



A Quarter-Century of JOIN Summer Camps

See a [1-minute video](#) from JOIN's 2017 camps

Birth of a Project

One of JOIN Israel's first responses to the overwhelming needs of the mass immigration of Russian Jewry to Israel was the creation of a summer camp for the young newcomers.

The transition was difficult for everyone – parents were scrambling to learn Hebrew and find work and housing, Israel was figuring out how to meet the inexhaustible needs of the newcomers, and children were struggling to establish a new identity and social standing, learn Hebrew and manage at school. Then summer brought a vast void for the children. Parents still had to cope with their challenges and lacked the resources to pay for camp.

JOIN summer camps were the answer! Here children could escape the boredom and tension at home and enjoy wholesome fun, nurturing activities, and warmth and encouragement. The children glowed, the parents were effusive and the staff was charged up by their mission. JOIN summer camps were here to stay!

Camp Power

Everyone agrees that summer camp is important, particularly when the parents are out all day at work. Allow me to quote the words of Rabbi Mitchell Cohen, Director of the National Ramah Commission:

“The transformational power of Jewish summer camp is undeniable. Greatness can be achieved when you combine summer vacation, supportive peer group [living] away from the pressures and restrictions of home life, young role models and challenging, nurturing activities. Children and teens grow in innumerable ways, developing greater self esteem, deeper friendships, and depending upon the camp program, significantly strengthened Jewish identity.

“Obviously, camps have a number of distinct advantages that cannot be replicated during the school year. Length of time away from home, freedom from the pressures of school peer groups and academic responsibilities, and certain aspects of the natural setting of summer camp all combine to make camp unique.”

Ultra-Efficiency

JOIN Israel doesn't just do great programs. We do great programs with ultra-efficiency. How do we infuse ultra-efficiency into something as straightforward as summer camp?

Target only the most-need – private day camps service those that can afford it. Communities and schools provide lower-cost camp alternatives. JOIN helps just the 15-20% of families who cannot afford even that.

Subsidy matching – JOIN enlists the schools, government and parents to share the expense, so we can extend our budget to reach the largest number of children.

Bare-bones cost – JOIN works with school-run camps so expenses are limited to activities and counselors, and not facilities, infrastructure, equipment or profit.

Educational enrichment – JOIN camps include learning as part of the daily schedule so that children remain academically fit, not just physically and emotionally satisfied.

Campers' Stories

Diana yearned to go to camp. But her father had been fired from his job and there wasn't enough money for even the most basic needs. Only with JOIN's generous subsidy was Diana able to join her friends in camp, uplifting her spirits as well as those of her parents!

Illiya is the only child of a single mother who works all day to support the family. His mother requested a large discount from the camp, but it was more than the camp could afford to absorb so they turned her down. When JOIN Israel offered to subsidize Illiya's camp fee, he and his mother were elated.

Later Illiya's mother told us, "I was so happy and comforted that my child wouldn't be left alone for so many hours. Instead, he was part of a supervised, enriching and values-oriented camp. Illiya thoroughly enjoyed camp and came home every day full of exciting things to share."

What Can You Do?

We thank all those who sponsored children this summer ... and every summer during the last quarter-century!

We ask you to commit right now to ***sponsor one or more children, at \$100 per child, so that next year's Dianas and Illiyas will have a summer to remember.***

\$100 can mean an extra shirt or a nice dinner. For Diana and Illiya – it means everything!

[Sponsor a Child](#) **now!**

