



Striving for Excellence!
In memory of Nir Krichman



Nirim Foundation

Summary Report 2013

Dedicated with great appreciation
and respect to all our Partners



Functionaries:

- Micha Simbalista – CEO and Head of the Nirim Youth Village
- Shlomi Avni – Head of Nirim in the Neighborhoods
- Yonat Glietman – CFO
- Yossi Hananya – The Nirim School Principal
- Vered Lapid – Head of the Youth Village Therapy Department.
- Golan Nothmann – Head of Nirim in the Neighborhoods Therapy Department
- Boaz Sivan – Head of the Village Boarding School & Informal education
- Michal Kaftory-Gavia – Head of the Programs and Training Department – Nirim in the Neighborhoods
- Ofer Abel – Head of the Wilderness Therapy Department
- Amir Bareket – Wilderness Therapy, Nirim in the Neighborhoods

Board of Directors

- Jacob Gershony – Founder and Chairman. A businessman and father of Ziv, Nir Krichman's (OBM) commander.
- Dubi Diamant – president. A businessman and former Mossad senior manager and elite navy squad fighter.
- Adv. Yonatan Altman – Partner, Amit, Pollak, Matalon & Co., Advocates & Notary and former elite squad fighter.
- Haim Sakal – Chairman of Sakal Holdings, founder and chairman of the Lev Ohev Association.
- Raanan (Rani) Falk – former IAF senior officer, former CEO of the Ministry of Public Security and of the Western Galilee College
- Yoram Sagy – CEO of the Central Company for Sales and Distribution



Striving for Excellence!
In memory of Nir Krichman

Dear partners,

We are facing the year end of the Nirim Foundation's tenth year of activity.

As noted at the 10th anniversary event, one of the goals for the coming year is to enhance our connections and deepen the dialog between us. Accordingly, we are happy to present this year's annual summary report. The Nirim Foundation is on the verge of its 11th year. Aiming at further development we are committed to expand existing processes and improve and fine-tune educational and therapeutic means as well as reinforce and stabilize our financial sources.

At the Youth Village we are focused on physical infrastructures and on improving the youth living conditions, (mainly their dorms). In addition we are developing educational and therapeutic tools to assist where current tools are not sufficient. Two main developments are the new therapeutic farm in the Golan Heights and the girl's home – "Shirat Hayam" (= melody of the sea) at the village.

The plan For Nirim in the Neighborhoods is to open Nirim homes in additional neighborhoods around Israel and reach a growing number of youths; this is part of the foundation mission & vision and moreover it's civic and social duty.

As far as our alumni support program is concerned we are committed to address the basic needs of our graduates, both in the village and in the neighborhoods. Growing in number by the year and lacking a normative family backup, we offer our graduates a response to a large range of basic needs.

We see ourselves as part of a joint effort of many in Israel who recognize the social-educational arena as the most essential and important of all, and play a role in it, each in his/hers own way. This is the essence of our partnership. Evidently, such partnerships between educational institutions and businesses and private funders make it possible to lead a change.

We value the continuous partnership with you and are committed to operate with transparency, professionally, and to bare the code of moral and ethics as should any educational organization.

Respectfully,

Micha Simbalista
Head of the Nirim Youth Village

Shlomi Avni
Head of Nirim in the Neighborhoods

The Nirim Youth Village

Nirim Youth Village for youth at extreme risk is based on the premise whereby these adolescent girls and boys can rehabilitate their emotional world, experience success and acquire the tools, skills and self-confidence to shape their life path and integrate into the core of Israeli society.

In the spirit of striving for excellence, we set high standards of reachable objectives that are often perceived by the youth as impossible; a **full Matriculation diploma, a meaningful IDF service, social involvement and personal growth**. We create a demanding and challenging framework for our students, while building a warm home for them to provide them with love, encouragement and support 24/7, all year round. The Village is located on the Mediterranean shore at Bustan HaGalil, and consists of three synergetic fields: Wilderness therapy, day school & boarding school, and therapy.

Target Population

- Boys and girls aged 14 – 18, defined by the authorities as "at extreme risk".
- Most of them arrive at the village by juvenile court orders.
- Youths with a background of learning disabilities, ADHD, repeated failures, dropping out of educational frameworks and significant pedagogic gaps.
- With past records of neglect, abandonment, abuse, violence, substance abuse, delinquency, low self-esteem and a lack of a sense of capability.

The youths arrive at the village for a three years' five stage program, which is parallel to grades 10th to 12th or for a four years program, including a preparatory year (parallel to the 9th grade). The transition from one stage to the next is performed once students complete the various stage tasks and an empowering ceremony with the Village's community and the families.

The Nirim program, its rational, missions and tools, are derived from the **Strengths Approach, which views the powers found within each person as the change initiators**. The entire program is aimed at exposing these powers, enhancing them and embracing an intense sense of self ability together with therapy process and emotional development. Strengths approach also works on behavioral and thinking patterns. Strengths approach indications the demanding Nirim program; setting high goals believing in the youths' ability to achieve them, inspiring high level organizational culture; strict discipline, an intensive daily routine and a compulsory set of values and norms. All of the aforesaid interact within the frameworks, which include **the Wilderness therapy, day school & boarding school and therapy**; and enable exposure and empowerment of strengths.



