



2025/26

IMPACT REPORT

Planting, Nurturing, Growth



Registered non-profit 58-0174225

Message from President and Director

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Once again, we are proud to present you with our Annual Impact Report which covers the achievements and activities of the past year at **Arugot Child and Family Development Center**.

Arugot is much more than a therapy center. It is a vital part of the local community with awareness of the changing needs and the ability to provide solutions during times of challenge and change.

The Center's mission is clear – no child or family is left behind. Each child, and his personal journey.

We are committed to making sure every child has the tools to thrive and reach his potential. Outreach programs in the community have raised awareness on the importance of early intervention and the benefits of therapy, not only for the child in therapy, but for the entire family. Mothers and adolescent young women, victims of abuse or exposed to violence, receive the help they need.

Our work has been made possible by the generous support of dedicated friends who help us ensure that the Center remains sustainable now, and for future years.

We look forward to continuing to provide essential services to the Arugot community.

Sincerely,



Jeremiah Lubasch, MD

President & Founder



Jacob Vigel

Director (pro bono)

"Every child is a different kind of flower, and all together make this world a beautiful garden"

Anonymous



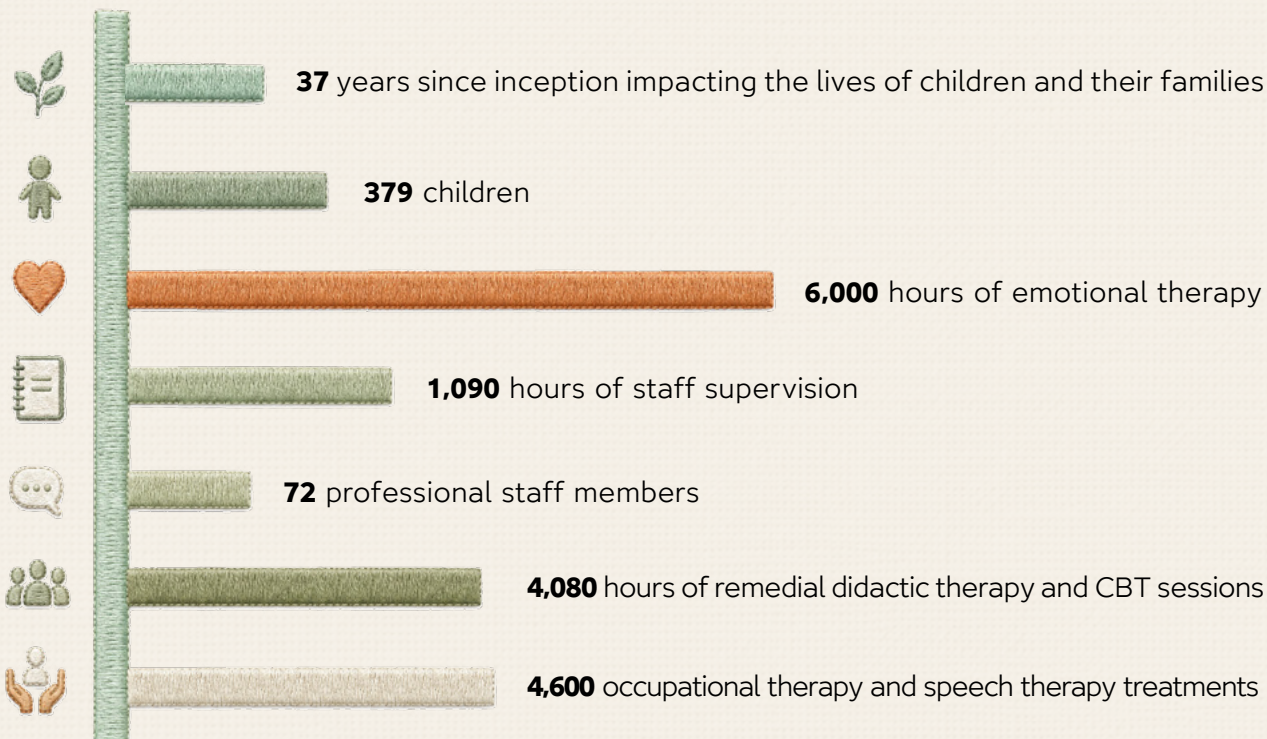
Impact in Numbers

Annual Turnover for 2025: **NIS 8,464,117**

Annual Growth: **6%**

Ministry of Education Financial Soundness Score: **100 points**

Impact in Numbers



Major Programs and Solutions

1. Early intervention

Early Childhood Center comprising:

A. Day Care Center for 40 children of working mothers age birth to 3 years ago. This fully inclusive framework allows mothers to join the workforce knowing that their children are well cared for.

