



Circles

BEIT ISSIE SHAPIRO'S MAGAZINE
AUTUMN 2016 | ISSUE 25



Beit Issie Shapiro

Changing the lives of people with disabilities

On the Willie & Celia Trump Campus



 **bank hapoalim**

CARMEL CHARITABLE TRUST

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ERIC COHEN BOOKS

Dear Friends,

This is the time of the year when new children and their families enter our kindergarten and school, and when we say lehitraot (farewell) to the children and their families who are graduating. It is always a bittersweet time for us at BIS and for the families when we say goodbye.

We are all proud of our children's progress. They have so much courage and love in them and they teach us much about meeting the challenges of life and "beating the odds". We know that they are able to move on more confidently and independently than when they first entered our doors.

We are witness to how the families leave Beit Issie Shapiro (BIS) with their heads held high, with many new friends and a sense that their lives have been put together again. They will always feel that BIS is a second home - even after their children leave.

But we also know that it is not enough - to help only those children who are lucky to receive direct BIS services. BIS strives to improve the lives of all children in Israel, and all those beyond our borders. We work very hard to research and document our successful models so they can be replicated in other places. We teach our models of intervention, and learn from others and tirelessly advocate for better disability policies and services for all.

As this year closes and a new one starts, I can honestly say that one of the most profound moments in my career was when I was at the United Nations this July, and heard about a world-wide research project on "early intervention." Israel was found to have the best practices in early intervention amongst all the countries evaluated. Some of these services were initiated and implemented at BIS by Naomi Stuchiner and Haya De Lowe over 30 years ago. This field has been developed further by other great professionals at BIS and beyond. It has been implemented throughout Israel as a result of advocacy in parliament that we have led. We can be proud Israelis!

You will read in this newsletter about some profound changes we are creating through the development of leadership amongst our young adults with disabilities. These young adults are leading their own future and the future for the next generation. You will also read about innovations that we are developing in the field of technology.

We need your continued support to make a difference in the lives of people with disabilities. I thank you deeply for partnering us in this journey. "Together we stand" and together we will pave the way for greater rights and equal opportunities for all.

I wish you and your families a happy and healthy New Year

Sincerely,

Jean Judes
Executive Director



Every once in a while, I ask myself, are we really on the right path? But then, I meet the parents of our children, and learn from them how meaningful our models and innovations really are.



Full Participation of People with Disabilities in Society

IMPACT IN ISRAEL'S SUPREME COURT

"Legislation that promotes equal rights is important but is not enough. The most important mission is to create a cultural social change that will enable full integration." Said Supreme Court Justice (Emeritus), Dalia Dorner, as part of a seminar run by Beit Issie Shapiro at Israel's Supreme Court in Jerusalem on the subject of the Equal Rights for Persons with Disabilities Law of 1988. Judge Spitzer, Director of the Supreme Court, opened the seminar and stated that "the court system is committed to values of equality, respect and the right of every person with a disability to receive services based on his or her needs."

During the seminar, Family Court Judge Anat Alfasi, left a lasting impression on the audience when she presented a case that was brought before her, in which she was required to reconcile between family members and a young man with disabilities. She demonstrated how the new model Beit Issie Shapiro is proposing can be effectively implemented.

Shai Assoulin, self-advocate with intellectual disabilities and member of the National Leadership Group made a presentation as well. He spoke about this self-advocacy national group's activities, and their desire to see the Guardianship Law amended.

Shosh Kaminski, Director of the Community Development Division at Beit Issie Shapiro, spoke after Shai and presented the best practices of this model self-advocacy movement for people with intellectual disabilities, a joint venture by Beit Issie Shapiro, Israel Elwyn, the Ruderman Foundation and the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles, comprised of eleven groups throughout Israel, in addition to the national group.



RESEARCH: HOW DOES STIGMA AFFECT US - THE VOICES OF THE SELF-ADVOCATES

A Unique Research Study Conducted by Beit Issie Shapiro's Research and Evaluation Unit

For the first time, a joint research study was conducted with self-advocates on the subject of stigma and self-stigma among persons with intellectual disabilities. This research method is unique; and this is the first time in which a joint study has been conducted with self-advocates who participated in the planning and research processes.

