



Update . . .

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Missing four year-old Rose Pizem.

Who Speaks Up for Abused Children?

by Richard D. Weisskopf, chairman

The Jerusalem Post reported that the Knesset Committee on Children's Rights held an emergency session this morning (September 1st) following the recent disappearance of four year-old Rose Pizem. Authorities fear Rose was murdered after suffering a life of severe domestic abuse. Her disappearance is currently making headlines in Israeli media.

Dr. Yitzhak Kedman, director of the National Council for Child Welfare, estimates that domestic murder investigations like Rose Pizem's come up approximately every two months in Israel. Dr. Kedman's audience included two Knesset Members out of 120 who were invited. KM Nadia Hilou chairs the

committee and KM Ze'ev Elkin attended the emergency session.

An estimated 350,000 children in Israel are at-risk of abuse and neglect according to the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs. Children, especially orphans, need caring leaders to speak out on their behalf. KM Hilou has devoted herself in the Knesset as a voice for children's rights. However, meaningful legislative changes that protect children's rights will happen when more Knesset Members make Israel's youth crisis a top priority.

It is unfortunate that voices of at-risk children are often drowned out by "more urgent" legislative matters. The lack of attendance to the Knesset Committee on Children's Rights this morning shows how

hard it is to create an effective legislative voice for at-risk children. However, these are *our* children and deserve our undivided attention.

Organizations like the Love for Israel Relief Fund with projects like Beit Netanel advocate for children like Rose Pizem. Without such efforts, it would be too easy to ignore the youth crisis. As part of Beit Netanel's objective, we voice needs of at-risk children; raise awareness, and help leaders address the youth crisis with effective solutions.

By contrast to at-risk families, many Israelis embody safe and compassionate households for the majority of Israeli children. Perhaps this is why it is so hard to perceive Israel's youth crisis.

At this morning's emergency session Dr. Kedman stated, "funds must be invested and perceptions changed in order to prevent future murders." We can use resources to bridge the gap between at-risk children and mainstream Israeli society.

Resolving much of Israel's youth crisis is well within our reach if we simply invest time and money to developing effective community-based solutions. Israel has excellent child welfare potential if we develop an effective infrastructure. Investing into training and programs that resolve the youth crisis today will save

huge burdens on society long term.

The Love for Israel Relief Fund grieves the loss of little Rose Pizem and others like her. We commend the efforts of leaders like KM Nadia Hilou and Dr. Yitkhak Kedman who devote themselves to these children - our future. We appreciate our supporters - without whom we could not advocate for the needs of these children who have no voice of their own. As we gather resources and raise awareness of the youth crisis, we can help provide a safe and nurturing environment for at-risk children in Israel.

Beit Netanel is undergoing improvements to the program. Please visit our web site often for new materials as we develop them.

Every \$50 we receive this Fall sponsors a young soldier with no family in Israel. We would like to take sponsors who are in Israel during one of these distributions along as our guest. Words cannot describe the feeling you will have by this experience.

On behalf of the Israelis you help - *today* and Shalom from Jerusalem!

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

Send checks to:
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