

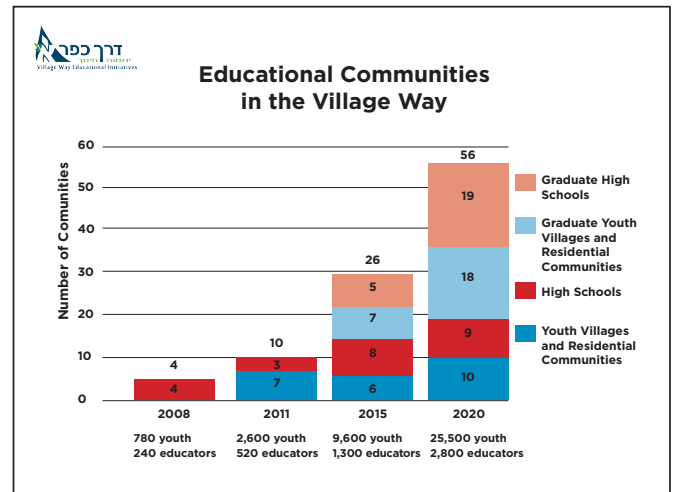
Village Way Educational Initiatives Report to the FYO Board November 2016

Highlights

Educational Communities – Serving 1500 educators and 11,800 youth at-risk

Village Way Educational Initiatives is partnering with 31 educational communities around the country:

14 communities are currently in the three-year implementation process (5 youth villages, 9 high schools for at-risk youth); and 17 are graduate communities (6 youth villages, 8 high schools, 3 residential communities).



The Village Way Educational Institute

The Village Way Educational Institute is a professional educational facilitation team that works with educators in each community to integrate the Village Way methodology. The integration process includes:

- Annual Village Way educational work plans
- Learning Sessions: Seminar days, round-table workshops (*Beit Midrash and Beit Nidrash*)
- One-on-One mentoring
- Developing programs with core Village Way components
- Intercommunity Forums, Trailblazers Course, & Annual Conference
- Educational Portal, E-Newsletter, Knowledge Management, Peer Learning

The Educational Institute also functions as an innovative educational think tank. Facilitators work to develop new materials for study sessions and new training methods to best fit each of the different partnering communities, and to respond to the most recent challenges facing our communities.

This year, the management of the Institute added a senior position – Methodological Development and External Relations. Responsibilities include analysis and development of the Village Way integration methodology, knowledge management, internal and external evaluation of the Institute's processes, and developing relationships with external partners (academia, educational organizations, etc.)

Highlights in Partnering Communities

The Village Way integration process includes staff learning sessions to our partnering educational communities with results on two levels of change: on **individual level**, changing educator's awareness and personal mission, in order to serve as meaningful adults in the lives of their youth; and on a **communal level**, changing the policies and programs of the educational community to reflect Village Way values.

Examples: In **Manof**, educators were preparing to send home a girl permanently. They struggled with the decision but did not see a way out. At one of the Village Way Beit Midrash study sessions, staff was asked to picture an ideal graduate. One educator reflected on a former student who had also gone through very difficult times, but in the end stayed at Manof and flourished. This memory inspired the staff to keep this girl and to find creative ways to actualize the Village Way axiom that *"We won't give in to you, and we won't give up on you."* The student entered the 12th grade this year. She's doing well, and is on the path to graduate in the spring.

An important and inspiring partnership continues between **Mahat Akko high school**, which serves an Arab population, and **Kfar Hassidim**, a religious Jewish village. Working with Institute staff, the two communities developed joint learning activities for their youth, including students volunteering together in Rambam hospital.

At **Ashdod Amal Technology High School** staff revamped Tikkun Olam programming. After in-depth study and discussion, they decided that the 9th grade classes would engage in community service once a week, and would focus on working with the elderly for the first three months of the year. They are developing relationships with a local retirement community, and are working to help the students develop empathy and prepare emotionally for such volunteer work. A trip to a museum that allowed the children to experience the physical difficulties that come with aging.

At **Mitarani Holon Ort Technology**, a "Community Day" was hosted at the school, where members of the wider Holon community, including children, soldiers, and elderly came to the campus to see the school and meet with the students and staff. The students showcased their vocational workshops and promoted free services to the public in areas such as hairdressing and makeup. This event was one aspect of the school's initiative to improve their image.

At **Beit Ha'arava Ort Technology**, staff involved student representatives in all program planning meetings. They allowed students' voices to be heard and have given students responsibilities for certain decisions and follow-through with the logistics. This new policy is developing trust between students and staff and creating a "Community of Meaning." At the parents' night before the first day of school this year, a mother told the principal *"My son just told me 'Mom, I can't wait for school to start again!' He has never said this to me in all his years of school."*

Intercommunity Forum Meetings

One of the important aspects of the Village Way educational movement is providing opportunities for educators to come together for joint learning sessions. This year the Institute will host five Intercommunity Forum Meetings for educators on the topics of Graduates, Tikkun Olam, Working with Families, Multifaceted Israeli Culture, and Preparation for Summer Vacation. In addition, there will be three Director's Forum meetings for village directors and school principals, creating stronger connections between our communities at the leadership level.