Unfortunately, people with intellectual disabilities still suffer from taunting and humiliation by people in society. The research results indicate that there is a significant difference between the newer and more veteran self-advocate members of the groups in coping with this phenomenon. While the new self-advocates respond to insults and other forms of humiliation by ignoring them, as they were taught to do, and by reducing their presence in the public



space - a response that indicates the internalization of the stigmas - the seasoned self-advocates externalize the feelings aroused by society's treatment of them, and even answer back to those who insult them - a response that indicates that although they are aware of their differences, they understand that they do not need to tolerate insults or humiliating treatment.

The results of this study will be published in the book - "Developmental Intellectual Disabilities and Stigma: Emerging from the Margins of Society" in the chapter entitled "How Stigma Affects Us - The Voice of the Self Advocates." The book will be published in London in October 2016.



Google & BIS

Groundbreaking Technologies that

ITAMAR UNDERSTANDS EVERYTHING

"Itamar understands everything. He can only express himself by laughing or crying. But I feel he is trying to communicate. The most important thing for me is to find a way for him to express himself and his inner emotions," says Sarah, mother of Itamar Kahana who attends Beit Issie Shapiro's Aaron De Lowe Early Intervention Center, and who recently celebrated his third birthday.

Itamar is an adorable child, with excellent comprehensive abilities; however, he has severe motor disabilities and is unable to speak. Itamar is, in essence, locked in his own body. His mother describes his abilities: "Itamar understands everything. I continually see and sense how he understands what is happening around him, like when I read him a book."

"At the moment, he can only express himself by laughing or crying, but I feel that he is trying to express himself, to really communicate."

The solution for Itamar is a unique therapy program that integrates recently-developed technologies, equipping him with a motorized wheelchair, giving him mobility, and,

teaching him to operate an eye-gaze tracking system, giving him the ability to operate a computer as his 'voice.'

The professional team of Beit Issie Shapiro work with Itamar, helping him to gain better control of the system that will serve as his means for communication enabling self-expression. Once this is achieved, he will be given an eye-gaze tracking system to take home with him that will stay with him all of the time, everywhere he goes.

Although Itamar is only at the beginning of this journey, it is already possible to see how happy he is. The eye-gaze tracking system, allows him to choose a song and hear it play. This opportunity for self-expression and independent choices helps connect Itamar to daily life.



Break All Limitations

PROJECT "GO AHEAD"

A partnership between Google and Beit Issie Shapiro allows people with severe motor disabilities full access to smartphones.

The technology is offered free of charge by its developer - Sesame Enable, an Israeli startup founded by entrepreneurs Giora Livne and Oded Ben Dov.

Giora and Oded are graduates of A3i - accelerating inclusion in Israel - the first accelerator in the world dedicated to ventures that improve the quality of life of people with disabilities. The accelerator is run by Beit Issie Shapiro and PresenTense, and in partnership with the Ruderman Family Foundation and The Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles.

Google.org allocated a million dollars to Google Israel for the purpose of making this technology accessible for people with disabilities.



Jean Judes, Danny Dannon, and Naomi Stuchiner

Promoting technological entrepreneurship can play an important role in improving the lives of people with disabilities. In June, the Mission of Israel, together with The Mission of Argentina and Beit Issie Shapiro, held an event on this issue as part of the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities.

Families and Parents Starting the New Year with Hope

At the beginning, when I was completely devastated, the mother of a 7 year-old boy with disabilities told me: 'I wish I could take you ahead in time seven years and show you how you will be.' | Ruti Gaon

He has this look when something really exciting happens to him. He tilts his head downward a bit, he breaks into a little smile, his eyes twinkle - looking ahead and upward - and almost meet his eyebrows. The eyebrows move up and down as if they are dancing.

"One more push and he's out," I am told as I look at him again, and breathe in as much air as I can, close my eyes and push with all the strength I have left until I hear the baby cry. The first cry.



