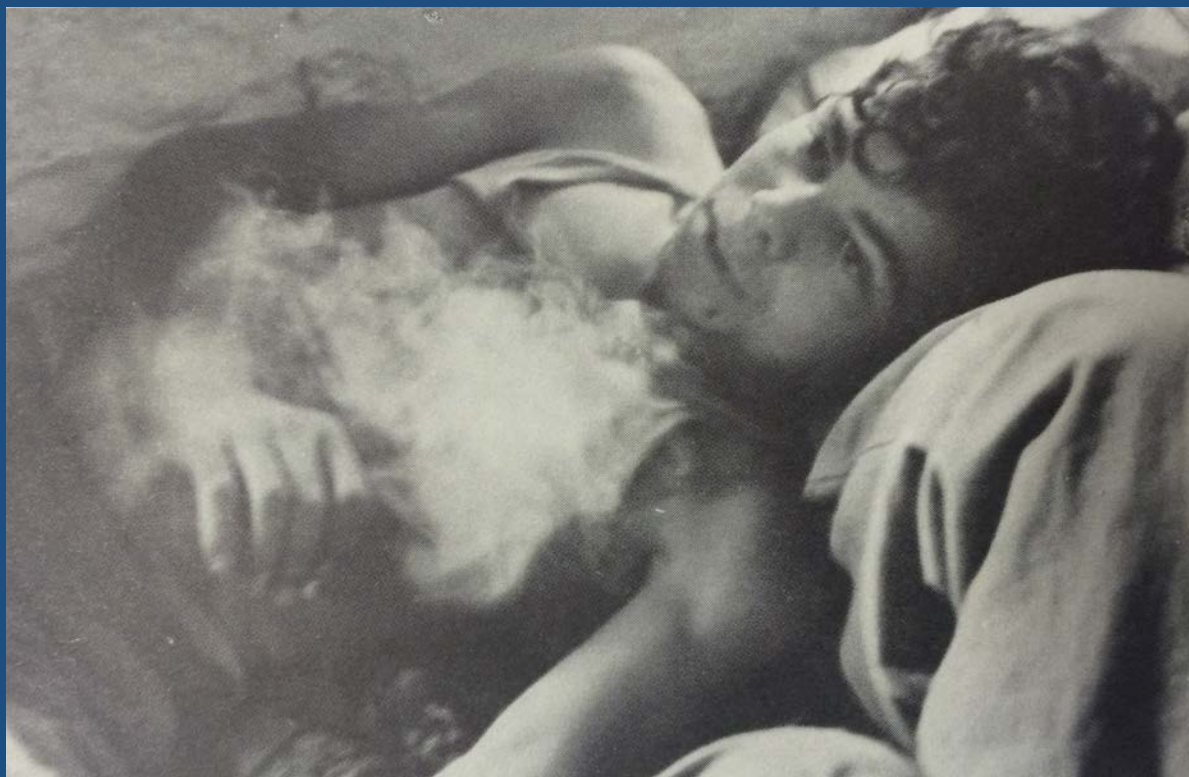
Shortly after the fighting began, Haim was wounded in his foot and became a Jordanian prisoner of war. For four months, Haim was handcuffed, wounded and lying in a tent in Jordan with incessant flies buzzing around him. His captors told him that Tel Aviv and Haifa had been captured and that all was lost. Haim thought that he would never leave there alive, and even if he did, there was no Israel to which to return.

During the fighting, a photojournalist from England, Jon Phillips, came into the Old City with the Jordanians and took photos of the war. He photographed the Jews being kicked out of their homes, of the soldiers blowing up synagogues, of the Jordanian soldiers looting the abandoned Jewish homes and synagogues.

Jon met Haim shortly after he was wounded. Haim was lying on the ground, leaning on the leg of a fellow soldier who had also been wounded, and the journalist asked him if there was anything he could do for him. Haim said, "I am in so much pain, do you have any medicine?" Jon said, "No, but would you like a cigarette?" And thus Haim smoked his first cigarette, which the journalist captured in the photo to the right.

When Haim was finally released from captivity, he returned to Jerusalem, and soon after, married his elementary school sweetheart, Simcha, who he cared for until her passing in 2017.

Haim and his son have expressed immense gratitude for the guidance and support that the integrated care team have provided them over the past year.



Haim laying in a Jordanian infirmary after being captured during the War of Independence (1948)



Supportive Communities Next Generation

JDC-Eshel's supportive community model allows older adults who live at home to receive three primary services – access to a community parent 24/7, access to a weekly social club, and emergency medical services. There are 270 communities with 56,000 members throughout Israel.

The older adult population in Israel has seen a change in demographics since the original supportive communities model was first developed nearly three decades ago. 80% of older adults have strong levels of functional ability and live independent lives, while 90% of older adults who require nursing services (1-in-5) continue to live at home, within the community. Life expectancy has reached 82, with this number increasing for those who reach age 65. The supportive community model therefore needs to adapt accordingly make the community services more relevant to today's older adults.

In response, JDC-Eshel is developing and piloting four new supportive communities models to address changing needs among the older adult population — Expanding the services available to members; Integration with Israel's Nursing Law, which provides homecare assistance to older adults who require constant personal care or help in daily activities; Social activities for the homebound; and Building Communities for Generations.

Devorah (81)

Supportive Communities Next Generation

Dvora, lives in the central city of Holon.

Dvora has great difficulty walking and is reliant on a walker to move around her apartment. She is a member of the Supportive Community program and for many years attended the local social club offered through the supportive community.

Since she started having difficulty walking, and with changes to the local bus routes that made regular transport inaccessible, she has stopped attending the club's weekly social activities. She visits the club only when she can get a ride both to and from the center.

Recently, a transportation service was added to the supportive communities next generation model. Dvora is able to benefit from and "pay" for this regular service with the Nursing Law homecare hours that she is granted on a weekly basis.

This has allowed Dvora to resume her bi-weekly visits to the senior citizen club in her neighborhood.

Like Dvora, other homebound members of the supportive community have been able to return to the social clubs they had belonged to for years, thanks to the integration of the supportive community with the Nursing Law and addition of new services.

Rachel (84)

Supportive Communities Next Generation

Rachel is lonely – her daughter lives in the United States, one son has a disability (both of his legs were amputated), and the other son is consumed in his personal affairs. She is only in sporadic contact with her children. Along with her loneliness, Rachel has had a traumatic past of divorce and domestic violence. Rachel lives on the fourth floor with no elevator. This is problematic for her as she suffers from dizzy spells and has difficulty walking. She is also living with early-stage dementia.