Trailblazer's Course

The first cohort of 12 community representatives completed the course in June. This fall, 16 participants launched the second cohort of the year-long Village Way Trailblazer's Course for emerging leaders, in cooperation with **Tel Aviv University's Continuing Education Unit**. This bi-monthly course provides in-depth day-long sessions on Village Way theory and applications. Participating educators develop an educational program to be implemented in their educational community over the course of the following year.

"I really got to know educators from different backgrounds, but with the same commitment to education."

Graduate Communities

Each year our list of Graduate Communities grows – 17, to date. A facilitator at the Educational Institute serves as the coordinator for all of the graduate communities, and the Institute offers these communities a wide range of options for connections and continued Village Way activity. These include *With You All the Way* programming support for communities meeting specific criteria, Science Enrichment programs for students, attendance at Intercommunity Forum Meetings and Conferences, and also a reduced number of *beit midrash* sessions and meetings with facilitators.

Evaluation

The Evaluation and Measurement Unit of Tel-Hai College continues to work as our third-party evaluator. This year's main findings are as follows:

Educators expressed **four essential contributions** of the Village Way:

1. Professionalism of educators (influence on educational outlook, work methods, and role perception);
2. Educator-student dialogue and changes in educators' attitudes toward students
3. Dialogue between educators in the educational communities and the strengthening of the cooperation and unification of the staff.
4. An organizing factor in the work of the educators and the educational activity in the educational community.

Four central recommendations arose from the findings:

1. To examine the operating model with first-year communities;
2. To examine the activities executed in the transition between the second and third years;
3. To examine activity to encourage connection between theory and practice.
4. To examine possibilities for enhanced involvement of educators from various spheres of the educational communities in the process.

We are working with Tel-Hai College to develop a new **survey of graduates** process to track outcomes of young adults who are graduates of partnering Village Way communities. We plan to have the results of the survey available during the summer of 2017.

The Village Way Advances in Academia

Recent developments mark important progress towards our goal that the Village Way will be acknowledged and adapted by all educators and educational communities in Israel dealing with at-risk youth.

This fall, the School of Education at the **Hebrew University of Jerusalem** is offering a course on the Village Way. The course is open to bachelor's students, including those in the honors program in education. **David Yellin College** has agreed to develop a full Village Way course to be taught in the college. At **Oranim College of Education**, the course in the Village Way has been renewed. In addition, we will once again provide sessions on the Village Way for part of a course at **Seminar HaKibbutzim College**.

Multifaceted Israeli Culture

At the request of the **Ministry of Education** and additional partners, the Educational Institute developed innovative training sessions for leadership and field staff working in diverse cultural environments. With a focus on working with Ethiopian Israelis, the program works to increase

participants' cultural knowledge, to build trust, to provide tools for dialogue, and to develop a sense of belonging.

The **Israel Border Police** requires sessions for all members going through officers training. An education officer recently wrote to us: *"Each one of the officers learned something important from this seminar. I was surprised to see how it is still possible to get such experienced officers looking at things in a new light."*

At **Ofek Juvenile Prison**, we run sessions with the prison guards, and we offer incarcerated youth the Science Enrichment Program available to all Village Way communities. This program has brought hands-on science learning sessions taught by a leading institute to the teenage inmates.

Our program partners:

Security Forces: Israel Border Police – ongoing training sessions for all courses; Prison Services – Ofek Juvenile Prison, IDF Units – working with Special Populations.

Educational communities: Youth Villages: Kfar Silver, Ben Yakir, Nahalat Yehuda, Kedma and TOM; High Schools and Elementary Schools: Amir Petach Tikvah, Branco-Weiss Beit Shemesh, Givat Gonen - Jerusalem, Beit Hatzayar - Jerusalem, Ulpanat Tzvia Haifa; Work with educational leadership in the *Shachar* (Education and Welfare) Department of the Ministry of Education, which is responsible with risk populations in the school system on a national level.

Additional partnerships: Bat Yam Municipality – Social Workers; Mechina programs – *"Echad Meshelanu"*; Youth Movements – Tzofim Health Funds – Community Doctors.

Mechinot: Young Men in Hatzor Haglilit & Young Women in Migdal Haemek

Mechinot provide courses throughout the year on important life and leadership skills, such as public speaking, interpersonal relationships, cognitive thinking, and managing personal finances. Participants also study topics such as Jewish history, Israeli geography, IDF history and lore, and engage in navigation and physical training.

In June in **Hatzor Haglilit**, we bid farewell to our 16th Mechina cohort of 67 young men, who completed the challenging and transformative year on a gap-year leadership program. In September, we welcomed our 17th group, with 72 participants beginning their journey on this transformative program. They began their journey with a week in Kfar Blum, which involved hiking and teamwork-building activities, while looking ahead to the year to come.

