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Afikim Provides New Paths for Children-at-Risk and their Families

During this era of social complexity, Israeli society is faced with a troubling situation: the increasing number of children at-risk. At present, 330,000 Israeli children are classified as "at-risk" and live in a daily state of crisis. The parental functioning in these families is generally deficient due to a difficult economic situation, unemployment, emotional or physical abuse and more. This lack of family support, in addition to living in poverty, diminishes the chances of children at-risk to escape the cycle of distress that envelops them.

In 2007, the Afikim Family Enrichment Association, rose to the challenge and developed a unique intervention program. The focus of the Afikim programs is on children and their families. Our aim is to provide children at-risk with their immediate needs while integrating them into a long-term program geared towards excellence in education, values and character. This is achieved through learning enrichment and character development while simultaneously integrating their parents into the Afikim Center for Parental Empowerment. Working with the family as a unit strengthens the family's stability and is the secret to advancing the child.

The Afikim Afternoon Centers provide a positive year-round framework (incl. school vacations). Children join in 3rd grade and remain in the program through the 8th grade when they are better equipped for high school and their future. Each day, they receive lunch and supper, study Hebrew, math, English and lessons in life skills and values. Classes are delivered by professional teachers in small groups of 10. Each child also participates in extra-curricular activities, as well as a weekly computer course. Most significantly, the Afikim staff is in regular contact with the children's' teachers to individualize the program as needed.

To ensure a secure future for each child, their parents are integrated into the Afikim Parental Empowerment Centers where they develop skills for managing their homes and families, while enhancing their vocational and workplace skills. Activities are moderated by a professional facilitator and courses are administered by licensed teachers. This program helps the beleaguered parents cope with the challenging demands of parenting and of life. Afikim presently operates a network of after-school centers in Jerusalem, Kiryat Malachi, and Kiryat Shmona. Afikim's unique approach is built on the conviction that supportive frameworks both at home and at school assist children emotionally and academically, allowing them to grow and advance.

AFIKIM'S INTEGRATED PROGRAMS ARE UNIQUE IN A VARIETY OF WAYS:

- **IN-DEPTH WORK:** Children are members of the center for six consecutive as opposed to the one-year programs of other after-school centers.
- **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT:** Parents are members of the Center for Parental Empowerment for six years in order to rehabilitate the family unit.
- **ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE:** The teaching staff is comprised of professional teachers, rather than volunteers, and follows a Ministry of Education curriculum to advance required learning material.
- **FOCUS ON VALUES AND GOOD CHARACTER:** The center promotes ethical behavior and Jewish values in a daily values education program.
- **CONTINUOUS PROGRAMMING:** Activities take place throughout the year including holidays and school vacations.
- **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:** The children are integrated into specialized workshops according to their personal choice and talent.
- **COMPUTERS PROGRAM:** The children (and parents) participate in computer courses order to bridge the digital gap.
- **COOPERATION WITH SCHOOLS:** Afikim staff works closely with the children's teachers to monitor and advance the child's progress.
- **EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT:** Afikim, under the guidance of professionals affiliated with the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, has developed tools to closely track each child's progress and monitor the program's impact.



The Afikim Afternoon Centers

- **ACADEMIC PROGRAM:** Children attend the after-school program for six years, from third through eighth grade. The goal of this program is to help children succeed academically and socially, both now and in their future adult lives. Afikim provides each child with more than two hours of lessons each day (a total of 48 teaching hours per month), reinforcing basic skills in math, English, and Hebrew reading comprehension and expression. Each group of ten children has its own qualified teacher in order to assure individual attention and maximum progress.
- **VALUES EDUCATION:** The children of the afternoon centers are the future of Israeli society. We thus aim to provide them with the tools that will allow them to develop into respectable, self-sufficient adults with strong values, guaranteeing a strong future for Israeli society. For this purpose, we have developed a unique Values Education Program in which the children of Afikim participate each day. In the framework of the program, which consists of study, games, and simulations, the children internalize values such as helpfulness, giving to the community, kindness, compassion, honesty, responsibility and love for the land of Israel.
- **COMPUTER COURSE:** A computer learning center outfitted with the latest technology and learning tools is an integral part of every Afikim branch. Professional instructors closely guide each student at his or her own pace in acquiring the computer know-how and skills that are essential for their academic advancement. The children also use the computers to prepare for homework assignments, research projects, and for independent study.
- **Afikim B'Kef:** To keep vacation time structured, constructive, and fun, Afikim b'Kef offers supervised recreational activities including swimming, amusement parks and other outings, sports competitions, contests, crafts, and more. Every day, the children receive a nutritious and tasty breakfast, lunch and snacks, and they enjoy exciting, organized outings.
- **ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES:** The children of Afikim's skills and interests are explored and developed through various enrichment activities in music, sport, dance, art and more. Children are encouraged to participate in choirs, shows, bands, etc., as a means of enjoying themselves, and building their sense of team pride and self-confidence.
- **FOOD FOR THOUGHT:** At Afikim's after-school centers, every child receives a nourishing hot lunch as soon as they arrive. As a result, they are more alert and ready to concentrate throughout the afternoon. Before they go home, the children receive a substantial snack – such as a sandwich and fruit – to ensure that no child goes to bed hungry.
- **Parenting Program:** A center for empowerment of the parents of the participating children functions alongside each afternoon center. These centers focus on the following areas:
- **PARENTING ENRICHMENT:** The activities take place once a week and are moderated by a professional facilitator. The network of academic facilities is an enriching framework of study that is both inclusive and supportive; they serve as a compass of sorts for parents. Participation enables the parents to take some time out from their day-to-day burdens, and to meet with various professionals and experts from both academia and the clinical field. This is a creative and conducive framework for discussing difficulties, raising questions, and receiving feedback, providing a group dynamic with peer support, encouragement, advice, simulation games, and social and cultural activities. The parents leave each session with better parenting tools, and, most importantly, more confidence, motivation, faith, and a smile on their faces.
- **VOCATIONAL TRAINING / FAMILY BUDGETING:** Each family's employment status is mapped out in order to properly rehabilitate its financial status. Based on the findings, the parents are offered vocational training including a course in preparation for joining the workforce. Parents are also educated in the proper management of the family budget.
- **CULTURAL AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES:** The parents are provided with the opportunity to participate in cultural events designed to enrich their lives and the lives of their children by going on museum visits, day trips, participating in workshops and seminars, etc.
- **INDIVIDUALIZED FAMILY GUIDANCE:** The facilitator of the parenting school responds to individual questions and issues of each family.