The supportive communities community father and other program staff make a special effort to visit Rachel regularly as they recognize her dire situation and suffering from loneliness. They also recognized that Rachel's apartment was neglected - overrun with mice - and extremely dirty. Rachel had difficulty doing chores around the house. Therefore, it was arranged to have her home regularly cleaned, which has meant that the atmosphere in her home has greatly improved. This service is "paid" for with the Nursing Law homecare hours that Rachel is granted on a weekly basis.

In the past, telemarketers and companies have easily taken advantage of Rachel, and fortunately, the community father has been able to step in and put a stop to the continuous abuse and fraud.

Rachel also takes advantage of the transport service so she can attend the community club every week. She greatly enjoys her time at the center and actively participates in the range of activities on offer.



Dementia

An estimated 150,000 Israelis (15% of the older adult population) live with some form of dementia.

These numbers are likely to double over the next twenty years, proportionate to the projected growth of the general population of older adults.

In light of this, the Government of Israel launched a national program to bolster and expand services for older adults living with dementia.

The Government is partnering with JDC-Eshel to develop, pilot, and disseminate programs to improve the welfare of adults who are living with dementia and to provide support to their families.

Sarah (84)

Training Doctors in Hospitals to Better Manage Patients with Dementia

Sarah is a widow and lives with her daughter. She receives nine hours of caregiving hours through Israel's Nursing Law. Over the past year she has started experiencing the onset of dementia.

A few months ago, she was hospitalized due to a blockage in her intestines.

After having surgery and recovering, she was required to undergo further surgery to reverse the colostomy. Sarah was also hospitalized a number of times over the past year in an addition to these surgeries.

The hospital doctors, who had received training in managing patients with dementia, understood from Sarah's evaluation report that she would need to receive additional support while hospitalized to avoid her experiencing unnecessary loss in her functional ability while in hospital.

A team of geriatric physicians consulted on Sarah's case and created a personalized intervention program for her.

For example, they understood that Sarah was at risk for delirium - difficulty in concentration and following instructions - which fluctuated throughout the day. The team therefore recommended that the staff keep Sarah under closer supervision and revised her drug regimen, excluding a drug that was making Sarah more confused and more at risk for falling.

With the initial onset of dementia, Sarah was at high risk for rapid loss of cognitive functional abilities while lying alone day after day in the hospital ward.

Having recognized this, the team recommended a volunteer visit Sarah a number of times a week to work with Sarah with cognitive stimuli.

They also recommended that Sarah be moved to a room with a quieter environment.

The volunteer kept Sarah company, stimulating her cognitively, and assisting with meals.

The volunteer also helped orient Sarah to the time and place, and helped her work on the recollection of long-term memories.

The volunteer was an attentive listener, and offered much needed emotional support and encouragement.

Despite Sarah's cognitive state, it was clear that she was satisfied with the volunteer visiting, and overall there was no significant reduction in her physical and cognitive abilities during her weeks of recovery in the hospital.



Caregivers

The Community Model for Primary Caregivers program provides support through "one-stop shop" Municipal Resource Centers for primary caregivers.

The support centers' holistic approach views the needs of the caregiver and the cared for older adult as a single-family unit.

Professionals and volunteers assist caregivers in creating a holistic treatment plan for the family member.

This work-plan is tailored to support the family caregiver and is modified according to the changing needs of the family unit.

The Center provides caregivers with information on how to access benefits for their relatives from different municipal services, while also focusing on raising public awareness around the needs of family caregivers.

Aaron (78)

Family Caregiver Support Center

Aaron was recently diagnosed with early stage dementia. He is the sole caregiver for his wife.

"I was introduced to the Family Caregiver Support Center in June 2015, when it first opened. At the time, I was in contact with the department of social services. My wife has Alzheimers and I am her caregiver.

I received a phone call from the Center asking me to participate in a focus group for male caregivers. The focus group did not end up taking place, but I asked if I could come to the center for a consultation on how to better care for my wife.

Since that first meeting, the Center has constantly been by my side professionally and always welcomes me warmly no matter what issue I may be facing.

Firstly, with the Center's support and advice, I learned about monetary support we were eligible for from the government, which significantly increased our income.

Due to her disease, my wife is very aggressive and caring for her requires a lot of emotional strength. Because of our increased income, I was able to hire a private caregiver for the hours when the homecare caregiver, supplied through Israel's Nursing Law, was unavailable.

This additional help benefits not only me but my wife as well. The caregiver has a lot of patience when taking care of my wife. Now, during the hours I care for my wife I am not burnt out and I am able to care for her properly.

When I attend the Center – and I go fairly often – I always find someone who is willing to listen to me and empathize with me. The staff look into ways in which they can help me, and they call to see if I have completed the tasks we spoke of during our previous meetings. For instance, they ask me if I have sent in the forms to the National Insurance Institute or to the Holocaust Survivor Rights Authority, which I filled in with a staff member at the Center. Unfortunately, I forget many things as I too have early stage dementia so they call to remind me often.

The staff at the center really show me wonderful kindness. I can turn to the Center with every problem I have and I know they will do everything in their power to help me.

I thank you from the depths of my heart for your support, which has been life changing for my wife and myself.”

Batya (58)

Family Caregiver Support Center

Batya is married and is the primary caregiver for her mother.

"I am the only child of a mother who has been living with Alzheimers for the past seven years.

Two years ago, I had the privilege of attending the Family Caregiver Support Center conference in Bnei Brak.

The idea that somebody cares – emotionally and practically – for family caregivers of older adults - really touched me.

There is a huge need for this!

During these past two years, I have come to realize the importance of the Center's contribution to the community – a holistic outlook that focuses on every aspect relevant to older adults and their families.

I participated in a wonderful support group at the Center that greatly contributed to balancing my mental state, provided solutions for various dilemmas, and gave me the strength to continue.

The instructor, Rina, was professional, direct, and friendly, and the meetings were extremely helpful.

In addition, every time I had a question on a technical or painful emotional issue I turned to the Center and received a speedy, warm, and professional reply from Meirav, Esther, or one of the volunteers.

With my own eyes, I saw, as I sat among the participants, just how much support the Center offers caregivers.

Despite the great difficulty recruiting men to activities, the Center managed to attract a large number of male caregivers through a series of lectures on relevant topics.

I thank you all so much for your perseverance in these extremely important activities and your efforts to reach the various populations.

I hope that you will continue to develop and contribute to the welfare of family caregivers ("the children of"), and to charge our batteries with knowledge and positive experiences.

You give us the strength to go on and I hope that my words, which come from the heart, will give you the strength to continue to grow."

Sarah (65)

Family Caregiver Support Center

Sarah is married and is the primary caregiver for her aunt.

“I was in a difficult situation with an aging aunt who lived with dementia and suffered from various disabilities. She was living on her own with nobody to care for her. For four years, I tried to get her help through The National Insurance Institute. Unfortunately, it was a nerve-wracking bureaucratic process that resulted in no help and came at the expense of my caring for my aunt. It simply exhausted my physical and mental energy!

