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February 2008

5768 Adar I



This orphan with acute cerebral palsy learned maximum independence.

Big Help for Little Angels in the Heart of Jerusalem

by Dr. Gerry Showstack

If you've never seen the smile of a four-year old taking his very first steps toward his father, with the help of a walker, then you haven't yet seen the face of complete joy.

When you walk on Isaiah Street in Jerusalem, you pass an iron gate, a bit rusty and squeaky. Whoever bothers to look beyond the gate sees an old building that for many years served as an elementary school under the British Mandate. Most people don't know that behind that gate lies one of the entrances to the Garden of Eden. If it's not the Garden of Eden then what are so many angels doing there?

No, it's not the Garden of Eden with beautiful fruit-bearing trees. And in this

Garden of Eden there are even those who doubt the Almighty's mercy on small children. But that's OK because this isn't a Divine Garden of Eden. It's a Garden of Eden that people have created. And it's overflowing with kindness and grace, hope and humanity.

"We first entered the gate in shock, holding tightly our son Yam who was then nine months old," said Yam's father. "It was right after we were told that Yam has Cerebral Palsy – that our Yam is crippled! Those angels immediately embraced us, and carefully took Yam, caressed him, hugged him, and began the long process that at its end brought him to where he is today: independent, with strong opinions, a child who uses his full ability. Today Yam is in

the first grade in a regular elementary school.”

The Preschool Development Center uses the best practices in therapy and state of the art technology to enable children with Cerebral Palsy (CP) and other neurological disorders and physical disabilities to develop their maximum potential. One of Israel’s leading pediatric neurologists founded the Preschool Development Center and today it is one of Israel’s finest programs, serving children between the ages of 1 and 7.

The excellent multidisciplinary staff and the intensive program work wonders with the children. The majority are able to join mainstream educational frameworks when they finish the preschool and move to the first grade. We welcome the Love for Israel Relief Fund to help finance therapy and enrichment sessions for these little angels. As little as \$100 per month provides life-changing therapy for a child.

We have a unique opportunity to purchase custom-built equipment for these little angels and invite the Love for Israel Relief Fund to join in. This specialized equipment is designed to help children with CP to sit, study, play and use the toilet with maximum independence. Every \$200 sponsors a child - our goal is to equip the preschool for 70 children.

The Preschool Development Center would like to extend an invitation to

supporters of the Love for Israel Relief Fund. We would like to give them a private tour of the preschool whenever they visit Jerusalem. Words cannot adequately describe what it’s like to see firsthand these precious lives being changed. Help us make a difference for the entire rest of the life of a child.

Dr. Gerry Showstack is the founding principal of Showstack Organizational Consulting, working with Israeli non-profits in the fields of healthcare, disabilities, and education. He has served as Director of Community Services for the Israel office of United Jewish Communities, Director of Education at the Council of Jewish Federations, and on the faculty of the Hornstein Program in Jewish Communal Service at Brandeis University. Dr. Showstack has also served in various capacities at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. Dr. Showstack received his BA from Princeton University and a Ph.D. from Brandeis University in Sociology and in Near Eastern & Judaic Studies. He moved to Israel in 1973, and resides in Omer with his wife and four children.

You can donate online at:
<http://love4israel.org/donate.html>

Send checks to:

Love for Israel Relief Fund
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