



Music Makes Us One - The Leo Baeck Arab-Jewish Summer Camp 2010

Submitted With Deepest Appreciation to our Friends at NPLS



Thanks to your generous support 126 Arab and Jewish children including 60 children from Leo Baeck After School Care Centres for Severely at Risk Arab and Jewish Children, were able to come together for our two week annual Arab Jewish Summer Camp which was led for the second year running by charismatic Haifa University student Meira Avara Molnesh, participant in Leo Baeck's University Leadership Training Programme for Ethiopian students. The 12 Arab and Jewish camp counselors, 2nd year participants in Leo Baeck's Arab-Jewish Youth Leadership Training Programme were supervised by Arab nursing student, Dalia Abu Stili.

On their first day the 63 boys and 63 girls were split into small groups each headed by an Arab and Jewish counselor using both languages at all times. The children got to know each other names and backgrounds through introductory games and fun activities, including water games and sports that were a daily highlight throughout the two weeks.

Every day began with breakfast that the children prepared together and included east-west singing, dancing and music programmes that incorporated the theme **Music Makes Us One**.



Nature Day in the Carmel Park introduced games that demanded positive communication skills, team spirit and mutual trust in addition to a learning circle that explored individual and mutual connections to the Land of Israel, its natural resources and our responsibility as human beings to respect and preserve our planet.



The first week came to a musical close with the children's favorite, a darbuka workshop, making maracas and other instruments out of recycled materials, and teaching one another in Arabic and Hebrew, 'Shir Hashalom – Song of peace' the song that became synonymous with the late Yitzhak Rabin's quest for peace. This very special day ended with all 126 children singing the song together in both languages accompanied by rattling on their hand-made maracas.

The second week opened with an Arab-Jewish talent show; first place went to an 11 year old Arab girl for her outstanding belly dancing performance. A dancing troupe of 10 year olds made the second place and a 6 yrs old Arab boy won the third place singing 'Shir Hashalom – Song for Peace' in Arabic.



An invitation from the Greek Catholic Church's Beit Hacheded, the House of Grace, resulted in a unique outing steeped in multifaith history, multiculturalism and yet again, the power and beauty of making music together. Guided by professionals from the Catholic community, the children created musical instruments and made music, danced and sang together in the courtyard of the church.

Following a fun day in a local Amusement Park and a Peace-Kite hand-crafting and flying day, the six groups organized individual musical celebrations to mark the end of this year's summer camp.



According to evaluation sheets completed by parents and children alike, Summer Camp 2010 was the best camp ever in every way. From the beginning it created a constant flow of new shared experiences topped off by the end of camp family party at *Neve Bedouim*, the Bedouin cultural and heritage centre at the entrance to the Druze village of Osafia. In the words of Summer Camp star, six year old Youssef, *"Not only did I almost win the talent show, I made great friends, had so much fun and I really loved my group counselors. I want to come back next year and I want to be a camp counselor when I grow up."*

On behalf of 126 children, we thank NPLS for making the summer of 2010 a summer of harmony and hope.