Then, the Creator sent good people who told me about the Family Caregiver Support Center. My automatic reaction was that I could not handle facing another task and another person... talk, explain, request. I had neither the time nor the energy after having failed repeatedly. One day, I decided to pick up the phone and try again.

Right from my first telephone conversation with the Center two years ago, I suddenly felt I could breathe again - into my body and soul.

Throughout the conversation, I felt I was taking a step in the right direction. The Center's director, Ms. Meirav, may she live a long and happy life, promised to check the issue with the National Insurance Institute and quickly got in touch with them.

At the same time, she organized for me to be able to receive help, free of charge, from professional nursing companies even before the issue was settled with the National Insurance Institute.

Suddenly, there were good days along with the difficult ones, because I had support and someone to turn to for every problem. The center provided advice, counseling, and solutions to every issue with unending patience. More than once, it felt as though my problem was their problem. Meirav diligently looks into and clarifies issues, conditions and laws. She looks into all possibilities, finds other ways to resolve issues, and is constantly looking for creative solutions when it seems we are up against a brick wall. She does not let go until she gets what she wants. She is warm and encouraging with her extensive knowledge in the field. She even goes the extra mile and will deal with me after hours if need be.

I admit, without shame, that since finding the center I no longer feel despair and the need to give up. With the help of God, my dear aunt got me back again. I now know how to make life easier for her; to help her; to think, plan and decide together; and aim for the best, because Meirav is able to assist me to manage the confusing background noise. We now have a good foreign caregiver and we receive assistance through the HMO's extended insurance services, which my aunt was insured for some 22 years – that was also a huge project that was overcome, with the center's help, of course.

Additionally, Meirav arranges the wonderful lectures, which are so enriching, supportive, and helpful in daily matters such as rights, family relations, geriatrics, and health. They discuss coping tools for us according to our needs and the role that has fallen on us. The last lecture was on utilizing time and getting organized, a truly critical topic for each one of us. We are blessed. The hall was full and the lectures are in great demand.

I give thanks to God Almighty for blessing me with the center, whose diligent work bears such fruit.”



Services for Homebound Holocaust Survivors

Services for Homebound Holocaust Survivors is JDC-Eshel's innovative strategic solution to improving the quality of life of the increasing number of homebound Holocaust survivors who are confined to their homes due to their deteriorating physical, cognitive and emotional health. The program is designed to enrich the lives of survivors while giving them new meaning and strength to combat their social isolation and emotional burden, while also relieving some of the burden on the family or caregiver.

The program provides participants with social and therapeutic services that are facilitated by professionals and volunteers.

Examples of the services and activities provided are as follows: social worker visits, adapted physical exercise, assistance with accessing survivor benefits, access to medical and paramedical services, a mobile library, use of technological aids to foster communication between housebound survivors and their friends and family, private home concerts performed by student volunteers, assistance in maintaining a home garden, and Shabbat and Jewish holiday home celebrations.

Additional benefits include enhancing the survivor's sense of vitality by promoting social relationships with individuals, including other survivors and the community at large.

Anna (87)

Services for Homebound Holocaust survivors

Bereavement and hardship have been facts of life for Anna, and not only during the traumatic Holocaust years.

Anna has outlived her husband, and tragically, her only son passed away tragically.

Anna recently suffered a major fall, from which she never fully recovered.

Today, she can move around her apartment, but her one arm paralyzed.

She only leaves her house for urgent errands, such as doctors visits, although even these she often forgoes due to the effort it requires to leave the apartment.

After meeting with Anna, the program coordinator built a basket of unique services from which she felt Anna would gain maximum benefit. She arranged an occupational therapist and massage therapist to come to Anna's home every two weeks, which saw an immediate improvement in Anna's functional ability.

She also arranged an animal therapist to visit Anna regularly as Anna had a love for animals and this in particular brought her a sense of calm.

The coordinator also arranged for an application to be made so that Anna would receive the rights and benefits due to her.

Anna was also matched her up with volunteers: Esther, a retiree, and a young married couple.

When Esther visits, Anna is able to converse with someone who understands her mindset as an older person.

Over time, the relationship between the two has blossomed from one of volunteer-client to one of close friendship.

Visits from the young couple have a different "flavor."

The two liven up Anna's day with stories from their busy lives; moreover, they have introduced her to the wonders of technology, using online photo services to create albums from her old photos, perpetuating her life story.

From a woman that had little social interactions, Anna now looks forward to her interactions with the volunteers.

The program coordinator has noted a significant improvement in her physical and emotional health since she entered into the program.

Golda (98)

Services for Homebound Holocaust survivors

Having survived the horrors of Auschwitz, Golda miraculously made her way to Israel.

She and her late husband were blessed with an only daughter, Rachel, who is cognitively impaired.

Today, mother and daughter live together in Golda's small apartment, yet neither has the capacity to further the wellbeing of the other.

Thanks to the program, Golda started receiving regular home visits from a social work student, a physical exercise instructor, and a musician, all of who harness their own skills to improve her quality of life.

More recently, the program coordinator arranged a professional from the Body/Soul program who began visiting Golda on a weekly basis, and engaging both Golda and her daughter, Rachel in activities to preserve and enhance their cognition.

The shared activity between mother and daughter added a new dimension to their relationship, and the "homework" provided by the Body/Soul therapist meant that there were more opportunities for meaningful activities when they were home alone.

Frieda (88)

Services for Homebound Holocaust survivors

Frieda, an Auschwitz survivor, lives alone in Ramat Hasharon, on the outskirts of Tel Aviv. Although the city boasts plenty of activities for older adults, Frieda rarely chooses to leave her home.

After a recent fall, which left her dependent upon a wheelchair for mobility, she became depressed and lost all interest in any type of activity. Joining the program was however a turning point in her life.

The program coordinator arranged for a fitness instructor to make weekly visits to her home, and has encouraged her to start walking. With every step, Frieda grows in self-confidence.

Prior to her fall, Frieda loved gardening and it offered her much respite from the loneliness in her apartment. After her fall Frieda was unable to garden. The program coordinator therefore arranged a home gardening instructor to visit her every two weeks and teach her how to garden from the comfort of her wheelchair on her patio – something she never thought she would be able to do, and has become the highlight of her day.

Additionally, thanks to the gentle persuasion of a program volunteer, Frieda has started to attend the city's social club for Holocaust survivors, where she enjoys engaging activities and varied companionship.



Yad I'Yad National Volunteer Network for Homebound Holocaust Survivors

Yad I'Yad aims to alleviate loneliness among Holocaust survivors by building a network of volunteers who visit survivors on a weekly basis.