Thanks to her, I have learned and am still learning to live in the moment, to enjoy what there is and what I have | Michal Unger

My Yuli will be two years old this summer. I look at her, at her sea-blue eyes, her winning smile, and her dimples, and am enchanted by her. I wonder again for the millionth time what exactly is going on in her head - if only I could know...

Since the day she was born, my Yuli, the youngest of my daughters, lights up my life and teaches me countless lessons about life, determination and courage, about true and complete love, without expectations, unconditional acceptance, the ability to see the small glimmers of light, because even tiny steps for us are giant strides - and they empower us until the next time. She taught me how to live in the moment, to enjoy what there is and what I have.

I can't stand it when babies cry, but this was a different kind of crying. A happy cry. I opened my eyes in happiness, smiled and breathed a sigh of relief reserved only for mothers who have just given birth. But the look on his face changed..." This is how I described in my book the moment that changed my life. The moment that I thought was the end of my world. The moment when my third son, Erez, was born with a rare syndrome."

"At the beginning, when I was completely devastated, a mother of a 7 year-old boy with disabilities told me: 'I wish I could take you ahead in time seven years and show you how you will be.' Erez is a little older than seven, and since then, I quit a demanding job and intensive work schedule. I abandoned many of my earlier behavior and perceptions, and I fell in love with the real me. Today, I run a business; and more importantly, I am in the midst of writing a book. Me? A book? Who would have believed it: The journey was not a simple one, but each and every day I thank my son Erez for coming into my life, and thank myself for the path I chose."



I have also grown, alongside Yuli. Seven years ago, at the end of my 40s, after years of practicing as an attorney, I discovered that I was different. My values had changed, and with it my list of priorities. I enrolled in a master's degree program in art therapy; and since then, I have been treating children and adults with emotional and psychological difficulties, working on processes of change and growth. I treat each person according to his/her own pace and in the manner that suits him/her best. And the journey? It's carved with uncertainty and a lack of knowledge, but always involves searching for those small steps which in the end lead to significant changes and successes.

Mothers

When i dreamt of having a family i never imagined that it would include so many people

Maya Segev

My Nika is 11.5 years old. At age 2, she was diagnosed with Rett Syndrome, a difficult, dangerous and complex syndrome that strikes almost all the body's systems. Since the diagnosis, I have learned about inner strength from Nika, and discovered my own inner strength. I now focus on what's important - setting limitations in life, separating "the wheat from the chaff" and unconditional love.

Immediately following Nika's diagnosis, we received warm

recommendations about Beit Issie Shapiro. Here, Nika receives all the treatments she needs. She has friends, and we have a second home and an address to turn to when necessary. When I dreamt of having a family I never imagined that it would include so many people.

But thanks to Nika, we have received assistance from people who have become part of our family. The other parents we have met, educators, therapists, assistants, caregivers and the wonderful people at Beit Issie Shapiro have all supported us, each in their own way, and they are always there for us and for Nika. On a personal level, I cope with my difficulties by writing a blog and by looking at life with a lot of humor.



We love her exactly the way she is

Efrat Rabinowitz

When Romi was diagnosed with Angelman Syndrome, after processing the news, my first experience was of loneliness. We didn't know who to turn to and the medical institutions offered only a partial answer and at a different pace than what we needed. The day after we received the diagnosis, I decided to establish an organization for families with children with Angelman Syndrome. Today, 3 years later, the organization promotes awareness of this in Israel, and works on behalf of the families. I currently receive all the information I need from the team of staff at Beit Issie Shapiro who work with Romi and I don't need to run around between different professionals. Beit Issie Shapiro is a second home for us, not only a school.

Romi is learning to express herself using a communication computer, and is mainstreamed once a week in a local school. Most importantly, Romi is happy! Raising a child with disabilities involves many difficulties; however, it provides me with an enormous sense of satisfaction, parental empowerment and a special feeling. The thing I would want most for Romi is for her to be a typical child, especially for her sake. But we love her exactly the way she is.



