Heart to Heart: Leadership for Shared Communities
How we will use the feelings, relationships and learnings to change communities in Israel over the long term

Overview

- Over the past five years since its launch, Heart to Heart has engaged 100 youth and their families from Jewish and Palestinian Israeli communities through its three week summer program in Canada; in ten years there will be 300 youth and their families who are alumni of Heart to Heart. This is a resource worth investing in!

- The program has offered a meaningful response and a model of positive behavior in response to the reality of the fractured and negative relations between the two major populations in Israel, Jewish and Palestinian arguably a core issue threatening Israel's future

- Because of the success of Heart to Heart in building bridges between people and communities based on mutual understanding, trust, and positive common experiences we are launching an alumni program to turn these relationships into a collective force of leadership for shared communities

  - This program will facilitate an ongoing connection between Heart to Heart participants and the Canadian communities engaged with the program

  - This program will support Heart to Heart participants in taking on leadership roles within their own communities via Givat Haviva’s Shared Communities Initiative (see below)

  - Our initial program launch will focus on the youth returning from their summer experience in 2015; later phases of the project will engage future cohorts as well as re-engage prior cohorts in an ongoing structure that best serves their needs

- Success of this initiative will be the engagement of the majority of Heart to Heart youth in ongoing social relationships across cultural borders, and the development of youth-led and parent-led community engagement initiatives for others. If more Jewish Israelis and Palestinian Israelis meet on a social basis and develop real and positive understandings of one another and a sense of shared future as a result of our alumni efforts, we will know we have succeeded.

- First year program costs are $25,700 as detailed within; to date $3000 have been raised to cover these costs; we are targeting a raise of at least $17,000 on or before November 30, 2015, in order to launch the program with this cohort.
Heart to Heart: Leadership for Shared Communities

The purpose of the Heart to Heart Follow-up Program is to leverage the connections between Jewish and Palestinian Israeli youth and their families built through the Heart to Heart and Children Teaching Children programs, in order to create a strong and stable core of leadership for shared society within local communities for the long term. By doing so, we will not only improve relationships among those communities in significant ways, but we will offer a model to other communities in Israel who may wish to follow a similar program.

Givat Haviva is a non-profit organization founded in 1949 as the national education center of the Kibbutz Federation in Israel. It is dedicated to promoting mutual responsibility, civic equality and cooperation between divided groups in Israel as the foundation for building a shared future and shared society. To this end, Givat Haviva serves as a catalyst in activating divided communities to work together towards achieving their common goals, while engaging in a process of interaction, support and empowerment. Givat Haviva’s Jewish-Arab Center for Peace, founded in 1963, is one of the oldest institutions promoting Jewish-Arab rapprochement and peace education in Israel. Tens of thousands of Jewish and Arab participants have taken part in the Center’s programs, which are conducted in both formal and informal education settings throughout the education lifecycle. A leader in its field, Givat Haviva was awarded the UNESCO Prize for Peace Education in 2001 for its longstanding work in promoting Jewish-Arab dialogue and reconciliation.

Background

Givat Haviva Programmatic Framework: Shared Communities

Givat Haviva’s Education for a Shared Society program is implemented within a strategic framework entitled Shared Communities. Shared Communities builds structured, multi-level cooperation between pairs of neighboring Jewish and Palestinian communities which are divided by increasing tensions and mutual alienation that threaten the democratic fabric of Israel today.

Through the Givat Haviva Program, Israeli citizens and local leadership are engaged across these divides through the creation of inter-community alliances that facilitate joint action around common values, projects, and goals. Inter-municipal partnerships create infrastructures to support cross-sector civil society cooperation among diverse populations. As part of this program, educational programs are implemented between schools operating within the municipal jurisdiction of the specific community pairs. Of course, one of the outcomes and motivators for these programs has been the Heart to Heart program.

In 8th and 9th grades, pupils take part in Children Teaching Children, a two-year civics study and encounter program that has reached over 30,000 teachers and students in Arab and Jewish schools over 27 years of operation. In this program designed to foster mutual understanding and shared citizenship, Jewish and Israeli Arab teachers and middle school students tackle complex issues of national and individual identity,
community life, and conflicting narratives in a shared land. The children visit one another's schools, have discussions, and participate in activities in both indoor and outdoor settings. For the past five years, that program has culminated with Heart to Heart, a three-week overnight summer camp experience in Canada for twenty of the children, ten Jewish and ten Arab. There they share a cabin, learn to get along in close quarters round-the-clock, and have the unique opportunity to cultivate the deep friendships characteristic of summer camp, across ethnic borders that are ordinarily impermeable. The Heart to Heart Follow-up Program aims to build on these connections which simply cannot be built solely through classroom encounters and which, through the immersive summer program, are cultivated not only between the youth but their families as well.

**Need and Opportunity**

From the unique atmosphere of the Shomria summer camp, immersed in a natural setting and insulated from Israel's political climate, combined with exposure to Canada's multicultural society, the teenage participants return to their home communities having gained a powerful, tangible, and personal experience of what a shared society can be like.

