

The Hope - התקווה

Kids and Urban Poverty



The Jaffa Institute's Approach

The Jaffa Institute is a private, non-profit, multi-service social agency to designed to create a new reality for thousands of underprivileged Israeli children from Jaffa, South Tel Aviv and Bat Yam. From food and tutoring assistance to emotional counseling, from art therapies to preventative health care, the institute provides many of the necessary elements for a safe and secure childhood and to break the cycle of poverty and deprivation. Their current programming areas fall under educational enrichment, morning enrichment, nutrition and health, parental empowerment, and immigrant integration.

KIDS IN CRISIS

On the map, Tel Aviv and Jaffa are close neighbors. However, often their realities couldn't be farther apart. The modernity, wealth and beauty of Tel Aviv make a stark contrast to Jaffa's poverty and urban blight. Those hardest hit by the negative conditions are Jaffa's children.

Jaffa has the largest concentration of poor families in Israel. Over 2,000 of Jaffa's kids don't eat a hot meal every day. Child abuse rates are 8 times the national average. Faced with this reality, many of Jaffa's children succumb to the cycle of poverty and destitution that surrounds them.

DINA'S STORY

Dina's family immigrated to Israel in 2005, settling in Jaffa in a government-sponsored absorption center. The youngest of 9 kids, Dina found it difficult to adapt to her new environment and received no help or encouragement from her family. Her negative attitude towards school work and other activities stemmed from feelings of insecurity and inferiority. Although Dina is a 4th grade student, at the beginning of the school year she could read no more than a few short sentences.

A JEWISH ISSUE

Creating safe, stable environments for children is an essential Jewish value. *Talmud* teaches that the world continues to exist only in the merit of children in school, and that we do not divert schoolchildren from their studies even for the sake of building the Temple (*Shabbat* 119b).

Dina's Story Continued

In spite of all of Dina's challenges, the Jaffa Institute counselors at the *Moadonit*/After School Enrichment Program would not give up on her. Since Dina began receiving daily private counseling she dramatically improved and inched closer to the level of her class mates. The *Moadonit* staff worked closely with Dina, utilizing games and other creative outlets to develop independent study habits and strengthen her mathematical skills. Dina has come a long way since the beginning of this process. She's constantly taking books out from the school library and reading with enthusiasm. She is attentive in class, participates in discussions, and completes her homework and school assignments. Dina has become a joyful part of the class at the *Moadonit* and is simultaneously becoming a symbol of progress to her traditional cultural environment.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE WITH THE JAFFA INSTITUTE

The Jaffa Institute runs over 37 different projects which assist thousands of severely disadvantaged children and their families at a number of different sites. Interactive group activities as well as site visits can be arranged for individuals and groups of various sizes. These activities include food distribution, tutoring, job training, and more.

The Jaffa Institute also offers many ways for those outside Israel to contribute meaningfully to the Jaffa Institute community, through Youth 4 Youth, a collection of young people's fundraising programs, planned giving, and more. For more information, visit their website at www.jaffainstitute.org