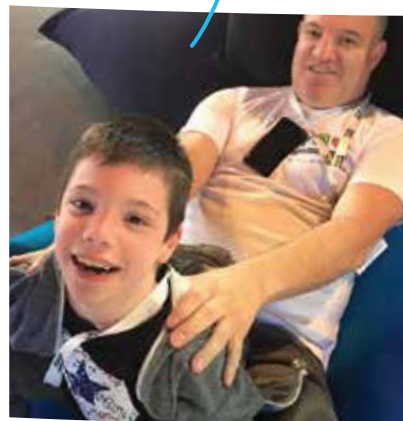
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Fathers

Our choice was to look at what can be done to improve our lives and the lives of millions of people | Yoav Gaon

I have always worked in the field of retail marketing. When our Erez was born, I entered the challenging world of families with children with disabilities. I was introduced to the great difficulty and enormous need to easily find and purchase assistive products, to gain inspiration and to search for ideas for activities we could do with Erez together as a happy family. Since I did not find anything to meet this need, we decided to establish YOOOCAN, a startup that features content about products, services and innovation for families with children with disabilities from around the world.

We collaborate with Beit Issie Shapiro as our content consultant and it serves as a platform for the sale of the amazing products. We chose to look at how to improve our lives and the lives of millions of people with disabilities and their families worldwide.



Thanks Rhea and Beit Issie Shapiro! I had the opportunity to devote my time to a goal that is absolutely priceless | Ziv Azmanov

My name is Ziv, a high tech entrepreneur and father of Rhea, a first grader at Beit Issie Shapiro's Special Education School. When Rhea was born with a rare brain defect, it was the first time I was exposed to people with disabilities. Consequently, I decided to leave my position as CEO of a hi-tech company and dedicate my time to my daughter and to social entrepreneurship. I was delighted to see that the hi-tech entrepreneurial community was very encouraging, allowing people to implement their ideas. On the other hand, I found the field of social entrepreneurship to be a vast wasteland. This enormous gap made me both angry and disappointed.

Guy's disability and learning to handle it has revealed a whole new world that I am only discovering now | Eran Tamir

For me, Beit Issie Shapiro is a second home. It is a wonder of nature with people working out of a true sense of mission. Guy's disability and our manner of coping with it has opened me up to a world I never encountered. When the staff at Beit Issie Shapiro joined forces with the TOM - Tikun Olam Makers, it was clear to me that they would achieve amazing results for people with different abilities. These are two organizations whose focus is on doing good and creating solutions for people with disabilities.

When the idea of a foldable standing device for Guy and other children was raised, Guy and I went together to try it out and to help with the development process. It was an amazing and exciting experience for us. Participation in the TOM project was very meaningful. I was exposed to brilliant solutions for people with disabilities, and I met people who have become my good friends. On a personal level, I have gained a great deal from people with disabilities and from the ability to help others in a way that has made me more sensitive to my surroundings and to other people and their needs.

I decided to seek a way to change this grim reality and create an environment that encourages social business entrepreneurship. The first significant step was my participation in the amazing project, A3i, the first Assistive Technology Accelerator of its kind run by Beit Issie Shapiro. It was designed to encourage entrepreneurship in order to improve the quality of life of people with disabilities. I am very proud to take part in this project. Thanks to Rhea and Beit Issie Shapiro, I was given the opportunity to dedicate my time to a goal of the highest order. I receive satisfaction from knowing that I am doing something meaningful with my life, making even the smallest difference in the lives of others.

Beit Issie Shapiro in China

Pursuant to the agreement signed in January 2015, a delegation of consultants from Beit Issie Shapiro traveled to China at the beginning of March this year to commence discussing the establishment of a treatment center for children with disabilities in the city of Wuxi in the Jiangsu Province.



BIS Experience Around the World



CANADIAN FRIENDS IN TORONTO

Canadian Friends of Beit Issie Shapiro held a highly successful 6th annual Kicking For Kids Soccerthon on May 15th with 14 adult teams, 10 kids teams, and virtual tournaments in Australia and Israel!



AMERICAN FRIENDS IN LOS ANGELES

We are so proud of this awesome group of people and many more who came out to Soul Cycle Beverly Hills to support Beit Issie Shapiro. Special thanks to Seth and Shani Fisher for organizing this amazing event.