The Road to Success

This year our first class of preparatory students have completed the extended four years program, and we are proud of our 28 graduates who have reached impressive achievements:

86% full matriculation diploma eligibility

5 graduates have joined a pre-army service year

2 graduates have joined a pre-army preparatory college

and the rest are in the process of joining the army

These results attest to the significant contribution of the preparatory year



Wilderness Therapy

Wilderness Therapy is a unique tool developed overseas (in the UK and US), which was adapted and perfected by the Nirim team. Wilderness Therapy enables the dramatic breakthrough and the assimilation of the tools and values our teenagers need so as to rewrite their lives' story. Evidently, the effectiveness of the Wilderness Therapy is based on the holistic concept, which is implemented in every aspect of the teenager's life: emotional, educational, physical, functional and family.

The outdoors is an unfamiliar territory to most of the kids, where they can achieve set goals and rebuild their identity. This is an environment which provides tangible challenges, with results providing an instant and clear feedback. "I was too lazy to build a shelter? I will be freezing cold at night." "I was able to climb this impossible mountain? I can probably do some other things which I thought were impossible."

This method revolutionizes the teenager's sense of capability and allows him/her to develop self-belief. Once they reach the peak of a steep mountain, they start to believe in their ability to overcome the obstacles put before them in real life. Success in the wilderness field and success in studies and other aspects of life are tightly connected. The outdoors challenges give them a chance to develop and practice values of self-control, independence, responsibility, collaboration, mutual assistance, leadership and perseverance. These values, which for the most part are missing among youth at extreme risk, are an important part of their transformation to become quality, value driven, and leading individuals in society.

Wilderness Therapy team is made up of professionals who are highly experienced in wilderness activities and in working with at-risk youths, and who provide these adolescent boys and girls the maximum support, escort, guidance and role model. They are, in effect, the ones responsible for the youths' daily lives at the Village throughout the year.

The Wilderness Therapy program is created so it is completely coordinated with the contents and processes the students undergo in all village sectors. The youths spend approx. 65 days a year outdoors, while some of them undergo individual processes and some even reach more than 100 wilderness days during the year. Once a week the youths go on a daily wilderness activity (hiking trip, bicycle ride, abseiling, marine activity, and survival skills training i.e. starting fire, purifying water and building shelters). In addition, they go on challenging tracks and survival workshops (of increasing difficulty levels) for several days including sleeping outdoors, carrying all the equipment, navigating and "solo" walking segments. **The Wilderness Therapy activity is a central tool of change and empowerment for the pupils and is responsible for a great deal of the youths success in all village sectors.** Accordingly, one of the Foundation's objectives for 2014 is to develop the wilderness area at the village, by adding extreme sports elements: a climbing wall, a rope jungle gym and a zip line. The area will enable us to increase the weekly wilderness activity in preparation for hikes and field workshops and as a tool for advanced physical training as part of developing combat fitness

In 2013 as part of the Nirim Wilderness Activity

we have walked 2750 km
we climbed up mountains and down valleys all across Israel;
The Judea Desert, Mt. Sodom, the Craters, Eilat Mountains,
The Golan Heights, Southern Golan, Upper Galilee, and Lower Galilee.





The Nirim School

The school is one of the main aspects of the adolescent life. This is where they spend most of their time every day and where they are required to prove themselves on a daily basis. Therefore, when a teenaged girl or boy starts accumulating failures at school, the damage to their self-esteem and sense of self ability is the deepest. Moreover if we add deficit disorders, learning disabilities, lack of family support, and the environment's low expectations as well as youths' low expectations from themselves, it is no wonder that many of our kids dropped out of educational frameworks in the past.

Education is an important tool allowing our youths the chance to integrate into the core of Israeli society. Therefore, we set the high standards for our students in terms of their study objectives and the attainment of a full matriculation diploma (all major studies include full matriculation diploma).

The Nirim School does not classify its students according to their past achievements or classifications, but assumes that each, given a dedicated, professional and attentive environment, can achieve a full matriculation diploma within three years, regardless of their starting point. A trained, loving and believing team of teachers encourage the students to realize their true skills and capabilities. We teach in small classes, of up to 8 students per class, and have a wide range of volunteers providing individual learning experience which guarantees success. The major study is geology and ecology taught under the guidance of the Weizmann Institute (see frame below). In addition, each student may choose, in accordance with his fields of interest, any subject he / she so desires to study and we allow it by collaborating with nearby schools (see box below). 2013 was especially successful and we are proud of the Shahaf (seagull) team for reaching a most impressive 86% eligibility for a full matriculation diploma.

Expanding the matriculation level range of subjects

This year 5 students took the matriculation exam in three subjects which are not studied at Nirim: Art, Russian and Physics. Everyone passed the tests successfully and with impressive grades.

Mini-Zoo

The new mini-zoo on campus is a serene spot for individual studying which promotes values such as responsibility, caring, taking care of pets and the love of nature. This year the parrot cage, the fish pond and the rabbit cage received new tenants.

