



Learning from Success at Ne'urim Youth Centers in Druze Villages

Sarit Ellenbogen-Frankovitz • Irit Aizik

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Editor: Revital Aviv Matok
English translation: Naomi Halsted
Graphic design: Efrat Speaker

Myers-JDC-Brookdale Institute
P.O.B. 3886, 9103702 Jerusalem, Israel

Tel: (02) 655-7400
Email: brook@jdc.org
Website: brookdale.jdc.org.il

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Abstract

Background

In recent years, the Druze community has been undergoing a rapid process of modernization and change in its traditional structure. The Ne'urim program was launched in 2006 in order to help young Druze cope with the many changes ensuing from this process. It focuses on teenagers and young adults, perceiving them as agents of change, and seeks to achieve its goals by operating youth centers in Druze communities – the so-called Ne'urim (“youth”) Centers. The centers are run by the Ma'ase Center association in partnership with the Ministry for the Development of the Periphery, the Negev and the Galilee, the Administration for the Socioeconomic Development of Druze and Circassian Localities, JDC-Israel, the local authorities and philanthropic organizations.

In 2018/19, a process of Learning from Success was conducted at the Ne'urim Centers. The main goal was to extract successful principles of action that can be applied in all the Ne'urim Centers and in similar programs, and to produce a document for the purpose of learning and implementing best practices at the centers.

Methodology

The work on this document was largely based on “Learning from Past Successes – the Retrospective Method,” which extracts tacit professional knowledge from the system and turns it into explicit knowledge, formulated in the language of “actionable knowledge.” In this way, program participants accrue a repertoire of actions and principles that lead to success.

The information was collected between May 2018 and March 2019 through interviews, observations, and focus groups with professionals and youngsters at the centers. Thus, information was gathered about each center from different sources and perspectives were gained on the work being done in the centers.

Report Structure

The document opens with background information about the program, describing its vision and organizational structure, the target population of the Ne'urim Centers, and the way the centers work. This is followed by a detailed description of the methodology used to collect the material to document the Learning from Success process.

A separate section presents the principles of action for operating the Ne'urim Centers and the work at the program headquarters, which derive from generalizing the actions revealed during the gathering of information and are shared by all or most of the centers. The principles of action are divided into the main areas of the program's work such as: contact with the participants, work with the volunteers, forming partnerships with the local authority and other agencies in the locality.

The final section comprises a detailed documentation of the learning process in four selected centers – Yarka, Julis, Isfiya and Hurfish. It includes documentation of the success of two programs implemented at the centers – the Nabi (prophet) Shu'ayb March, and the Picture of the Future program.

The voices of the young participants for whom the program was created are presented in a separate section and are also interwoven as quotations throughout the document.