AMERICAN FRIENDS IN NEW YORK

Andrew Fine has become Chairman of AF of New York. Andrew co-manages a global venture capital group with a focus on consumer technology and he is actively involved in charities relating to children, innovation and Israel. He is also the great nephew of Issie Shapiro and his father Errol is the Chair of our board in Los Angeles



From left: Steven Pinkus (Montreal), Benji Maor (BIS Global Development Director), Chuck Merovitz (Ottawa), Dan Yolleck (President of Global Development) and Jack Shaicovitz (Montreal)

AMERICAN FRIENDS IN SOUTH FLORIDA

SNOWBIRDS

New friends of Beit Issie Shapiro gathered in Miami in March for an education and information evening especially for "snow birds" from Canada. This is a new tradition we will continue in the coming year.



From left: Eric Stein, Israel & Overseas Chair; Anne Jacobson, Chair, Board of Directors; Larry Feldman, Campaign Chair; Matthew C. Levin, President and CEO



From left: Jacob Solomon, President & CEO; Amy Dean, Chair of the Board; Robert Berrin, Immediate past board Char; Jeffrey Scheck, General Campaign Chair

FEDERATIONS

Thank you to the Greater Miami Jewish Federation for its ongoing support and the Jewish Federation of Palm Beach for its new partnership.



FRIENDS OF BEIT ISSIE SHAPIRO (UK) UKFOBIS

Laura Weller has become Chair of UKFOBIS. Laura was previously a commercial lawyer and has most recently worked with charities relating to children, education and Israel. UKFOBIS welcomes Claire Shutes as a Board member. Claire spent 20 years producing documentaries before becoming an expert on how state of mind impacts performance. She was born with cerebral palsy.



From left: Jean Judes ,Beit Issie Shapiro Chair of the Board, Zeev Bielski Beit Issie Shapiro Executive Director 20th Chief of Staff of the IDF, Caron Bielski Mayor of Ra'anana ,Gen. (res.) Benny Gantz

ISRAEL

Our donors and partners in Israel gathered to hear Lt. Gen. Benny Gantz talk about leadership and the future as part of our Virtual Shares Program in Israel.



AUSTRALIAN FRIENDS IN MELBOURNE

Congratulations and thanks so much to Louise Fisher on officially establishing the Australian Friends of Beit Issie Shapiro, Melbourne Louise volunteers every year at Beit Issie Shapiro's Aaron De Lowe Early Intervention Center. Thank you Louise!

SOUTH AFRICAN FRIENDS

Beit Issie Shapiro in Israel deeply mourns the passing of our beloved caring friend BERTIE LUBNER z"l A founding supporter and committed leader whose impact on the field of disabilities in Israel will remain indelibly for future generations

We are grateful to the Lubner Family for their tremendous support and partnership and thanks to Hilary, Marc and Nikki (in picture) for recently visiting us.





Save the date

PLEASE JOIN US

NOVEMBER

06

N.Y.C. Marathon

NOVEMBER

17

L.A. GALA honoring
Dr. Sharon Cermak

NOVEMBER

T.B.A.

TORONTO
Annual Autumn Event

DECEMBER

03

INTERNATIONAL
DISABILITIES DAY

NOVEMBER

16

N.Y. GALA honoring
Dr. Howard Weiner

NOVEMBER

18

TONY LEON
with Beit Protea, Israel

DECEMBER

01

POSITIVE EXPOSURE
Exhibit Opening at
Tel Aviv University

DECEMBER

07

EDUCATIONAL NIGHT
South Florida /
Boca Raton

Remember Beit Issie Shapiro in your will and make a difference in the lives of children for generations to come

Please contact us and we will provide you with further details about charitable plans including opportunities for lifetime income



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American Friends of Beit Issie Shapiro

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 - Southeast Region
 - West Coast Region
- Canadian Friends of Beit Issie Shapiro

United Kingdom Friends of Beit Issie Shapiro

- South African Friends of Beit Issie Shapiro
- Australian Friends of Beit Issie Shapiro
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