The words of Prof. Orion of the Weizmann Institute of Science (in the photo), who leads one of the pedagogic tours:

"For me the meeting, like all my meetings with the Nirim students, was very emotional. The knowledge, understanding and interest demonstrated by the students were of the highest levels, compared with thousands of students taking this major nationwide, whom I had taught over the years. But mainly, my enthusiasm was the human aspect of meeting these teenagers. It was just nice to be around them. They radiated calm and it was very heartwarming to see the humane relationships between them. Humane, friendly, encouraging and supportive behavior which sadly, is lacking in the general Israeli landscape and rather rare among the teenagers "I work with".



Therapy Field

Nirim youth village is a therapeutic educational one, to which adolescent boys and girls are referred by welfare entities, most of which by court orders. Throughout their years in the village the pupils are continuously and intensively attended by social workers and therapists using various projective tools. The therapeutic process is done as an integral part of the village's routine and in coordination with unique processes i.e. trips and wilderness therapy workshops.

The therapy team is led by Mrs. Vered Lapid, L.L.M., social worker and graduate of the psychotherapy school. The team is composed of 15 employees, social workers, art therapists, psychiatrist and four internship students.

The therapy field in the village includes a study center where we hold seminars and courses on various subjects, such as the 12 steps method, and the DBT approach, for both the Nirim faculty and other frameworks such as the Prisons Authority and the Probation Service. Part of the workshops in the village is also held for the students' parents - important partners to the process the youths undergo. The parents learn therapeutic tools and communication skills to use with their children while they stay at home over the weekend. Our experience shows that the long term therapeutic processes help coping with issues and with decisions making and ultimately succeed in exiting the risk cycles and integrating into the core of society.

Girl's Home "Shirat HaYam" (= melody of the sea)

The girl's home was created as a solution to girls who do not receive the correct therapeutic response from the intensive "Nirim Program". The main characteristic of these girls is their inability to emotionally regulate themselves. They cannot tolerate the village routine for long and time and again in short intervals (hours or days) go from a state of uplifted and empowered emotional mood to a crisis and extreme emotional downfall. Crisis may be accompanied by in-adaptive behaviors such as dysfunctioning, shouting, cursing, escaping, using mood alternating substances (drugs and alcohol) etc... Despite being treated with an extensive range of tools, girls in "Shirat Hayam" are still unable to calm down. This situation of helplessness leads to dropping out and sometimes rapid and extreme deterioration.

The home is located in the village, in a separated area. The program is spread across three months and is supposed to provide a bubble of peace, calmness, inclusion, and therapy which is based on model, different from the "Nirim Program" model. The Girl's Home applies DBT (Dialectical Behavioral Therapy Model) the only therapeutic model in the world to be proven effective in these cases. The Girl's Home is designed to accommodate 4 – 5 girls at any given time. The purpose of the process is to enable the girls to return to their team at the "Nirim Program" after three months stronger and with effective regulating tools.

The Girl's Home is located in a large Yurt type tent, fully furnished, including shower, toilet and a fire place.



The Boarding School

The Boarding School is a home for our youths providing them with a sense of protection, belonging and warmth. Their dorms and surroundings play a key role in what makes a house a home, giving them both physical and emotional security. The youths, who are in the midst of an intensive self-defining process, need to feel that they belong on the one hand yet need their privacy on the other hand. Providing our youths with this feeling is vital which is why this year we focused on renovating and upgrading the boarding school's dorms as well as upgrading the dining room.

The structured and organized daily routine gives the kids a firm base for self-development and empowerment. At the end of their school day, they begin the boarding school's routine, which includes extra curriculum activities, guided activities, therapy groups (emotional development, 12 steps, open conversations and more), cleaning, sharing the day's experiences and much more. This is all carried out with the help and guidance of the dedicated and professional team, while observing strict discipline and limits.

In addition, we strive to provide the kids with opportunities to develop their strong suits, and provide them with a varied system of extra curriculum activities. A variety of sports, arts, and music classes and many more enable them to find out where they can excel, discover and develop their talents and broaden their horizons. This year we focused on developing their hobbies and expanding the extra curriculum activities on offer.

In the music field, which is the most sought out one in the village, several classes are held: a band, individual music lessons on a selection of instruments, singing lessons, and drumming circles.

This year at the singing lessons, T. – one of the kids from the Eitam team, wrote the lyrics to his original song "Disappearing Gradually", and composed the music for it along with one of the guides. On the Memorial Day service, T. sang his song before the entire village faculty and students, which was both moving and emotional. After the ceremony the song was given to a graphic designer who made it into a poster for him pro bono (thanks!). T. was given the picture at a touching ceremony and it was hung at the school's computer room (see box below in Hebrew).

הולך ונעלם

אני לבד רק נושם מפחד רק מחפש
את החום שהיה ונעלם.
רעב הייתי ונשארתי חיפשתי לא מצאתי
אמא לי הייתה ונעלמה.
אחותי בי נאחזה בכוח נלקחה
את קול בכייתה אני שומע.
אבא היה ונעלם.
אנשים מוזרים בשדות אליי רצים
אני ילד קצת חושש קצת חושש.
רעב הייתי ונשארתי חיפשתי לא מצאתי
אני הולך ונעלם.