B. Network of 5 Developmental Preschools for 60 children with developmental delays who all have high potential and with early and intensive intervention are able to overcome their challenges. **80% of all graduates since inception of the program 20 years ago graduate to regular first grade classes.**

2. Therapy Solutions

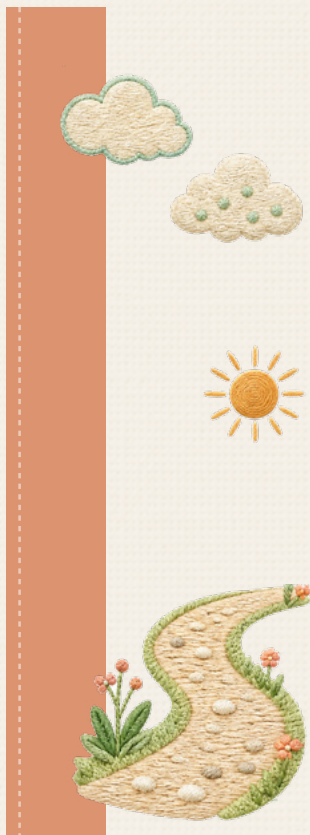
Assessment and Therapy Center for 280 children who benefit from a range of therapy solutions to address developmental delays, emotional problems, and learning disabilities. Parental Guidance is an integral part of therapy.

- Emotional Therapies include: Art Therapy, Psychodrama, Animal Assisted Therapy, CBT, Movement Therapy in Snoezelen Room, Gardening Therapy, Therapy Kitchen, Bibliotherapy
- Group Therapy to enhance social skills using a range of modalities: Drama and Role Play, Art, Snoezelen Room, and Animal Assisted Therapy.



The group provides a protected space to navigate the complexities of the social world including: conflict resolution, assertiveness, and cooperation.

- Paramedical: Occupational and Speech Therapies
- Remedial Didactic Therapy to address learning difficulties in the area of reading, math, writing
- Special program for boys learning in Yeshiva frameworks who need therapy to address a range of challenges



3. Community Outreach

- Treating War Trauma during and after ongoing war on all fronts
- Providing trauma therapies for women and adolescent young women victims of abuse and violence, and those coping with challenging life situations such as postpartum depression, eating disorders, anxiety
- Parental Guidance and Couples Counseling
- Purim Campaign reaching out to single-mother families, children in hospitals, at-risk children living in a shelter run by social services, and low-income families in the community
- Training volunteers in the community on issues of abuse in conjunction with Bat Melech Shelter and Yuvalim Center



TURNING THERAPY AROUND

Last year, Pnina Berkowitz, Professional Director of the Assessment and Therapy Center at Arugot, observed a recurring pattern: some mothers were returning year after year with children for therapy. New children. One child concluded therapy, then the next one started.

Gently and with appreciation, she approached these devoted mothers and said, “You’re doing so much for your children—what if you took some time for yourselves?”

She suggested that by investing in their own well-being through therapy, they might see changes ripple through the family. Those who embraced the idea and began therapy for themselves soon shared remarkable feedback: not only had they grown personally, but their entire families had benefited as well.

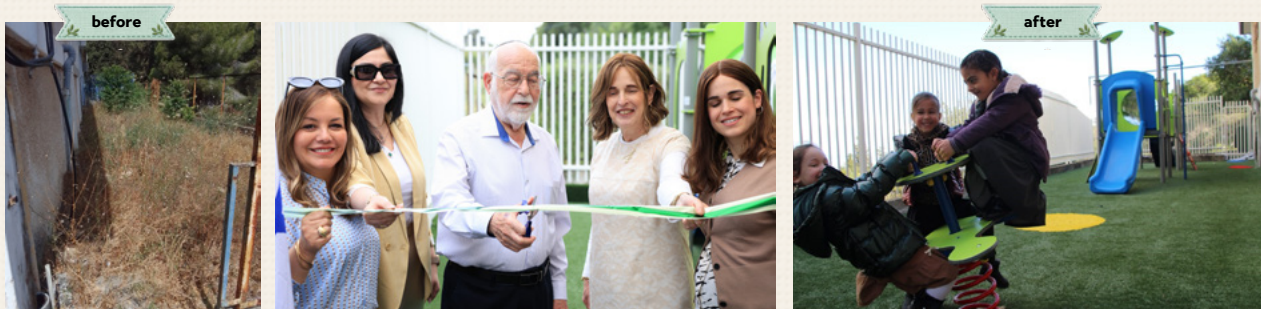
More and more mothers are taking advantage of this opportunity. And we are proud to be able to reach out and make a significant impact in the community.





Special events

- Ribbon cutting ceremony for the inauguration of new playground equipment in preschools following a full renovation and installation of equipment



- Important visit at Arugot by Mr. Geoffrey Stern, President of P.E.F. Endowment Funds, Inc – he was joined by members of the administration including: Dr. Jeremiah Lubasch – President, Pnina Berkowitz – CEO, Efrat Demri – Deputy CEO, Rabbi Daniel Hofner – Board Member
- Nourishing the staff – as a gesture of appreciation the staff was treated to a cooking workshop, offering relaxation, creativity and a boost to inner strength. After preparing delicious dishes together, the members enjoyed a meal in a warm atmosphere of camaraderie.
- Celebrating 90th Birthday of longtime supporter: Mr. Rafi Shinhav



Professional Staff Training

Dr. Gail Suskin, therapy staff coordinator gave a workshop about incorporating play in all kinds of therapy for children, irrespective of the modality used by the therapist. Play is the language of children. Through play they express themselves indirectly. Children usually lack the language to verbalize stress and trauma. The world of play reveals the child's inner world to the therapist. A doll can become a significant family member enabling the child to process life events without verbalizing them.