The program, launched in July 2017, will directly impact 5,000 homebound Holocaust survivors within the first three years.

The initiative will see 5,000 volunteers recruited nationally to serve as the backbone of the program.

Professional staff work with volunteers to devise a customized program to meet the survivors' needs and fulfill the desires of the vulnerable survivors.

Where possible, volunteers and survivors are matched based on mutual interests or other common factors.

Miriam (85)

Yad I' Yad National Volunteer Network for Homebound Holocaust Survivors

Miriam was born in Romania. In first grade, the Nazis pulled all the Jews out of school and Miriam never returned to a formal educational setting. At the tender age of eight Miriam witnessed her father being murdered by the Nazis before her eyes.

At the age of fourteen, Miriam made her way to Israel - alone. She was adopted by a family on a kibbutz, along with fifty other children who were placed with families on the kibbutz.

She began her time in Israel by working in the fields, and finally settled into a career of pre-school teaching. Miriam's sister and mother also miraculously survived the war and made it to Israel a few years later where the family was reunited and lived together.

Miriam was recruited to the Israeli Army where she met her husband. They were married forty years and were blessed with three sons. At the age of sixty, her husband started experiencing heart complications and knew his time was limited. In order to fulfill a final wish, he returned with Miriam to Romania for a visit to visit the grave of his mother.

Miriam's husband passed away three months later. Today, Miriam has six grandchildren from her three sons, but is largely alone. She has made it her pastime to knit scarfs and hats, which she donates to charitable causes.

Miriam currently lives in a retirement community in Hod Hasharon and is part of the Yad I' Yad program. She was matched with Leah, a volunteer, who visits Miriam twice a week.

Leah became interested in the Yad I' Yad program since her late parents were also Holocaust survivors and she understood the difficulties they experienced in their later years due to the traumas they experienced during the Holocaust, and how these traumas were exacerbated through the loneliness in their older age.

When Leah's parents passed away, she decided that she wanted to volunteer with other Holocaust survivors.

Miriam and Leah have developed a wonderful relationship and Miriam in particular is very appreciative for the personal time she has to speak her mind and share her thoughts, offering her some respite from the traumas and memories that weigh her down during her hours alone.



Leah (right), a Holocaust survivor and her volunteer companion, Miriam (left)



Witness Theater

JDC-Eshel's Witness Theater program is an innovative intergenerational theater program for Holocaust survivors and third generation Israeli high school students. Witness Theater offers a therapeutic process by which Holocaust survivors can come to terms with their past, spreading testimony through the retelling of their stories.

The program aims to simultaneously provide catharsis for the survivor generation and connect them with their grandchildren's generation; thus passing on the memory of the Holocaust to a new audience. Over the course of a year, the group works together in weekly meetings during which the two generations expose the jarring stories of survival and explore issues of trauma. Through theater workshops, using acting, props, lighting and music, participants young and old undergo a process of transformation. Professionals guide the creative process and encourage free expression by both survivors and students. The project culminates in the production of a semi-professional public performance that dramatizes the survivors' stories – chronicling their memories and personal survival.

To date more than 1,000 Israeli Holocaust survivors have participated in the program in more than 70 groups throughout Israel. The program has been adopted in both Germany, the United States, and Ukraine.

Ada (80)

Witness Theater– Even Yehuda, Israel

Ada (Adla Fisch) was born in August 1938 to Moshe and Fania Yorgal. Her family lived in the town of Skorny in Bessarabia, present-day Ukraine.

In 1942, when Ada was three and a half years old, her and her family were forced from their home. Her mother was pregnant. During their flight, Ada's father fell ill and was murdered by the Ukrainians.

Ada and her mother arrived in Mogilev, Transnistria, where her brother was born. Tragically, her brother died when he was two weeks old due to starvation.

In 1943, with the assistance of the Joint, Ada's mother sent Ada along with other children to Bucharest. Ada describes the two years she spent in an orphanage in Bucharest, not knowing if her mother was dead or alive, as a living hell.

In 1945, Ada arrived in Odessa, where she was reunited with her mother. Ada recalls their reunion:

“I don’t remember what I said to her or what she said to me. I just remember a big hug and many tears of joy.”

The woman brought her and her mother to Czernowitz and from there they returned to Skorny.

In 1946, Ada and her mother left Russia and moved to the town of Rubanico, in Romania, where Ada began her studies.

In 1947, they boarded a ship called Transylvania in the direction of Brazil and got off in Italy. After passing through a refugee camp in Italy, they boarded a shaky ship to Haifa, Israel. Having finally arrive Home, the joined a new immigrant community in Even Yehuda where she continues to live today.

Ada served in Israel's Air Force, and is blessed with three sons and fourteen grandchildren.

For Ada, who grew up in Even Yehuda where no one seemed to know or care about her traumatic past, Witness Theater was an opportunity to deal with memories that had been repressed for decades.

A letter from Ada can be found on the following page...



Ada narrates her traumatic story during a Witness Theater performance

Reflections on the Witness Theater Program

“I was one of twelve Holocaust survivors in our Witness Theater group - along with 15 high-school students.

Initially, both survivors and students, were uncomfortable.

We did not know one other and what was expected of us or where this was headed.

The students, typically, giggled and were busy doing their own thing, while we older adults were serious and ready to get to work!

Two professionals sat before us with a burning desire and vast experience on forging a meaningful bond between these two generations.

For an entire year, we gathered together at 4pm every Monday, and gradually warmed up to one another. We talked, played, painted, and told stories under the professionals' courteous and professional guidance.

We shared our personal stories – difficult at first - and these were gradually transformed into a play.

The staff tailored characters to the students, who had in the interim matured and realized the huge task and responsibility that faced them.

We all invested heavily in all aspects of the experience and it resulted in a perfect, moving and meaningful performance.

The silence in the auditorium during the shows was proof of the impact we were having on the audience.

I underwent a very personal and meaningful experience over this year.

More than once, I went back to being the little girl from the distant past.

I felt a strong longing for my mother, who had and continues to be a part of me my entire life, although she has been gone for some fourteen years.

Thank you to my older friends, the brave survivors.

And to you, dear children, I loved you from the start and knew you would do a great job carrying out this assignment.

To the incredible professionals - thank you for guiding us and enabling us to express ourselves with so much patience and perseverance.”





Photography with Joy

JDC-Eshel's Photography with Joy program proves the well-known maxim "A picture paints a thousand words."

By helping survivors express their "words" – loaded memories and painful stories – through photography, the program has proven to be a life-changing experience.

Through a yearlong process, participants learn both the art and science of photography. The survivors learn to confront their traumatic past and tell their story to the world, using their own creativity. They create a portfolio of photographs that help them share and process their experiences of the Holocaust and its continued impact on their and their families' lives.