2013



Nirim in the Mountains

Nirim in the Mountains is an active agricultural farm in the Golan Heights, which was established by the Nirim Foundation. The farm serves as therapeutic framework for teenaged boys and girls who reach a state of dysfunctional behavior and are in deep crisis. These teenagers, when in most extreme situations, were bound to be remanded to the state again, to institutions or returned to their destructive environments, had we not stepped in and given them the intensive and individual care they needed. **This additional framework, outside the Nirim village and on a smaller scale, provides us with the option of helping these teenagers, continue working with them individually and addressing their needs and emotions, until they can emerge from their crisis situation and function again at the parent framework.**

"Nirim in the Mountains" is located on a secluded area and is designed to hold up to 5 youths at the same time. Its rigid and demanding routine, although creating a tough structure to deal with, is at the same time warm and embracing. Seclusion and detachment, individual attention and the family support the youths receives from the farm's staff, provides them with the peace of mind and clean space they need for introversive work. Therapy is integrated into the farm's work routine, where the main work is tending to a herd of goats, which entails herding, milking, cheese making, alongside other farm aspects such as tending to the vegetable garden and the chicken coop.

While staying on the farm, the teens partake in various farm duties and undergo in-depth therapeutic and rehabilitative processes, which include keeping a journal of their daily activities, emotions and thoughts. A social worker and personal mentor, who arrive on the farm every other day, help them understand the process they are undergoing.

Over the past year the Farm and village staff has continued with the building and preparation works, with the help of the pre-army service year guides, the kids, graduates and volunteers, and on Tu Bi-Shvat (the trees' festive day), the entire village staff went on an exciting day of planting olive trees at the farm. Currently the Farm boasts a stable and three horses, a vegetable garden, terraces for various crops, a warehouse, a pen and a chicken coop (which have yet to be populated). These days we are focusing on the establishment of an open shed, underneath which a residential building and a shed are to be built.



Nirim in the Neighborhoods

Nirim in the Neighborhoods is a national outreach program for teenagers at extreme risk in the community. The project's participants are youths aged 14 to 18, who are found in neighborhoods by the Nirim in the Neighborhoods staff or referred to us by welfare and educational frames.

The program takes place in the toughest neighborhoods in Israel. These socioeconomically deprived, crime saturated neighborhoods are characterized by drug and alcohol abuse and a low rate of army enlistment. The program emphasizes populations of distinct characterizations (i.e. religious and new immigrants from the CIS and Ethiopia), ensures continued support and mentoring and prioritizes teens of younger ages, so as to prevent their deterioration.

The Nirim in the Neighborhoods program uses the unorthodox methods used by the Nirim village, among which is the Wilderness Therapy, which serves as the main change initiator. **We focus on returning these teenagers to their educational frameworks, integrating them into society, and strengthening their close environment, their families and their ties to the community.** The guides scout the neighborhoods, at the kids' usual gathering places and slowly and patiently succeed in gathering the wondering teens; gaining their trust and helping them join the program. The staff serves as a Case Managers for the youths, and is in constant contact with all frameworks involved in their lives.

We aspire to influence as many areas of life as possible for these teens, and so create a positive and significant change in their extended circles – their family, friends, neighborhood, and community.

2013 was a challenging year for Nirim in the Neighborhoods.

Professionally, we continued developing our work model, while perfecting the Steps Model and assimilating work procedures. This year we will emphasize efficient time management for the various tasks the guides are faced with – school attendance, neighborhood tours, wilderness activities, opening the Nirim homes, processes, and individual mentoring.

As to the development of the program – we have begun activities in the cities of Kfar Saba, Tiberias, and Dimona, and next year we will expand activity there and open more Nirim homes in additional cities.



Moreover, we have opened girls' only groups this year, having realized that girls at high risk are under the influence of more traditional perceptions of women's rights and position in society, which objectify them and make them vulnerable, setting their expectations low and minimizing their opportunities.

Enlistment to the IDF – as every year, this year again in high percentage, youths enlisted to a significant army service with the IDF, and we are proud of them all and especially of the one who got accepted to the naval commando and the one who is due to begin his naval officers course.

Budget – this year was not a simple one, in light of the elections and late approval of the budget by the government. We have dealt with uncertainty, while concentrating our efforts on receiving institutional funding commitments from all relevant bodies. To facilitate our ongoing enterprise and not harm the scope of activities, we have turned to alternative support channels, and with the joint efforts of the resource development department have succeeded in reaching significant fundraising in the US and in general.

In 2014, with the governmental acknowledgement, the program is due to grow and expand, in both its national outreach and the expansion of the models in existing cities.





The Therapy Field

Nirim in the Neighborhoods operates nationwide treating girls and boys who are referred by the welfare and educational bodies or are located by our staff. Our therapy field is headed by Golan Nothmann, M.A. rehabilitative psychology, which includes multi-cultural work with various populations, of unique characteristics. Girls' only groups, mental disorders and diagnoses were among the issues which had surfaced this year, and on which we intend to focus our training in 2014.

A psychologist and family therapist had joined the therapy team this year to broaden the field as part of the daily work and the survival trips. The creation of the Steps Model as part of the Nirim in the Neighborhoods project was completed, and serves as a built-in framework for working with adolescents, while focusing on their individual place within a group. In addition, we are in the midst of completing the Nirim in the Neighborhoods training book in collaboration with JDC Ashalim.

