



Dear Friends of MICHA,

On the threshold of the High Holy Days and the start of a new school year we are beginning our 62nd year at MICHA Center.

Sixty-two years of caring for children with hearing loss, productive years of professionalism and unceasing volunteer work, filled with creativity and the capacity for perpetual renewal, which have made our Center such a dynamic one with impressive accomplishments each year. The revolutionary idea upon which MICHA Center was founded is constantly being cultivated. Although therapeutic methods have changed and become more advanced, the vision of Dr. Ezra Korine - founder of MICHA - continues to lead the work and spirit of this outstanding organization. At present, MICHA Center cares for over 500 children annually and 90% of our graduates are integrated in regular elementary schools when they reach first grade. By any criteria, this is a remarkable achievement!

What is the secret of MICHA Center's energetic vitality? It is the human factor – the expert professional staff, the many dedicated volunteers and the loyal donors and friends who have accompanied MICHA throughout the years. Thanks to this "human wealth" with which we are blessed, we look forward to continued success and even greater achievements in the coming year.

With warmest wishes to all our friends for a blessed and fruitful year.

**Dr. Vera Korine-Shafir**  
Chairperson



The lovable panda donated by Lial's father

## Parental Involvement

Parents of children at MICHA Center are an inseparable part of our organization. This year, we benefitted from the support of numerous parents in various ways: One parent enlisted his work place to contribute a new piece of playground equipment, another parent recruited gifts for MICHA Center's outstanding employees and several parents gave interviews on the media recounting their personal narratives in order to help the public become more attentive to the special needs of children with hearing loss.

## Someone Hears Them

In honor of Israel's National Hearing Day in May, musician Shlomi Beracha, of the popular Mashina Rock Band, met with MICHA's preschool children and hearing children to record a new version of the song "Does Anyone Hear Me?". This unique video clip was circulated by various social networks and its exposure helped promote greater awareness about children with hearing loss.



# MICHA *Newsletter*

SEPTEMBER 2015



## MICHA Kindergarten Reunion

At this year's reunion for children who had attended MICHA Center's kindergarten rotation program during the last few years, singer Harel Skaat and actor Ido Mosseri gave enjoyable performances for the children and their parents. One of the highlights of the event was when Harel surprised MICHA child Hila Bokovza, who was celebrating her birthday that day, with a special song just for her.

The kindergarten rotation program is a unique framework for children who attend the kindergarten at MICHA Center twice-a-week where they benefit from language enrichment, speech therapy sessions and activities with other children with hearing loss. During the remaining four days of the week, they attend a regular neighborhood kindergarten enabling them to benefit from integrated activities together with their hearing peers.

## Air Force Soldiers Visit MICHA

During a week of touring various sectors of Israeli society, a group of excellent Air Force soldiers from the "Nocturnal Birds Squadron" came for a visit to MICHA Center. The soldiers became acquainted with the children and enjoyed playing with them in the playground. When they were asked by their commanders to summarize their impressions, the soldiers indicated their visit at MICHA as one of the highlights of the week's experience.

At this opportunity, we would like to note that we have about 100 volunteers at MICHA Center who help out in the kindergartens, provide personal support to children and families, and assist at fundraising events and varied projects.





## Preschool Framework Graduation Event

The graduation event for the children of the preschool framework took place this year at "Hachava", an ecological farm in Tel Aviv. After each graduate received a MICHA diploma and medal, the ceremony concluded with the children joyfully releasing dozens of balloons up to the sky. Later on, the children participated in diverse activities including visits to various animal corners, learning about the production of honey by bees, baking pitas in a tabun oven and more.

This unique event was funded with the help of proceeds of a fair held by students of Alliance High School, who had accompanied the children of MICHA's preschool framework throughout the year as part of their "personal commitment" curriculum. The Alliance high school students also helped MICHA's staff with the children as they took part in the varied fun activities at the farm.

## Volunteers at Kfar Kassem

Following the Seminar Day in Kfar Kassem last February, three 12th grade students – Nur Desoki, Asil Teha and Nura Graba – have been volunteering their services regularly at the Kfar Kassem Rehabilitative Day-Care Center, helping the day-care staff and bringing happy smiles to the children's faces.



## "Simanai Derech" in the Dream Kindergarten

MICHA Center's successful "Simanai Derech" Program, in the framework of which parents of children with hearing loss are guided how to encourage the hearing learning process in their personal home environment, continues to be expanded. This year it reached the Dream Kindergarten – a new kindergarten in Kfar Azar that cares for children rehabilitating from cancer who, due to their weak immune system, cannot attend a regular kindergarten in their neighborhoods. During the past year, a number of MICHA's children, diagnosed with hearing loss resulting from chemotherapy treatments, also attended this unique kindergarten. MICHA's professionals met with the kindergarten staff and parents of children with hearing loss to provide them with important information and guidance. Emphasis was placed on improving acoustic conditions, techniques which encourage the children to rely primarily on their sense of hearing and helpful suggestions to facilitate the children's coping with hearing challenges in varied situations.



## Suddenly the doctor asked: "Were you told about her ears?"

Excerpts from a narration by Talia Chen Yoffe, mother of a MICHA child (Mako website)

"During my 33rd week of pregnancy, my waters broke. I remember worrying about the damage which might have been caused to the parquet flooring... Five hours later, as my newborn baby weighing only 2.065 kilo was placed on top of me, one of the doctors approached me and said: "Tell me, were you told about her ears?" In one unexpected moment, this is how I found out about my daughter's disability: microtia – a congenital deformity in the ear canal structure, resulting in hearing impairment... My maternity leave (vacation), if you can call it that, was filled with bureaucracy, medical appointments and examinations, while trying to cope with my fatigue and anxiety during those early difficult weeks. At the same time, I was trying my best to be calm with Mika-Ella and to hide my inner feelings of hysteria, helplessness and uncertainty.

Now, two years later, Mika-Ella has grown to be a little princess. To a large extent, this is due to MICHA's wonderful care and support – "angels on earth" who were there for me with a warm embrace, helpful information to relieve my fears and, most important, letting me know that I am not alone."



### Starting Good

In the past year, MICHA Center joined the "Starting Good" venture. This new initiative offers couples planning their weddings an opportunity to make their affair a special one by giving an unconventional souvenir gift to their wedding guests. Money contributed by the couple is transferred to the charity of their choice and the wedding guests each receive a gift certificate notifying them of the donation given in their name. For further details: [www.startinggood.org.il](http://www.startinggood.org.il).



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