At the same time, the families, who have been involved since the beginning of the Children Teaching Children program, are brought together by their common focus on their young teenagers overseas. Both groups, children and adults, are uniquely positioned to act as living examples and ambassadors of a shared society despite the prejudice and skepticism in their own communities.

Following the participants’ return, there has been a great desire among the youth and their families to continue meeting and to build on the potential for individual and group relationships, but structural elements in Israeli society work against this. Jewish and Palestinian populations live in separate cities, social relations across the Palestinian-Jewish boundary are uncommon, and most businesses cater to their own ethnic group. Yet, the special group of families emerging from participation in the Heart to Heart program in previous years have expressed the desire to spearhead joint projects. However, without active facilitation, the initiatives have dissipated before they could coalesce. These families are poised at the brink of being able to form a leadership group that will continue to function without outside support, if only they are given that final impetus toward independence.

**Objective of Heart to Heart: Keeping it Going...**

To establish shared community leadership groups of adults and teenagers, who will continue to work in partnership without the need for further outside support or intervention. These groups will:

- Act as living role models of advantageous cooperation within both communities
- Present their positive learning experiences in their home communities to counter the prevalent discourse of mistrust
- Articulate and carry out grassroots-generated projects geared to local needs
• Bring together people from within the broad spectrum of the Palestinian population that participates in the Heart to Heart Program with the surrounding Jewish population
• Provide a forum for meetings on an equal footing between members of the two populations
• Provide positive experiences of meeting, working, and spending leisure time together
• Expand and deepen the ability to understand each other’s point of view, as cultivated in the Children Teaching Children and Heart to Heart programs.

Work plan
The Heart to Heart Follow-up Program will conduct facilitated meetings in three distinct constellations: meetings of the youth who participated as a group in Heart to Heart, separate adult meetings of the youth’s parents, and get-togethers of the families as a whole. All of the sessions will be facilitated by Usnat Atamna and Ruby Sapir, who accompanied the group to Canada and throughout the entire Heart to Heart process. They will be responsible for coordinating the meetings, and will also facilitate the groups, with the goal of bringing them to a point at which they can continue to maintain themselves independently.

The first of the meetings will be scheduled for two weeks following the group’s return from camp.* It will be a meeting of parents and children together, and will be an opportunity for bonding as the children share their experiences in Canada with the whole group.

*In the first year of the program, meetings will begin as soon as funding is secured

Youth Meetings
Beginning two weeks after the combined meeting, the children will have five monthly get-togethers of their own facilitated by Usnat Atamna and Ruby Sapir. Usnat and Ruby will facilitate the teen’s re-entry into their school communities, where they will present their experiences both formally to different classes and informally to their own friends and classmates. The children will be taught to deal with the reactions of those in their communities who are likely to hold less than positive opinions of the other population and the possibilities for cooperation and friendship. The children’s own undeniable and ongoing experience uniquely positions them to influence attitudes among their peers in these challenging situations.

The children’s group meetings will take place in a permanent outdoor space which they will be provided on the Givat Haviva campus. The group will design and build a structure from reused materials with additional facilitation from an art instructor, creating a home base for all Heart to Heart alumni groups to continue meeting in the future. The teens will work together for one week during a joint school vacation to create this meeting space. This is critical, as lack of mutually agreeable and accessible meeting places is one of the main stumbling blocks to continued contact - building a space together which the youth will feel collective ownership over is the best solution.
Parents’ Meetings
The parents’ meetings, which will be held in the communities, alternating between Jewish and Arab families’ homes will be geared toward identifying and commencing implementation of ongoing projects geared to the skills, interests and needs of the parents and their communities. The aim of the first two meetings, which will commence within a month of the combined meeting, will be to identify and articulate projects in accordance with the parents’ skills and interests, and the perceived needs of their respective communities. Examples of ongoing activities in which interest has already been expressed are:

- A study group that will meet to read and discuss texts from Islamic and Jewish sources
- A photography exhibition, created by members of each group photographing the other in their home environments
- Exploration of mutually advantageous business partnerships, suited to the particular occupations of group members

The various projects will be launched with five subsequent facilitated and coordinated meetings, to form a solid foundation for independent continuation of the activities. These parents’ groups will act as role models, leading processes of change in their own communities and setting an example for the entire country.

Field Trips
Two guided field trips will be held for all the families together, with destinations of cultural interest chosen by the parents in their first organizational meetings. These trips will provide opportunities for communication and connection, building group solidarity through cultural enrichment and pleasurable activities together in natural settings.

Project Leadership
Orit Meoded and Zecharia Machmid, Directors of the Children Teaching Children and Heart to Heart programs.
Usnat Atamna and Ruby Sapir, Israeli facilitators and guides for the Heart to Heart program.

Project Budget (CDN Dollars, 2015-2016 program)

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Directors</td>
<td>3750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Facilitators</td>
<td>6780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Trips (Transportation and Guides)</td>
<td>2190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hosting (Classrooms and Light Refreshments)</td>
<td>530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Material and Supplies</td>
<td>625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creation of Outdoor Space (Instructor and Material)</td>
<td>3125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seed Money for Parent Led Initiatives</td>
<td>3125 - 6250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect Expenses</td>
<td>2450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td><strong>25,700</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>