What's between survival trips and academics?

Over the past year we have taken part in a scientific research conducted by Prof. Sarah Ben-David – head of the Criminology Department at the Ariel University. The research studied the effects of survival trips on self-esteem, focusing on control and self-empowerment for at-risk youths. The connection made with Prof. Ben-David is one of a kind and has already resulted in the consideration of additional studies to examine different aspects of the team's work and functioning. Prof. Ben-David has honored us with her presence at the 10th anniversary event and has expressed her willingness to continue our collaboration and expanding the communication between the Criminology Department and the Nirim Foundation.

Project Development

Nirim Classes – over the past year we have developed the Nirim Class model along with the Shachar Department at the Ministry of Education. The model is based on the methods used by Nirim in the Neighborhoods, and is aimed at returning dropout students to school. The curriculum includes a built-in weekly day-long social activity, outside school, where the students go on wilderness activities which provide them with challenges, meaningful experiences, and special conditions to increase their self-esteem.

This year we began collaborating with the Eldad School in Netanya, where a Nirim Class was opened. 31 ninth grade TELEM students (Hebrew initials stand for "motivation to full matriculation") with learning and behavioral difficulties, who are highly motivated to succeed in school, attend this class. Nirim Classes serve as a complementary element of the Nirim in the Neighborhoods program and therefore, we intend to open additional classes in cities where the program runs as a complementary activity to the afternoons.

Nirim activity at the Branco Weiss School, Tiberias – Branco Weiss is a school for at-risk youths – high school students from Tiberias and its surroundings. Following the school's appeal to Nirim in the Neighborhoods, we started activities for the tenth grade, as part of which the students leave the school once a week for a wilderness activity with Nirim.

The annual program includes 18 sessions of the Nirim team and the students, one session which includes the entire grade's teachers, a one night wilderness trip and a consultation and follow-up session with the class's homeroom teacher and the school advisor every three weeks.

Nirim in Collaboration with ADVANCEMENT OF YOUTH AT RISK SECTION at the Ministry of Education – Advancement of youth at risk section run by the Ministry of Education is designed for youths who are not attending school. This year a program by the Nirim spirit was created for this program, at their request, including 13 sessions (12 sessions and one night wilderness trip). The program has been approved and will be practiced in several cities in 2014, among which are Netivot and Dimona.

Nirim Homes – National activity

Northern Branch-The northern branch includes activities in the cities of: Nahariya, Karmiel, Afula and Tiberias. In 2014 we plan to expand our activity to the cities of Haifa and Yoqneam. The program has been active in Nahariya, Karmiel, and Afula for many years and its graduates serve as guide assistants and help with activities held at the Nirim homes, on the field, and on wilderness trips.

Nahariya, Trumpeldor Neighborhood – Nirim's activity in Nahariya includes approx. 40 boys and is held at the Trumpeldor Neighborhood Park or at the near forest. In 2014 the municipality will allocate a building in favor of these activities. We are fruitfully collaborating with the elite Golani unit Egoz on the camouflage and wilderness activities, as part of which the unit's officers and fighters mentor the boys and serves as their role models. In addition, we are cooperating with the Youth Probation Service, who has referred approx. 10 boys to us this year.

Strong points:

- The boys continuously taking part in the activities
- The progress made by the boys and their families in personal and group processes
- Getting out of the delinquency circle
- Motivation to joint to wilderness trips
- Will and motivation to enlist (they adore the naval commando, flotilla 13)
- Most are in school based frameworks
- Personal connection between the team and the boys' families

Points to improve:

- Promoting the channel with the municipality
- Strengthening the team
- Allocating a building in the city for activities

Karmiel, Western Neighborhood – the activity in Karmiel includes approx. 35 boys, who have undergone considerable work, in order to train those suitable for the part of assistant guide for wilderness trips and regular activities. Over the passing year the boys have established a multicultural garden, along with the neighborhood's residents, which includes a bench and table made of recycled materials. At the same time we are also in the initial stages of creating another boys group in the city. Moreover, after much effort and labor a girls- only group was opened over the past year which includes 10 girls. Since its inception the girls have participated in a unique Hanukah activity, a wilderness night trip, and a 3 days long hiking trip during the Hanukah holiday to the Judea Desert. It is no less important to note the unusual cooperation received from the Karmiel municipality and its representatives, who work closely with the Nirim team, and keep in constant and continued contact.

Strong points:

- The Nirim home is opened regularly and provides the city's youths with a warm and welcoming home
- The team regularly attends the municipal "round table" panel, the city's informal frameworks forum
- The team's close connections with the municipality, parole officers, schools, the Anti-Drugs Authority, and the municipal youth department
- Working closely with the community worker, which strengthens the connection with the youths and helps develop the neighborhood
- The Elementary Nirim program which is held in three schools, as part of which the team provides challenging activities for kids with difficulties
- The excellent connection and cooperation with a local factory, Carmochrome Ltd. (thank you!)
- Weekly volunteering at the soup kitchen (Hot Plate project) – delivering food for the needy in the city
- The daily process with the kids and their families

Points to improve:

- Renewing and improving the Nirim class activity at the "Atid" school



Afula, Giv'at HaMore Neighborhood – this year we have worked even closer with the city's professional bodies (municipality, schools, police and welfare) and we hope that this cooperation will continue bearing fruit. The graduate group in the city has been growing over the past year and now includes 25 boys, who keep close and personal connections with the team. On the trip during the Hanukah holiday this year the boys and the program's graduates joined forces on the trip and acted as one unified group. Together they rose to the challenges and withstood the difficulties while maintaining high spirits all trip long.