At the end, participants exhibit their work to the public, an opportunity that is both cathartic and empowering.

In 2017, JDC-Eshel launched a new intergenerational model of the program in which high school students work with survivors in the photography class.

These young Israelis learn about the survivors' stories and create portraits with them. The survivors are able to share their stories with a new generation.

Reuven (90)

Photography with Joy

Reuven was born in 1928 in Copenhagen, Denmark. When he was fifteen years old the war reached Denmark.

In 1943, when the Nazis began arresting Danish Jews, Reuven's father and two older brothers "disappeared" and joined the Danish underground.

Together with his mother and three younger siblings, Reuven was sent to Theresienstadt ghetto, where they stayed for 18 months.

They did not know of the secret deal between Denmark and Germany, according to which Danish Jews would not be sent to the gas chambers.

A few days before liberation they were sent to Sweden, where it was discovered that his father and brothers had drowned in the sea while trying to escape to Sweden.

After the war, Reuven returned to Denmark, where he met his future wife and lifelong partner – Birgitta, whose family had moved back to Denmark after spending the war years in Sweden.

In 1972, he and Birgitta decided to make Israel their home, and they made Aliya together with their two daughters.

Today they live in Kfar Saba, have eight grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

For sixty years, Reuven did not talk about his past.

At the age of 80, he started to open up and share his traumatic memories.

Reuven's book, "To Understand is not to Forgive", in which he details his experiences during the Holocaust, was published in Denmark in 2015.

Reuven's story and photograph as exhibited as part of the Photography with Joy program is shown on the next page.



Man Has No Advantage Over Animals (Reuven Fisherman)

“When the Nazis came to take us from our home in Copenhagen we were proud Danish Jews with equal rights.

Some two hundred Jews were loaded onto a German ship. Among them my mother, me – the oldest (fifteen), and my three younger siblings. My father and older brothers remained in Copenhagen. I felt a heavy responsibility on my shoulders. We arrived on German soil and from the ship we were taken directly to filthy cattle cars. Some fifty people in each cabin with a small window above. It was the beginning of October 1943, very cold. So crowded, not enough room for everyone to sit and the journey doesn’t end. Where are we being taken?

A terrible stench of urine and excrement fills the car. It is hard for people not to relieve themselves. One woman who tried to maintain her dignity finished the tea in her thermos and used it as a toilet. Others used the straw prepared for the animals who had been transported in the car before us.

Suddenly we stop. The doors are opened, they are shouting at us to get down. We all relieve ourselves in the field, close together, men and women, like a herd of beasts. The Germans watch over us with weapons, mocking us. Humiliating us. They take us back to the cars, traveling on the tracks continuously day after day on our way to an unknown destination.

Within four days, the time it takes to travel to Theresienstadt, we became faceless people whose lives are as worthless as dust. Each day another layer of human dignity and control over our lives is peeled away.”

“For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them; as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that man hath no pre-eminence above a beast; for all is vanity.” (Ecclesiastes 3, 19)



Arie (79)

Photography with Joy

Arie was born in 1939 in Kezmerok, Czechoslovakia.

In 1944, the Nazis began sending transports of Czechoslovakian Jews to concentration camps in Poland. Despite attempts to escape, Arie and his extended family was caught and sent to the camps. When the allies liberated the camps in 1945, Arie and his mother returned to Spisska Nova Ves, Czechoslovakia and then immigrated to Israel in 1947. Later on, Arie married Dina and today they have three children, eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

For many years, Arie did not talk a lot about his experiences during the Holocaust. Through his participation in the Photography with Joy course, he was able to explore his feelings and memories of this traumatic period in his life.

The teachers, who were patient and sensitive to the course participants' backgrounds, created a safe atmosphere for Arie to recall his past and encouraged him throughout this process.

Arie looked forward to attending class each week and through the course he gained a supportive community of friends and confidants.

Arie describes this course as an important and moving experience in his life. Arie wrote the story on the following page to accompany the photograph he took during the program.



Photography with Joy intergenerational group of survivors and high school students (Raanana, Israel)



Arie and a student participant

Life in the Palm of Your Hand (Arie Shapira)

In 1944, my family was living in Spisska Nova Ves. The Germans were preparing lists of individuals to transport to the concentration camps. One way to postpone your transport was to work in a factory vital to the German army. My father quickly learned shoemaking skills and got a job in a shoemaking factory. The postponement of our transport was brief. Once again, our names appeared on the lists, and we were forced to flee and hide in villages. In time, the villagers became frightened and refused to hide us even for large sums of money.

The men decided to build a hut in the forest because the Germans were afraid to enter the forest due to the partisans. We managed to hide in the forests for a few months. Someone must have informed on us because the Germans came into the forest and caught us. We were sent by cattle car to Ravensbruck concentration camp. There they separated the men from the women and children. I will never forget this moment, because it was the last time I saw my father. Some two months later, they sent us to the infamous Bergen-Belsen camp. There we suffered terrible hunger and disease. Each day, I would watch in horror as another corpse was dragged out of the bunks. On April 15th, 1945, the British liberated us. My four-year-old -sister contracted tuberculosis and did not survive. I do not know her burial place. My mother and I returned to Spisska Nova Ves where we learned that apart from my aunt, her husband and son, everyone else in my family had perished.

In 1947, we immigrated to Israel with false papers. My mother married a lovely man who warmly adopted me and insisted I keep my surname to continue the Shapira legacy. My mother gave birth to my brother and I had a family once again. In 1961, I married Dina and we raised our own family to continue the Shapira legacy. Today we are very happy great-grandparents.





Digital Literacy

The Digital Gap is a strategic topic related to national resilience - societies that are better prepared for the Digital Era will be more resilient. Scholars warn of a situation in which those lacking digital literacy will be considered 'the new illiterates', impacting their employment, income and education. Lack of digital literacy among older adults will also negatively impact physical and mental health, loneliness and depression. In light of the ongoing trend of fast developing digital technologies, people are required to utilize an increasing variety of technical, cognitive and sociological skills to carry out tasks and solve problems in digital environments. There are an estimated 470,000 (1-in-2) older adults in Israel with poor levels of digital literacy who are unable to benefit from the application of technology in their day-to-day living. Low digital access and the growing difficulty many older adults experience in everyday use of technology, is increasing their emotional, social, financial and health gaps.

JDC-Eshel is developing a Digital Literacy National Initiative for older adults that offers a range of digital literacy courses and workshops across various levels and disciplines – teaching digital skills that older adults need to remain relevant in the workplace, and tools to manage their health, social and economic wellbeing. The initial 18-month pilot phase includes 66 groups comprising 1,000 participants, throughout 50 locations nationally.

