



HIGHLIGHTS OF YEDEI CHESSED



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On the Seventh night of Chanukah, Yedei Chesed sponsored a party for the young men living in the group homes on Albert Drive and College Road. Rabbi Abraham J. Twerski, MD, who is a neighbor of the group home on College Road, was invited to attend. Rabbi Twerski was very impressed and after his visit he wrote the following:

One Can Do Much With A Little

As I write this, we are celebrating Chanukah. We commemorate a historic event of two miracles: (1) a small group of dedicated Jews, the Hasmoneans, defeating the mighty Syrian Greek army, and (2) just a small amount of oil miraculously burning for eight days. Both were miracles of doing much with just a little.

History, yes? That was over two thousand years ago, but miracles like that don't happen any more, do they?

I have just returned from a Chanukah party at Yedei Chesed. The students were singing and dancing with the visitors. These were kids who came into the world with very little. Too often kids like this are relegated to mere existence, because they do not seem to have the necessary resources to participate in society.

The staff and administration of Yedei Chesed are the Hasmoneans of today. They are not discouraged by the paucity of resources. They know that with dedicated effort, these children's meager resources can be developed.

I saw youngsters who, several years ago did not know what it means to smile. They did not have the self-esteem that comes from knowing that one is a valuable person. I saw them dancing joyously. They have been helped to develop their skills to the maximum. They know that they are loved. They know that they can be productive. They know that they have value.

Tonight I will light the Chanukah menorah, which symbolizes that one can do much with just a little. The lights of the menorah will dance before my eyes just as the youngsters at Yedei Chesed danced with me earlier today. Yedei Chesed proves that much can be done with just a little.



Magic Moments Weekend Retreat

On Shabbos, Parshas Vayishlach, Yedei Chesed held its tenth annual Magic Moments Weekend Retreat at the scenic and luxurious Hudson Valley Resort in the Catskills. At the retreat, parents had a chance to relax, rejuvenate and share stories while caring volunteers led a parallel program for the children. Without having to worry about the kids, parents were free to enjoy the lavishly prepared meals, inspiring speakers and conversations with other parents, rabbonim and professionals. Everyone agrees that this year's Weekend Retreat was a total success!

Yedei Chesed has plans to follow up on some of the suggestions made by parents at the Weekend Retreat. We are looking into starting a support group for grandparents of children with disabilities and an English speaking fathers' support group. If you are interested in joining any of these groups, please call Mr. Sabol at 425-0887 ext. 223.

Tapes of Rabbi Wachsmann's speech are available at Yedei Chesed's office. If you would like to come pick up a copy, please call 425-0887 ext. 257.





Tzippy Teaches Us An Important Lesson

Tzippy*, a 7-year-old girl, who attends the Magic Moments After School Program showed an interest in needlepoints. Mrs. Renee Rubinfeld, Director of the program, promised Tzippy that if she does her homework nicely for a month, she'll take her to A.C. Moore to choose a needlepoint. Tzippy managed to keep her part of the deal, so Mrs. Rubinfeld took her to the store. On their way back to Magic Moments there was a lot of traffic. Mrs. Rubinfeld was worried and said to Tzippy, "I hope we'll make it back in time for you to catch the bus back home." Tzippy replied " Don't worry, Morah Renee, Hashem's gonna help us!" *Believing is Seeing!* They made it back with plenty of time to catch the bus.

*Name changed for confidentiality.



 **Employee of the Month** 

On Wednesday, the fifth day of Chanukah, the staff of Yedei Chesed had a Chanukah Mesiba at Eli's Bagel Shop. Rabbi Rottenberg addressed the staff with inspiring words of *Divrei Chizuk* encouraging the staff to continue their important work for Klal Yisroel. At the Mesiba, Mr. Sabol announced that **Mrs. Renee Rubinfeld**, Director of the Magic Moments Sunday and After School Program, was the Employee of the Month for December. Her caring attitude, creativity and outstanding work with each individual attending her programs makes this award one truly deserved!



Sibling Support Group Meets on Chanukah

On Sunday, the second day of Chanukah, the Sibling Support Group for girls met at the Yedei Chesed offices. This was the first time that Mrs. Chana Zynshtein joined the group as a group leader. The girls designed their own edible menorahs, using cookies and jelly rings for candles, and marshmallow fluff as glue. Not only was it a great project, but it was a delicious snack too!

They also discussed the story of Chanukah, how the weak won the war against the strong. Then they discussed how Hashem creates every person with some strengths and some weaknesses. Each of the girls talked about their sibling's disabilities and they were also able to point out a strength, or positive thing about that sibling.

Everyone had a wonderful time and Mrs. Merav Lalouch and Mrs. Chana Zynshtein will schedule future dates for the girls' sibling support groups to meet again. To join this group, please call Mrs. Lalouch at ext. 253 or Mrs. Zynshtein at ext. 275.



**Chanukah at Magic Moments
After School Program**

The children had a great time when they baked Chanukah cookies on a beautiful Chanukah tablecloth. The tablecloth had Chanukah pictures on it which the children colored before they used it for baking. To sculpt menorahs and dreidels out of clay was another activity which was enjoyed by all. A pizza party and jelly doughnuts complimented the fun at Magic Moments!



Points of Interest:



The Mothers' Support Group will be meeting on Tuesday, January 6, 2004 at 8:00 p.m. The meeting will take place at the Leiser's home at 25 N. Southgate Drive. Mrs. Leiser's phone number is 362-6755. The topic to be discussed is "Do I Have To "Fix" My Child?"



The Yiddish speaking Fathers' Support Group will be meeting Motzei Shabbos January 10th. For more information, please call Mr. Sternhill at 425-0887 ext. 260.



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