This year we have opened a junior group, which includes 18 kids who were referred to Nirim from the Advancement of youth at risk section run by the Ministry of Education and the local schools. The new group is in its formative stages and kids arrive regularly for their various activities.

Strong points:

- Continue the positive processes with both groups
- Continue the close contact between the team and the various bodies in the city
- The teams continued participation in the at risk youth committees and the Parole Service committees
- Continue working as part of the KaDaM program (in Hebrew stands for Family Discussion Group to build a therapy program for juvenile delinquents)

Points to improve:

- The Nirim home needs renovations and new equipment must be purchased

Tiberias, activity at the Branco Weiss School – in late 2013, we began activities for two 10th grade classes at the Branco Weiss School, which now includes 16 boys and girls and which continues to challenge more students. The school's teachers are surprised by the students' show of interest and positive attitude. As part of our operations at the school the group leaves three times a month on wilderness activities along with the teachers. These are led by 2 senior guides from Nahariya and Afula. We hope this activity is the first of many for our continued work within schools around Israel.

Strong points:

- Cooperation with the school's faculty
- Positive feedbacks from the students
- The teachers' enlistment to the wilderness activities
- The positive processes the students have been experiencing since the beginning of our work

Points to improve:

- Organization before leaving for the wilderness activity

Center Branch

The center branch includes activity in Or Aqiva, Netanya, Hadera, and Kfar Saba.

Or Aqiva, Shazar Neighborhood – the first of our neighborhoods, has been active since 2003, and includes 45 boys and girls. This year the girls group reached its final stage of the program (after 4 years), when some of the girls continue on as guiding assistants for the new girls group to be opened. Over the past year a new boys group was opened, including 10 boys who are making their first steps in the program. This has been a significant year especially for one of our girls, who have made an amazing process of transformation, overcoming a substance abuse problem, and today functioning as any normative girl in the community. In her own words: «Nirim's journey made me realize the personal journey I have to make.»

Strong points:

- Continuous successful work with the boys and girls groups
- High IDF enlistment rate to significant positions by the program's graduates
- The boys' and girls' will and motivation to go on wilderness trips
- The girls' dramatic success

Points to improve:

- Recruiting the right manpower
- Reinforcing support and assistance by the municipality and its representatives

Netanya, Dora Neighborhood – more than 40 boys are currently participating in activities, most of them come from Ethiopian immigrant families. This year we started a new junior group, for kids aged 12 – 14, as preparation for the Nirim in the Neighborhoods activity, which is currently attended by 15 boys. We have also concluded a long process (3 years long) with the graduate boys group and each one continues his own way in society (enlistment, service or preparatory year, and employment). An additional boys group, including 15 boys, has gone on to the leadership stage this year, as part of which those suitable will be trained to become guide assistants and will hold activities as contribution to the community. This year we have also opened a Nirim class at the Eldad School. Once a week, the 31 class students attended the sea-scouts activity, and went out on wilderness trips, where they had the opportunity to experience significant success. A graduate of the program who had received «public contribution hours» chose to realize them as a guide assistant for the junior group, which gave the boy and the entire group a powerful sense of closure.

Strong points:

- Collaboration with the municipal bodies – the Probation Service, the Informal Education Department, Advancement of youth at risk section, schools and the community youth center
- Opening the Nirim class at the Eldad School in the city
- Working with the Adult Probation Service and working with a 19 year old boy who they referred to us
- Delivery of the Purim gifts to the Laniado Hospital in Netanya
- Wilderness trips with more than 25 boys

Points to improve:

- A more significant collaboration with the Netanya municipality and raising more municipal resources in favor of the program
- Strengthening our presence at the schools and a much more serious influence in this respect



Kfar Saba, Ha'aliya Neighborhood – in 2013 Nirim in the Neighborhoods was launched in the city. The staff is now in the process of creating a group of 10 boys, who were referred to us by the authorities. At the same time we are mapping the city's different youth frameworks, while identifying community needs. We make sure to blend in with the neighborhood and community's natural landscape by our continuous presence in all neighborhood events. Since launching the program, we have had a successful wilderness trip with 3 of the boys and as a part of our cooperation with municipal bodies (the psychological service, Youth Advancement, and the HiLaH program); have begun working with one of the boys individually, using the wilderness therapy to initiate his personal empowering process.

Strong points

- The joint work with various municipal bodies
- The staff's daily presence in the neighborhood
- An excellent relationship with Youth Advancement and the community home in the neighborhood – the Lazarus House

Points to Improve:

- Reaching additional at-risk boys
- Expanding to additional neighborhoods in the city

Hadera, Meitar & Nirim Project – the Nirim home in Hadera is operated in collaboration with Meitar Project, which is a multifunctional support day-center for youths who had dropped out or are in danger of dropping out of formal education systems. The objective is to integrate the youths into regular frameworks, and provide them with life skills, employment, and education. The center operates Sunday – Thursday, from 09:00 to 16:00, and three times a week it is open until 21:00, and serves as a safety net also for at-risk youths who are still part of formal systems. Over the past year, our activity in the center included approx. 70 boys and girls and we have also opened a parents' guidance group, led by our team. In addition, activities and night trips were held in the city's neighborhoods with 30 more youths.