Anita (78)

Digital Literacy

Anita was born in Casablanca, Morocco in 1940. Anita and her family were greatly impacted by JDC's support of Jewish day schools and provision of medical care, clothes, and food in Casablanca. She recalls that many people did not have food to eat but thankfully, JDC was able to provide flour, sugar oil, cheese, and gifts for Hannukah to her community.

A bright student in school, JDC offered Anita the opportunity to participate in a course to become a preschool teacher at the age of 16. She worked in the preschool until 1964 when she made Aliyah to Israel.

Today, Anita is participating in one of JDC-Eshel's digital literacy courses for older adults. When she learned that it was the Joint that was offering the class in her neighborhood, she was very excited about the possibility to be involved.

Anita loves to learn new skills - she speaks French, Arabic, Hebrew, and English, and she is constantly working to improve her language skills. The course was able to find a young volunteer who speaks French so that they could work together in French.

When Anita began the digital literacy course, she did not know how to use a computer. Her son bought her a computer for her birthday and she worked hard in class to improve her computer skills.

She is now learning how to browse the internet, send emails, and how to pay bills online.

Anita's youngest son recently moved to the United States. She misses him and her grandchildren terribly, and knowing how to send emails enables her to communicate regularly.

In the course, she is also learning how to utilize various computer features, such as Skype, which will enable her to speak with and see her family through Israel and abroad.

The course has also created a community of friends for Anita – an added incentive to attend the class every Monday.

Anita is very thankful for the work JDC-Eshel is doing for older adults and refers to the Joint as her extended family. The Joint was there for her in her early years, and now again in her later years.

A letter from Anita can be found on the following page...



Anita at her weekly digital literacy class

A Letter of Thanks from Anita

“To the wonderful people of the Joint,

I have been blessed to be a participant in JDC-Eshel's Digital Literacy program for older adults, but please let me share with you how the Joint assisted me in the past... I sit here, moved to tears... and want to thank you for your extensive activities throughout the world and especially in Israel.

I was lucky enough to study, twice, under the auspices of these wonderful people.

Many years ago the Joint established kindergartens in North Africa, in Algiers, Tunisia, and Morocco, to provide a solution for young children who sat at home with nothing to do, and especially to provide them with nourishing, varied meals and a daily routine. I entered a seminar for kindergarten teachers and principals at the Joint's expense, and in addition I received an allowance and reimbursement for travel expenses. The seminar was excellently organized, with many teachers brought from abroad to train us. The studies were intensive in order to help people as quickly as possible. The kindergartens were equipped by the Joint: toys, books, heavy equipment, and training equipment.

I have a document testifying to the course I took, with the address and signature of the Joint's director.

We lived in a large villa in an upscale neighborhood, with a housekeeper to fulfill all our needs. The Joint's head office was near the villa – and one Shabbat one of the Joint's dignitaries joined us for Shabbat dinner.

(Continues on page 66)

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- ATTESTATION -

Je soussigné Abe Loskov, directeur de l'American Joint Distribution Committee au Maroc, certifie par la présente que Madame Benchanan Anita (née Lévy) née le 20 Juin 1910, a suivi avec succès le cours de formation de jardinières d'enfants d'une durée de trois mois sous la surveillance technique de l'American Joint Distribution Committee du 9 Avril au 6 Juillet 1964.

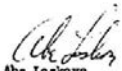
Ce cours comprenait les matières suivantes :

- Théorie et pratique de l'éducation de l'enfant
- Travail manuel et activités dans les garderies
- Hygiène de l'enfant
- Santé de l'enfant
- Judaïsme
- Programme juif dans les garderies.

Madame Benchanan a participé au stage de l'Introduction juive en Janvier 1967 et au cours supplémentaire d'éducation du 15 Février au 15 Avril 1968. En Juillet 1966 elle a commencé à travailler en qualité de jardinière à la garderie de la Communauté Israélite d'Essaouira et depuis Septembre 1969 en qualité de jardinière en chef.

Durant les cinq années pendant lesquelles Madame Benchanan a pris en charge cette garderie, elle y a maintenu un bon niveau bien qu'aux prises à de constantes difficultés. Elle possède des qualités exceptionnelles; elle a montré une imagination et une habilité d'adaptation. Elle a été capable dans l'organisation de la garderie et a pris des responsabilités.

Casablanca le 7 Mai 1964


 Abe Loskov
 Directeur

MG/ca

Anita's certificate of completion from JDC for successfully completing the course to become a preschool teacher (Casablanca, Morocco, 1964)

On Chanukah all the kindergarten children received a package of clothes and shoes as Chanukah Gelt. Salaries were also paid for by the Joint as the kindergartens were intended for low income families, with the parents paying a symbolic amount to keep them from feeling they were accepting charity.

As a child I remember that women who had given birth received a basic package for the newborn that included clothes, a blanket, diapers, and baby soap and shampoo. Once every two or three weeks provisions were given out to the city's poor. These included flour, sugar, oil, cheese, butter and more, and the distribution amount was based on the number of people in the family.

I'm stopping here as I have so much to say about this incredible organization and its wonderful people.

Today I am learning to use a computer under the auspices of this very same organization – the Joint. These are skills I am deeply lacking and which will help me stay in touch with family and friends in Israel and overseas, and purchase goods on the internet and make medical appointments amongst other wonderful benefits.

Thank you all for the help and the joy you bring to every home in Israel.

I am so thankful for the Joint that has been there to assist me throughout my life.”



JDC-supported Jewish day school (Casablanca, Morocco, c. 1948)



Preparation for Retirement

JDC-Eshel is developing a streamlined approach to retirement planning that comprises of retirement preparation conferences and decision-making and financial literacy workshops.

The program is aimed at raising awareness, strengthening emotional preparedness, teaching digital, financial and decision making skills, and providing information, guidance, and advice to retirees about how to navigate their retirement years.

Initially launched as a series of national conferences and workshops, the program now operates out of JDC-Eshel's one-stop shop Guidance Centers for independent older adults that are being implemented throughout the country.

JDC-Eshel's Guidance Centers cater exclusively to the needs of Israel's independent older adults, which comprise 80% of the older adult population. The Centers assist older adults to create a tailor-made retirement plan that makes use of existing services and activities in the community through both personal counseling services, group workshops and conferences. The Centers empower participants to make choices regarding volunteering and employment, healthy aging, preparing for and managing the retirement phase of life (emotional, psychological, financially), and improving their financial and digital literacy.

Batya (62) and Yisrael (66)

Retirement Preparation Workshop

“To the organizers of the Retirement Preparation Workshop,

Thank You!

I attended a four-session retirement preparation workshop under the auspices of JDC-Eshel and Pa’amonim, and in collaboration with the National Insurance Institute. The very fact that we can participate in a workshop for ‘future retirees’ should not be taken for granted.

