



ISRAEL MITZVAH HORSES

Newsletter

Pesach 2018

We are pleased to share with you the highlights of IMH in 2017 and our goals for 2018:

❖ On-going Projects in 2017 and 2018:

“Youth at Risk Program” for Youth at Kfar Batya

This program takes place at Epona Stables, in Sde Warburg.

In 2016-2017, thirty children participated three times a week, for two to four hours at a time. In 2017-2018 we adopted a new therapeutic strategy based on more individual work. It has produced excellent results as each youth gets more specific and personal attention, and we see tremendous changes in the group's dynamic.

“Children with Autism Program” at Nir David Stables

This program is in cooperation with Dror School (Kibbutz Messilot).

The school year 2016-17 was the first year of the program, and it ended with great success. Six children participated in the program, all of them at a low functioning level. Among them, one child also suffers from cerebral palsy accompanied by motor impairments. Individual goals and strategies were set for each child. Progress is clearly observed and reported on -- the emotional, cognitive and physical aspects.

We opened the 2017-18 school year with 8 riders, and added four youth with high functioning Autism who act as assistants. The school administration and the parents would like to allow more children to participate to this program. Cooperation with Nir David Stables is working perfectly.

❖ Additional Projects Awaiting Funding

Soldiers with Traumatic Stress Disorder, with Dr. Anita Shkedi:

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is the main disabling condition of combat veterans. IMH, under the supervision of Dr. Anita Shkedi, seeks funds in order to provide a thirty-eight-week program of equine therapy for Israeli veterans suffering from PTSD.

Equine Therapy is a complimentary medical intervention helping veterans cope with real-life-issues. Equine therapy is also known to improve intergenerational communication and interactive skills, bringing families together. It increases motivation and self-esteem, often resulting in the return to work, and a better quality of life.

“Young Adults with Cognitive Impairments Program” Gaia Riding Center in Kibbutz Nitzane Oz

This program aims to integrate young adults with cognitive impairments into society. The program is to help fifteen residents of the “Nitzan Onim Hostel” for young adults, who currently cannot integrate into general employment frameworks and outside their parents’ homes to live an independent life (with support)..

This program will:

- train participants in motor, cognitive, language, and social skills
- train self-management features such as self-control, persistence, ability to plan actions, to solve problems, to proceed sequential tasks through order or to start and finish tasks.
- help participants gain knowledge and tools to better integrate into society by learning work norms
- develop love and empathy for nature, environment and people
- learn responsibility, motivation, and the ability for self-evaluation.

“Miniature Therapy Horses” with Mickella Ben Tovim: Due to their size, Miniature Horses can visit nursing homes, schools, kindergartens and other facilities. They allow those who can't access the riding centers to participate to Equine Assisted Activities and to benefit from this special therapy. Mickella Ben Tovim is an expert in this field and IMH would like to help her to develop her activities in Israel.

Miniature horses are highly trained and adapted to urban surrounding. They bring love, joy and laughter to unexpected places. They are kind and gentle. People pet, brush and play games with the horses. Unintimidating to those who admire and yet fear large horses, they can comfort, uplift the spirit and even help with development of motor and communication skills.

❖ New members:

We are happy to welcome three new Amuta members:

- Dorit Ayalon, Therapeutic Riding Instructor, joins Brigitte as a board member
- Dr. Anita Shkedi, Therapeutic Riding Expert recognized internationally, will lead the PTSD Program
- Johanna Markowitz Attar, Therapeutic Riding Trainer, Mentor and Evaluator, will assist in the development of the Autism Program of Nir David as it grows.
- Mr. Vianney Bollier from France, Management and Legal expert.