In June in **Migdal HaEmek**, we said farewell to our 3rd cohort of 25 young women. We are happy to report that there are 37 young women beginning the year as the 4th cohort of the Young Women's Mechina – our largest group yet!

"I came to the Mechina because I felt unprepared for the army. Today I can say that I was given an immense gift. I have gained so much knowledge, tools for the army and for life. I re-discovered my cultural identity, a topic that I had neglected in my youth. I learned about my true self and to love that person."

Educational Communities

Village Way Educational Initiatives is partnering with 31 educational communities around the country, impacting lives of over 1,500 educators and 11,800 youth at-risk.

New Communities 2016-2017

Youth Villages:

Kfar Silver Youth Village – located in the south of Israel near Ashkelon, Serving 630 youth, including 230 who live at the village and 400 additional. The village has 120 staff members.

Community High Schools:

Ort Tel Nof Air Force Technical High School - located on an Air Force Base just outside of Rehovot, south of Tel Aviv. The school serves 360 students with 77 staff members.

Emunah Torah and Arts High School – located in Jerusalem, a religious girls' high school serving 273 students, with 71 staff members.

Jisr a-Zarqa Atid Technology High School – 34 staff members and 250 students. This is the technological high school located in the poorest Arab town in Israel, Jisr A-Zarka, located on the central coast.

Makr-Jdede Naamat High School – 15 staff members and 85 students. This is an all-girls high school located in the combined Arab village of Makr and Jdede, located east of Akko.

Continuing Communities

Youth Villages:

Hadassah Neurim – Located on the coast near Netanya, serving 400 youth, including 300 who live at the village and 100 additional students who commute to the school, with 90 staff members.

Ktziney Yam Ort Ashdod – Located on the southern coast, serving 350 youth, including 220 living at the village and the rest attending the school only. The school is a naval cadet training school and includes technical and naval studies. The village has 65 staff members.

Manof – Located near Akko in the north, serves as home for 150 youth with special therapeutic needs that have dropped out of regular educational and occupational frameworks in their communities, with 100 staff members.

Nahalat Yehuda – Located in the city of Rishon Letzion, with 300 youth and 80 staff members. Part of a partnership with the Youth Village Project of the Naor Foundation.

Community High Schools:

Ashdod Amal Technology – Serving 230 diverse students, including secular, religious and ultra-orthodox, with 50 staff members.

Adivi Ashkelon Ort Technology – Among the largest technical schools in Israel serving 440 students with 60 staff members.

Mahat Educational Technology Center Akko – A relatively new school serving 133 youth of the Arab community in Akko, with 15 staff members. This school provides a professional/technical training framework for students who have dropped out of the normative school system.

Mitarani Holon Ort Technology – Located in the Center of the country, a technological high school with a focus on entrepreneurship with 100 students, mostly native-born Israelis, and a small team of 14 staff members.

Ibn Rushd Tamra Technology - A high school in the Arab sector, in the city of Tamra located in the north, with 146 students and 30 staff members.

Graduate Communities that have completed the Village Way process include:

Youth Villages:

Kedma – Located in the northern Negev. 120 children (85 live at the village), 60 staff members.

TOM – On the Coastal Plain. 320 children (220 live at village), 60 staff.

Neveh Hadassah – In the Sharon region. 300 children (180 live at village), 60 staff members

Aloney Yitzchak – Near Binyamina. 500 children (330 live at village), 140 staff members

Kfar Hassidim – Southeast of Haifa. 320 children (180 live at village), 90 staff members

Community High Schools:

Branco-Weiss Tachkimoni School – In Hadera, 120 youth, 25 staff members.

Beit She'an Ort Technology – 108 children, 19 staff members.

Marom Acco Ort Technology – 130 children, 16 staff members.

Shimshon Amal Technology – This school unfortunately closed but its educators have all been placed in other schools and brought the methodology with them.

Tel Aviv Amal Technology – With 124 students, almost completely of the Arab population from Jaffa. A Hebrew-language school with 21 staff members.

Daliyat Al Carmel Atid Technology – Serving the Druze community on the Carmel mountains with 120 children and 15 staff. The school recently was transferred from the Ort to the Atid educational network.

Beit Ha'arava Ort Technology – A regional high school in Jerusalem with students traveling from far distances to study in unique technical programs, with 210 children, and 22 staff members.

Yad Shapira Ort Technology – In south Tel Aviv, with 115 students from immigrant communities, native Israelis, and Arab minority, with 30 staff members.

Residential communities

Eden – Therapeutic community for teenage girls near Ashkelon, 35 children, 35 staff members.

Bet HaBoger – Therapeutic community for teenage boys in the Sharon region. 56 children, 25 staff.

Talpiot – Therapeutic community for children under 14 in Hadera, with two sections: a residential program and a day-program. 200 children. 100 staff members.

In addition, we have maintained our continuous working relationship with **Neve Amiel Therapeutic Youth Village**, which was our first partnership village. It currently has 70 children and 60 staff members.