



In Yemin Orde, the Youth Summer Jobs Program Keeps Children Busy

Instead of getting into trouble, youth at Yemin Orde Village work in a program that allows them to learn to accept responsibility and to handle difficulty

This happens in Yemin Orde Youth Village on the Carmel Mountain. Instead of complaining, as usual, that there is no budget or manpower, instead of making excuses, the managers, staff and children in the Village take responsibility and find solutions.

The summer break is a time prone to complications. Boredom, wandering and freedom creating fertile ground for quarrels and counselors often find themselves having to bail out children, or collect them back to the Village. This is the background for the establishment of a wonderful program called "Taasukayits" (Summer Jobs), which was initiated by Yemin Orde in order to combat the dangers of the summer and to preserve the fruits of the intensive work carried out throughout the school year.

For the past three years, 100 of the village's children have been working during the summer break with employers such as IKEA, ZARA, EL AL, hotels Ramada and Fattal, social organizations and law firms. This is not an act of charity, but rather a real business project with real jobs, with the work being closely supervised by the staff to ensure that the children are up to the task. In this way, three goals are achieved: the children stay away from trouble, they acquire work skills that will help them in the future, including acceptance of responsibility and fulfillment of obligations, and, of course, they receive fair wages for their work.

Yemin Orde is a religious youth village, but not all children are necessarily halachically Jewish. The village is pluralistic and embraces all.

Victoria Smaugina immigrated to Israel alone four years ago from Russia, leaving behind her father and mother. She arrived at Yemin Orde as part of the "Na'aleh" program and will complete her studies at the age of 18



Yemin Orde Youth Village. Turning obstacles into opportunities

instead of this year. During the current summer break she worked at eBay, where she was responsible for quality checking the products. Alongside her were 20 other children from the village. Now that the project is over, she and some of her friends have been offered follow-up jobs that are not part of the project - simply because management was happy with the work they delivered.

"There were many children who did not know what to do without school", she says. "When they gave us this job opportunity, everyone was happy because you make money and you are not alone and everyone is with you, and the village is with you and continues to accompany you during the break too." Victoria will not continue with eBay because she is joining the army. When I ask where she will serve she becomes coy and says she cannot say because it is a secret. Shmuli Bing, director of the village

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in the past four years and initiator of the Summer Jobs program together with Idan Ginat, is very proud of the percentage of children enlisting in the IDF as well as in the types of roles they perform.”

“It all started from the fact that we noticed that the summers were a source of problems, and we said, let’s turn this problem into an opportunity” he says. In regular high school this change from learning environment to the summer break is not easy, but here it is amplified. The village is open in the summer, but the children do not want to stay in this framework. There are those who go back to their parents and those who cannot, and we looked for a system that meets the needs of everyone.” It was not a simple project: There were companies which joined the project and then withdrew, and there were children who did not hold out and quit. We were hoping that 200 children take part in this program but in reality only 100 succeeded. We are already working on the next summer break and are looking for additional companies to join the program. The educational authorities are looking into expanding this program to other youth villages. “

There were opportunities for learning during the program, for everyone. The children had to wake up in the morning on their own without being helped by their informal educators - this is a small but significant

achievement. They learned to be part of the working force, and they learned how to handle difficulty. We were there just in time to help out. Every child was also accompanied by a mentor for economic education, because the issue of what to do with the money they earned was just as important.”

We do not pay enough attention to the youth villages and the boarding schools, to the exciting work that is being performed there. The motivated staff, their sense of calling, and how they give it all in order to best prepare the children for the world ahead.

Yemin Order’s slogan is “From survival to Leadership – I am going to conquer life”. This is a powerful message for the children and teenagers who are less fortunate and those who are here alone. These children know that someone cares about them every minute of the day, even if that someone is not their parent, and regardless of the hour. It is a world almost invisible, but we could all learn so much from it.