The workshop provided ‘milestones’ and tools for understanding what we can expect in the future. In retrospect, as workshop participants, there is no doubt that these meetings contributed to an accurate understanding and better planning of the retirement preparation process.

To the instructor, Mr. Gilboa,

The success of any workshop depends on the ability of its instructor to present content. There is no doubt that Mr. Gilboa’s unique personality contributed greatly to the success of the workshop. Mr. Gilboa had a professional grasp of the material, great methods of presentation, and used helpful teaching aids. He was patient with participants’ questions and created a relaxed atmosphere, enabling participants to express themselves freely.

To the representatives of the National Insurance Institutes, Ms. Sandra and Ms. Rivka

These two highly regarded representatives contributed greatly to the workshop's success. They helped to organize all the logistical details of the workshop from preparing the classroom, various teaching aids, refreshments, and beverages to handing out learning materials. Ms. Sandra and Ms. Rivka also shared their knowledge and experience of other National Insurance Institute activities and rights that are relevant to us.

They discussed possible issues one might experience when interacting with the National Insurance Institute, the relationship between the Institute and retirees, and the scope of assistance we may receive from it.

We had the honor and pleasure of being partners in this retirement preparation workshop.

We want to offer each and every one of you a heartfelt thank you and our greatest appreciation for your blessed activity and the wholehearted efforts you invested in the success of this workshop."



A retirement preparation conference held in the north of Israel



60+ Employment Centers

JDC-Eshel's 60+ Employment Centers are designed to meet the unique needs of older adults who have retired after decades of productive employment, yet still have the ability and the desire to continue working.

Candidates for this program may have different motivations – supplementing income, keeping busy, contributing to the community.

The centers offer a structured framework – consisting of employability workshops, soft skills training, and assistance with job placements.

These provide participants with the proficiencies and self-confidence they require to rejoin the workforce.

While recruiting potential employers, centers raise awareness and work to change attitudes about the benefits that an experienced older adult can bring to the workplace, regardless of their age.

Yaffa (59)

60+ Employment Center in Bnei Brak

Yaffa worked for a company, but was forcible retrenched when the company relocated.

The staff conducted an intake meeting with Yaffa at the employment center during which many personal difficulties arose.

These difficulties lead the staff to create a tailor-made program with intensive liaison supervision for Yaffa.

Yaffa and her family are known to the welfare authority for domestic violence issues and family problems.

Due to her family situation, Yaffa experienced a great decline in her self-esteem. She needed this intensive liaison support to build up her self-confidence so that she could return to the workforce. She repeatedly requested help to find work in light of her family's dire financial status.

Yaffa participated in an employment-seeking course designed to boost her self-confidence and potential to find new employment.

Being with a group of her female peers, all of them older adults seeking to support themselves with dignity, it enabled her to progress and develop with the group.

Yaffa, a secular Israeli, integrated extremely well into the group of women, most of whom were Ultra-Orthodox woman.

She was active and took on many roles, which made her feel important and improved her self-image. Yaffa also took a digital literacy course through the center.

It soon became clear to the staff that Yaffa was particularly skilled in caring for young children.

The staff enrolled her in a vocational training course for early childhood care, which she completed, and soon after she was hired by the Women's International Zionist Organization to work in a daycare center.

A Thank You letter, written by Yaffa on behalf of the women who graduated from the employment and computer courses, can be found on the following page...



A job skills workshop held at the 60+ Employment Center in Jerusalem

A Letter of Thanks from Yaffa

“To Efrat, my dear teacher, the wonderful women of the course, and the Municipality of Bnei Brak's Department of Social Services,

I would like to express my personal appreciation to our teacher Efrat, who taught the Basic Computer Familiarity course.

Efrat displayed endless patience, attentiveness, and warmth, with a gentle smile. She was wholeheartedly willing to offer help to anyone who needed it.

I wish Efrat much health, success professionally, and joy with her family.

To the women of the course – may you prosper and succeed in all your endeavors.

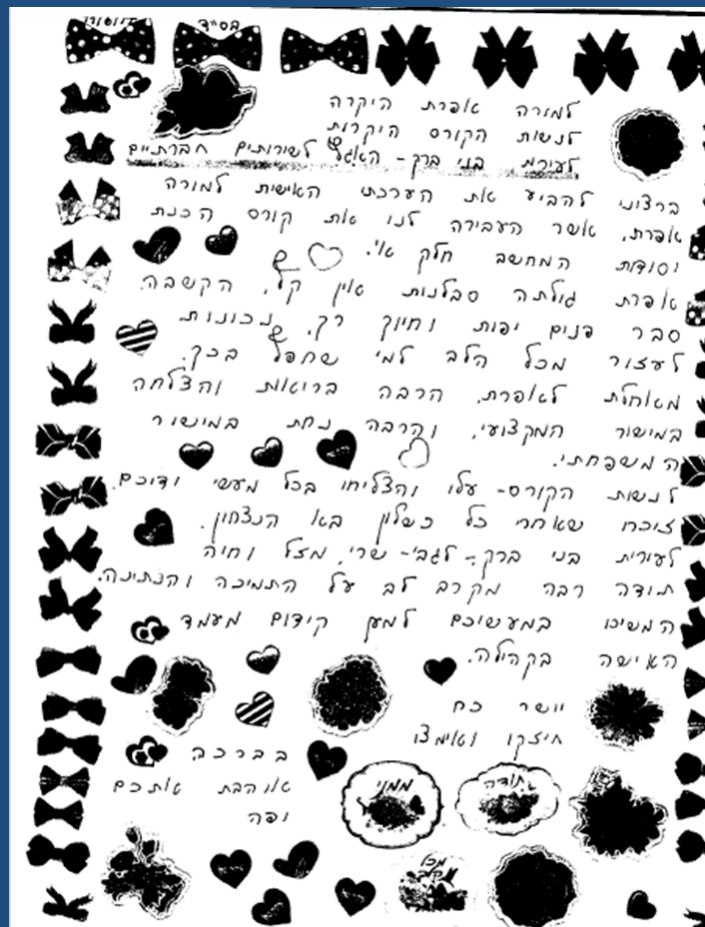
Remember that every failure is followed by success.