Additional Afikim Services

With the help of our dedicated friends and supporters, Afikim can provide the following additional services for our disadvantaged children and their families:

- **"BACK TO SCHOOL" KITS:** The cost of supplying a child with the necessities needed for the school year places a very taxing burden on the parents. Afikim steps in to alleviate this burden by providing "Back to School" kits, complete with backpack and supplies, school books, and basic clothing.

WINTER KITS: The winter months can be an especially grueling time for parents who are struggling financially. The need to supply their families with sufficient heat and warm clothing may often surpass their capabilities. Afikim supplies these families with heaters and warm clothing.

- **EYE CARE / DENTAL CARE:** The costs of maintaining necessary health care for their children poses an incredible burden on low-wage earning Israeli parents. Afikim helps out by providing eye checkups and glasses as well as dental care assistance for struggling families.
- **HOUSEHOLD ASSISTANCE:** Many Israeli families cannot afford to pay for all of the necessary home appliances to maintain a normal household. Afikim is attuned to the needs of these families and provides household assistance in the forms of refrigerators, ovens, youth beds, desks, heater and air conditioners, and washing machines.
- **FOOD CARDS:** It is getting increasingly difficult for low-income Israeli families to be able to buy all of the necessary food products that they require from local supermarkets. Instead of receiving these products in a degrading manner, these families receive prepaid food cards from Afikim. These cards can be used in local supermarkets to pay for basic necessities such as milk, juice, bread, and eggs.



Sponsorship Opportunities

FOR CHILDREN

	1 CHILD & FAMILY	10 CHILDREN & FAMILIES	20 CHILDREN & FAMILIES	40 CHILDREN & FAMILIES
COMPLETE ENRICHMENT PROGRAM	1 Yr = \$3,600 6 Yrs = \$18,000	1 Yr = \$36,000	1 Yr = \$72,000	1 Yr = \$144,000
ACADEMIC PROGRAM	1 Yr = \$750	1 Yr = \$7,500	1 Yr = \$15,000	1 Yr = \$30,000
VALUES EDUCATION	1 Yr = \$180	1 Yr = \$1,800	1 Yr = \$3,600	1 Yr = \$7,200
COMPUTER COURSE	1 Yr = \$250	1 Yr = \$2,500	1 Yr = \$5,000	1 Yr = \$10,000
AFIKIM B'KEF VACATION PROGRAM	1 Yr = \$300	1 Yr = \$3,000	1 Yr = \$6,000	1 Yr = \$12,000
ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES	1 Yr = \$300	1 Yr = \$3,000	1 Yr = \$6,000	1 Yr = \$12,000
FOOD FOR THOUGHT	1 Yr = \$925	1 Yr = \$9,250	1 Yr = \$18,500	1 Yr = \$37,000
SPECIAL WORKSHOPS: GUEST SPEAKERS	\$200 a session			

NECESSITIES

FOOD CARD	\$120/card
"BACK TO SCHOOL" KIT	\$400/child Includes: backpack and supplies (\$80), school books (\$150) & basic clothing (\$170)
WINTER KITS	\$250 (includes heater and warm clothing)
EYE CARE (CHECKUPS & GLASSES)	\$250/child
DENTAL CARE ASSISTANCE	\$500/child
HOUSEHOLD ASSISTANCE	\$500 Refrigerator \$400 Oven \$500 Youth Bed \$400 Desk \$2000 Heater/Air Conditioning \$450 Washing Machine



Sponsorship Opportunities

FOR PARENTS

FAMILY BUDGETING COURSE	\$3,000/Yr - a group
VOCATIONAL TRAINING	\$12,000 for a professional training course
PARENTING PROGRAM (WORKSHOPS + ENRICHMENT)	\$12,000/Yr - a group

DEDICATIONS

BRANCHES	\$150,000/Yr x 3 Yrs = \$450,000 - includes plaque dedication
CLASSROOM	\$12,000 - includes plaque dedication
CLUBROOM – KIRYAT SHMONA (ACCESSORIZE AND DECORATE)	\$25,000 - includes plaque dedication
COMPUTER ROOM	\$20,000 - includes plaque dedication
COMPUTER	\$1,000 - includes software