Strong points

- Our cooperation with the various municipal frameworks for youths
- The team's availability and accessibility in providing immediate response
- In-depth contact with parents

Points to Improve:

- Extending opening times and days at the center



Southern Branch

The southern branch includes activity in Arad, Netivot, and Kiryat Gat. In 2014 another group is to be opened in Dimona.

Arad – our activity in the city's neighborhoods begun in 2008 and has been very successful. After operating three groups of boys in Arad, alongside individual therapy in many cases, we are proud to say that today, the amount of youths at extreme risk has been significantly decreased and the few at-risk youths in the city are referred to boarding school settings. Therefore, we are not needed that much in Arad and we have decided to close the program this year. We will of course continue working with our graduates in the city. This is a good opportunity to thank all authority bodies and partners at work, with a special thank you to the Dead Sea Works, who have been contributing to the program over the years.

Netivot, Weisman and Neta'im Neighborhoods – Nirim in the Neighborhoods program began its operations in Netivot Weisman and Neta'im neighborhoods in 2008. In 2013, a boys' group and a girls' group, including 25 kids together, were running in Netivot. Due to difficulties in recruiting a team, we have downsized our activity and are now focused on forming the groups again. In 2014 we plan to continue establishing our existing groups while tracking and contacting other potential participants.

Strong points

- The team's perseverance and determination to stabilize the groups
- Personal connection with the kids

Points to Improve:

- Uniting and establishing the two Netivot groups
- Renewing and establishing collaboration with Netivot municipality

Kiryat Gat, HaShoftim Neighborhood – the program has been running in the neighborhood since 2009 and has enjoyed many positive reactions. We have been collaborating with the municipality, which has been effectively, professionally and skillfully referring boys to us. Over the course of the year we have opened a new girls' group of approx. 10 girls, a junior boys group, which includes 13 boys aged 12 – 15, and a senior boys group aged 16 – 18, which includes 8 boys. In early 2013 some of the junior group's boys volunteered at the center for at-risk kids, with animal based activities. In addition, with the generous help of the Central Company for Sales and Distribution and as part of our ongoing collaboration with the company, the Nirim home has been renovated and upgraded (Thank You!).

Strong points

- Tight connections with the various municipal bodies
- The welcomed collaboration with the Central Company for Sales and Distribution (Coca-Cola)
- Operating number of groups and continued significant work with the boys and girls

Points to Improve:

- Locating and recruiting manpower
- Expanding night wilderness trips

And there's more...

This year we have lead individual short term processes with about 50 youths nationwide, including follow-up's and assistance in solving personal and local problems.

Nirim in the Neighborhoods' map





Graduate Program

The Nirim Foundation has more than 200 graduates aged 18 – 25, and their number grows every year. Most of them have a full matriculation diploma and the vast majority of them serves in the IDF or has completed a full course of service. Despite the powerful process they had undergone, their environmental and personal risk elements still exist.

We have developed our support and follow-up program, which helps our graduates before their army enlistment, while they serve and post service, until they fully integrate into the core of society, with the knowledge and faith that real change can only be assimilated following a long and in-depth process.

As part of the program's activity, contact with the graduates is maintained throughout their army service, including consultation services and emotional support, problem solving with the authorities, taking part in their happy occasions, supporting them at times of crisis, and much much more. Upon their release from the army our assistance is focused on making employment, housing and higher education programs more accessible to them. Our graduates are great role models for the younger boys, and we are proud of them and view them as part of our warm Nirim family.

N. – Nirim graduate and student at the Sapir College:

"This degree is my ticket out of my parents' faith – to a different life. Better. Normal. I owe it to myself, to my brothers, to the children I will have. The scholarship you gave me, really, totally truly, saves me."

Volunteers at the Youth Village

We have discovered, over the years that the village is where we can maximize the added value brought by the volunteer to the youths' process. In the beginning, each volunteer undergoes a training day which includes a variety of contents, among which: background information regarding youths at extreme risk, the "Nirim Model", boundaries, ethical aspects etc.

The scope of volunteer work in the village is very extensive and includes a commune of 15 boys and girls on their pre-army service year, 38 independent volunteers from the village's surroundings, the employees of RAFAEL, who have adopted the Village over the years, and soldiers from a number of IDF units. The soldiers are at the school on a daily basis and come from the Egoz unit, the IAF, the submarine naval unit (Flotilla 7) and of course the naval commando unit (Flotilla 13). The youths view them not only as a source of help but also as role models. In addition, every year the Israeli Naval Training Camp holds a week long leadership workshop for a team of kids who are about to begin their "Mentoring and Leadership" stage at the village.

This year with the help of the RAFAEL employees, online workstations have been installed in all student dorms in the village. This has enabled the kids to study in the afternoon and evening times at their home study station, as is customary in regular homes. In addition, over the course of the year, the RAFAEL employees invite the village students to various company events; produce unique activities at the village (such as the traditional Hanukah party) and take part in the various ceremonies held at the village.