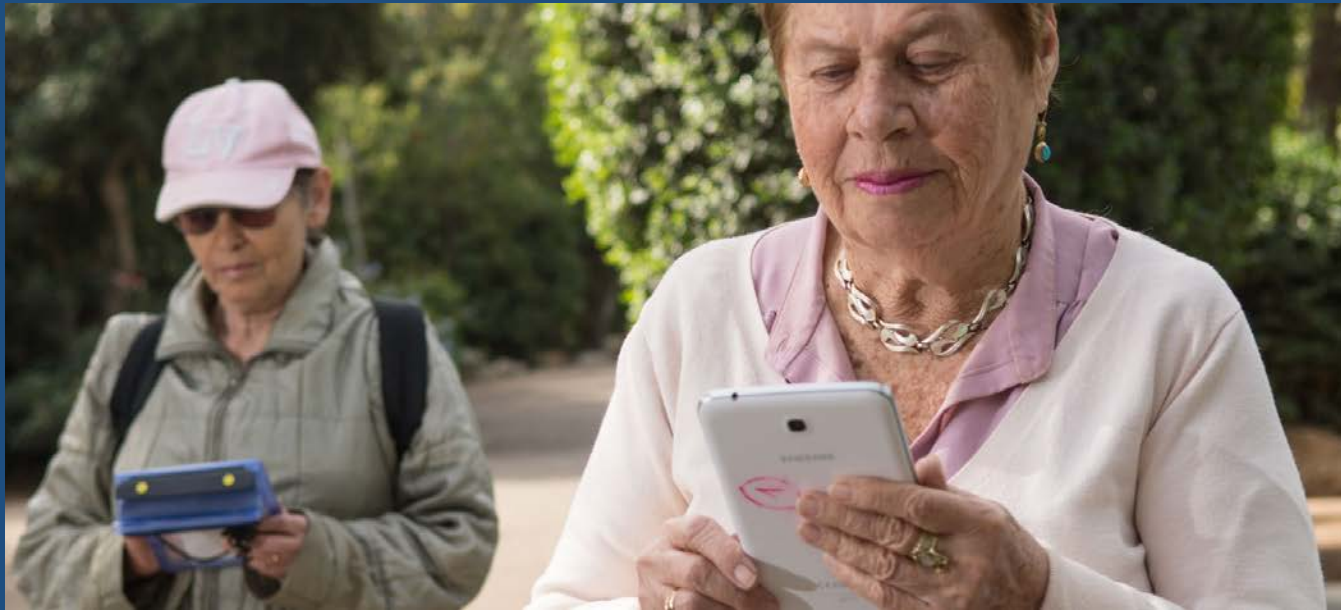
To the Municipality of Bnei Brak – to Gaby, Sari, Mazal, and Chaya. A heartfelt thank you for your support and generosity.

Please continue your work to promote the status of women in the community.

May you be granted strength and courage.

I love you all.”





Health Promoting Environments

The Health Promoting Environments project is part of "Our Voice," an international initiative promoting healthy and age friendly environments spearheaded by the Stanford Prevention Research Center (SPARC) at Stanford University's School of Medicine. This innovative project empowers citizens with technology to have an impact on policy decisions that affect the built environment. "Citizen Scientists" use technology like geo-coded photographs and GPS-tracked walking routes to assess their neighborhoods, and leverage the results to promote active living and healthy eating.

JDC-Eshel is using this technology to empower older adults to assess the safety and accessibility of their own communities. Through this technology, participants identify barriers to physical activity and good nutrition along with age friendly attributes of their neighborhoods such as stable paths and suitable benches for resting.

In 2014, JDC-Eshel adapted the tool for the Israeli context and conducted a feasibility pilot in three cities in Northern Israel. The program resulted in recommendations for improving the neighborhood, which were presented by the participants to the municipalities. The tool was useful in both Jewish and Arab populations. As of 2018, JDC-Eshel started to expand the project to additional cities and neighborhoods throughout Israel.

Rachel (70)

Health Promoting Environments

Rachel, a pensioner, lives in Nave Sha'anani in Haifa. She has always been an active person and expressed interest in participating in the Health Promoting Environments Program in her neighborhood.

Rachel, along with other individuals in her neighborhood, used Stanford University's "Our Voice" application on a tablet to map her neighborhood.

The program manager initially provided Rachel with the tablet and taught her how to use the application.

Rachel found the application to be very intuitive. Using it, she took pictures of features in her neighborhood that promoted or inhibited walking.

After Rachel and her neighbors completed mapping their neighborhood, they all gathered to discuss their findings. They brainstormed approaches to improve their neighborhood to make it more accessible for all generations. Local students and government officials joined the participants in the discussion. Rachel particularly loved the community aspect of the program.

One of the recommendations that has borne fruit are a series of walking paths in the neighborhood that make it more comfortable and safe for people, and particular older adults, to be active outside.

Rachel is very proud of the work her group did and she witnesses the impact of the walking path daily which are in constant use.

Rachel is still working to improve her local environment.

She helps organize walking groups through a club for pensioners and she volunteers in the local municipality to help organize events for older adults related to active aging.





Warm Homes

The Warm Homes program targets lonely and isolated older adults who are not involved with community programs and/or other social or cultural programs.

The program consists of cohorts of 12-15 participants each, which meet weekly or biweekly at the home of a host family.

The content and character of the meetings differs from cohort to cohort based on the preferences and interests of the group members.

Key elements to the program's success are the participants' shared common background and a regular location to hold the meetings in one of the group members' apartments.

There are 330 Warm Homes operating throughout Israel.

JDC-Eshel has modified and culturally adapted the original Warm Homes model to serve new target populations such as bereaved parents, Holocaust Survivors (130 groups), homebound (yet physically mobile) older adults, older adults in rural regions, and older adults living with early stage dementia.

Gideon (87)

Warm Homes

Gideon lives on Kibbutz Mate Asher with his spouse.

He moved to the Kibbutz 25 years ago at the age of 62 and worked in the kibbutz's accounting department.

Over the past 25 years, Gideon struggled to make friends and kept largely to himself, although admitted that he sought more social interaction.

At the age of 87, the kibbutz requested that Gideon retire.

This made him very angry because he had nothing else to keep him occupied throughout the day other than his work - he seldom if ever engaged in recreational or social activities.

Yossi, the head of a nearby warm home, reached out to Gideon and worked on convincing him to join the Warm Home community he was responsible for.

Gideon was holding onto a lot of anger, but after much persuasion, he decided to give it a try.

Through the Warm Home interaction, Gideon connected with individuals who encouraged him to begin painting.

He started with simple paintings and then moved on to painting on canvas. He also discovered he could draw and started to explore other medians of art.

The Warm Home helped Gideon realize that there was far more to his life.

Now Gideon looks forward to the days he spends with his Warm Home friends – the time they meet formally as a Warm Home each week, and the social time he spends with his newfound friends during the remainder of the week.





**In recognition of the dedication and professionalism
of the JDC-Eshel team, which works tirelessly with
our partners from the Government of Israel
for the benefit of older adults in Israel.**

**And to the philanthropic investors who
have made it possible for JDC-Eshel
to improve the quality of service
and safeguard the health and
wellbeing of older adults
in Israel for 50 years -
we thank you!**



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