

AUGUST 2011

With apprehension rising over the bubbling cauldron in the Middle East, Leo Baeck's 20th Arab-Jewish Summer Camp, our most successful ever, gave 92 Arab and Jewish children the tools to develop a common language and to dispel their fears of the other. This camp has never been more important.

Click here to view TV report: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=klro4Bjmlag>

Leo Baeck Arab Jewish Summer Camp August 2011 Report

"On the one hand you can see the fear: they meet for the first time and some of them are really scared. Arab children, scared of Jews, Jewish children, scared of Arabs...in our small way we can change this." -Noa Erlich, Summer Camp Coordinator

"We're a Moslem family. We believe in peace and coexistence; my father has a restaurant in Haifa. During the 2nd Lebanon War he took food to people hiding in the bomb shelters, Jews and Arabs...we're all human beings." -Inas Atalla, Summer Camp Coordinator



We came to show the kids how weddings are celebrated in different cultures... The children laughed together, danced together, ate together...it was really joyful." - Marlen Matar-Da'abul, Camp Facilitator

"My child will get to know other children and their way of thinking; this is coexistence." -Aline Hadad-Kashkush, mother of camper



"We would stop the wars...we would simply come to the Prime Minister, or call him if we had his phone number, and say we want to make peace..." -Alexandra, age 9

"I feel good about this, I have never been to a camp with Jews before, and I never had any Jewish friends. But here, I am meeting Arabs and Jews. This was good for me." -Rojeh Gearisse, age 10

"The magicians were the best; they didn't use words but were so funny..."
-Malia, age 6



"You don't need language; you just need to believe in peace and friendship..." -Professor Jeremy Seligson, the Children's Peace Train

"To tell you the truth, the issue of Arabs and Jews, I always put it aside because it looks too complicated for me; but they asked me to do this Peace Wall...it is like a shock for me that the results are so good, that the children united. It is like magic." -Noa Ben Or, Peace Wall Artist

Leo Baeck's 20th annual Arab Jewish Summer Camp, which was organized in partnership with Haifa's Beit Hacheded Greek Catholic Church, was a triumph, a microcosm of everything that Arab-Jewish coexistence in Israel can and should be. 90% of the 92 participants said that they want to come back next year. Camp counselors wept as they said goodbye to their "tribe members". In just two weeks, fears were overcome, attitudes changed, open-mindedness to learning new words opened new lines of communication, and real friendships were forged. Evaluation sheets were handed out on the last day of camp and plans for reunions are already underway. Most importantly, however, the end of camp marked the beginning of new relationships and renewed hope for the future.

Day 1 - Welcome Ceremony: Trust & Bonding



Day 2 - The Culture of Weddings



Day 3 - Children's Peace Train



Day 4 – Nature, Bridges & Building Trust



Day 5 – Survivor Day



Day 6 – Communication Day: Drumming, Dictionaries & Art



Day 7 – Fun at “Balagan” Amusement Park, Kibbutz Yagur



Days 8, 9 & 10 – Peace Wall Project & More...



Sunday 14th August – Family Celebration



Awards ceremonies, a visit to the Peace Wall and a performance by the Haifa Puppet Theater were the prelude to the end of camp family party. Evaluation forms were distributed and everyone agreed that this 20th Arab Jewish Summer Camp exceeded their expectations. We are delighted to report that Arab Coordinator Inas Atalla will be joining the Clore Neighbourhood Centre.