The support of these numerous volunteers at the village is very important to us all and we greatly appreciate their contribution. Some of the volunteers invite the teenagers to their homes for the weekend, some join our wilderness activities and school trips, and one of the volunteer, who is a veterinarian, has donated his skills, and tends to the animals in the mini-zoo.

Volunteers at Nirim in the Neighborhoods

Nirim in the Neighborhoods operates its own system of independent volunteers who join wilderness activities as companions and are a significant and important assistance to the team as well as the boys. In addition, some of the volunteers teach extra curriculum activities in Nirim homes all over the country, continuously and regularly while maintaining a high level of commitment. Carmochrome Ltd. has adopted the Nirim home in Karmiel. This fruitful collaboration is strengthening and we welcome it with open arms. The Central Company for Sales and Distribution has adopted

Nirim in the Neighborhoods' activities, and provide assistance in the form of refreshments at the end of each wilderness trip; renovating Nirim homes with the help of the company's employees, and every other month organize a special activity for Nirim homes.



With a little help...

On Friday I proved to myself that I am capable of doing things in my life. I didn't like English and never thought I could learn it. And then on Friday a volunteer came here and I told him "leave it, quit now, I don't know any English and don't want to." He said let's start and whatever will be will be.

At the end of the lesson the best thing ever happened to me. I completed two essays in English and both with more than 60 words. I can't begin to describe this feeling but I have to say to you and the entire team – thank you! A huge thank you for not giving up on me and carrying on even though I didn't want to.

Volunteering all the way to graduation

For 3 years, twice a week, a volunteer from RAFAEL had arrived to Nirim to teach three girls physics lessons.

At the end of the year the girls took their 3 points matriculation exam and did very well.

The RAFAEL volunteers from the boys' perspective

Two years ago a group of village students visited the IAF base at Ramat David. During the visit one of the fighter pilots introduced the planes to the boys. When it came to the issue of arming the planes, the pilot explained to the boys that the state of the art missiles are developed by RAFAEL. One of the boys asked him most innocently and in wonder: "ah... so RAFAEL works with you too?"



The Human Resource

The Nirim Foundation creates an ethical value based organizational climate and invests a great deal in the development and preservation of its human resources, knowing that this is the most essential resource for our operations.

Preservation and Maintenance

Personal and group meetings were held once a week for the leading team, which were focused on routine issues, as well as on improving communications and working on the team's climate. Alongside these, a weekly staff meeting was held lead by professional bodies. The staff participated in open conversations with therapy professionals according to the needs which had surfaced while working on the field. As done annually, all foundation employees were given a satisfaction questionnaire which helps create improvement programs and draw conclusions.

Training and Qualification Courses

Over the passing year we have held workshops and professional courses for the guidance and therapy teams, which included among others: group guidance, sexually abused girls' thgeraphy, the 12 steps method and many more. In addition the staff members took part in professional conventions, such as "Desert Challenge" and "Nature, Field and Adventure". Once a month all employees attend a forum which includes an enrichment lecture. To encourage professional personal development, collaborations were formed with various academic institutions, which enable the Nirim staff to study for subsidized costs.

Welfare Activities

For the Village's Staff:

A fun day at the Kinneret, including water sports, beach activities, a Tai Chi workshop and a relaxing Shiatsu workshop. Evening event, "Dreams Come True" for the staff and their partners, including a delicious meal followed by the play "Down Syndrome Angel" by Dekel and Ofer Shikartzi.

For the Nirim in the Neighborhoods Team:

A family day including group competition all around Zikhron Yaakov and a mouthwatering meal.

A fun day at the Superland amusement park for the team members and their families, courtesy of the Central Company for Sales and Distribution.

A staff evening on Caesarea beach as a year-end event, including beach games, water sports, and supper.



Resource Development and Fundraising

This year we have recruited a new team for the Resources Development Department, which includes four professional highly motivated people.

Resource development focuses on three fronts:

Israel, overseas, and local urban development, where the Nirim in the Neighborhoods operates.

Alongside forming and developing the team, emphasis was put on raising funds from companies, foundations, and private contributors in Israel.

The first seeds of activity were planted for our activity in the USA, mainly with the Jewish Federations. We will continue developing activities with foundations, companies, and individuals in the USA.

In recent months we have created a program for strengthening contact with our partners, which we plan to continue and expand over the coming year. At the 10th anniversary event held on November 2013, we launched "Friend of Nirim", and gave the attending partners a small gift. In May 2014 the club's first meeting is due to be held.

Nirim's partners, small and large, are the ones who enable our continued work in lending a helping hand to hundreds of at-risk boys and girls, and for that we would like to thank you.

Distribution of revenues for 2013

Government support – NIS 17,200,000
Contributions from Israel – NIS 1,400,000
Contributions from abroad – NIS 2,000,000
Matching gifts – NIS 180,000

Newsletter

In 2013 two newsletters were prepared and delivered to partners, contributors, and bodies connected with the Foundation's activity.

In addition we have sent out Rosh Hashanah and Passover greeting cards.

**We appreciate the time you spent summarizing the 2013 year with us,
The Nirim Family**