Exciting Moments in Therapy Kitchen

A. Chanukah Light – the week of Chanukah was celebrated in the therapy kitchen by preparing traditional latkes. The activities took place in groups enabling children to work as a team, follow instructions, take turns, and practice their social skills while the aroma of the latkes spread throughout the building.



B. Purim would not be complete without the traditional hamantaschen cookies. At Arugot, the therapy kitchen became a lively space where children worked together to prepare the treats.

Beyond the fun, the activities serve an important therapeutic purpose. Baking together helps children develop sensory-motor skills, practice social interaction, and experience the satisfaction of completing a task on their own.

And the highlight of the day – each child proudly taking home the hamantaschen they made themselves.

Purim Power – a campaign to distribute hundreds of sweet packages of mishloach manot packages to children hospitalized in Rambam Hospital, single-mother families, needy families, and young residents of Beit Shabtai Levy – a residential framework for at-risk children under the auspices of Municipal Social Services.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the Elgazi and Almani families for their generous donation of mishloach manot packages, which helped bring Purim joy to so many children.



Impact Stories



Leoni's Journey to Safety and Stability

Leoni came to Arugot for CBT therapy after a turbulent childhood marked by emotional manipulation and instability. The home environment was toxic, her mother was a victim of gaslighting by the father. This followed with a painful and hostile divorce during which he manipulated the children against their mother. In the end, the father was awarded child custody, further deepening the emotional strain on Leoni.

In therapy, Leoni slowly began to open up. She shared difficult truths, including the fact that she had discovered her father's inappropriate behavior. Despite the chaos at home, Leoni showed remarkable insight and maturity. She realized that living in her current environment was not in her best interest and quietly began to consider moving to a dormitory.

However, expressing this desire was difficult—Leoni did not feel she could trust or rely on either of her parents. The Arugot team stepped in. After meeting with each parent separately, and involving the school counselor, they presented Leoni's case with care and clarity. Both parents agreed to support the move.

Leoni was registered at a dormitory for at-risk youth in Jerusalem, where she finally found a safe and supportive space. Equipped with the emotional tools she gained in therapy, she was ready to begin a new chapter in her life—one built on strength, healing, and hope.





Ilan, an 8-year-old boy came to Arugot for occupational therapy and emotional therapy. He struggled with low self-confidence and showed delays in age-appropriate reading skills. During a multi-disciplinary team meeting, it was recommended that Ilan undergo a psycho-didactic assessment. Based on the results, his treatment plan was updated to include remedial didactic therapy focused on reading.

Despite these efforts, towards the end of the school year, his teacher reported to his parents that there had been no noticeable improvement in his reading. His mother, overwhelmed and heartbroken, came to Arugot in tears. She was in despair—how could her son succeed academically if he couldn't read?



Ilan's emotional therapist saw something different. She described him as creative, talented, and full of potential. She noted how he had skillfully repaired several broken toys in the therapy room. Her goal became clear: to help Ilan recognize his strengths and rebuild his self-image. She knew that repeated failure in school could crush a child's confidence and hinder emotional growth.

One day, she invited Ilan to the therapy kitchen to make pizza. She brought a recipe, preheated the oven, and began setting out the ingredients. Then something unexpected happened—Ilan picked up the recipe and read it aloud from start to finish. Fluently. Without a single mistake.

She was stunned. And then, overjoyed.

In that moment, she realized she was witnessing the results of a team's hard work and persistence. As soon as the session ended, she called Ilan's mother and said with excitement:

"You can stop crying. Your prayers have been answered. Ilan will succeed in school next year."





When Galit arrived at Arugot's preschool, she carried with her the emotional toll of two very difficult years in mainstream preschools. She was unable to sit still even for a minute. There was never a moment of calm. She did not enjoy her learning framework, had no friends, and often felt misunderstood. "I used to be bad," she once said quietly. "Here it's fun. Here I have friends."

At Arugot, the team recognized that her behavior was not defiance. She was crying out for help. With the guidance of an occupational therapist, Galit was given simple but powerful tools to help her feel safe and regulated. Weighted ankle bands and a special weighted vest gave her the deep sensory input her body needed. In fact, she now asks for them herself, because they help her feel grounded and calm.



The Occupational Therapist introduced creative strategies as well, like placing her hands under her legs for a few minutes to help her stay seated and focused. She is a bright and capable child - just too young for medication, and in need of understanding rather than labels.

In a warm, supportive environment that truly meets her needs, she is beginning to settle, connect, and thrive.





During the war, a missile struck a building in Haifa, setting it ablaze.

Rivki, watching from across the street, was certain her best friend Sari was trapped inside.

Although everyone from the building was safe in a shelter, the terror of that moment left Rivki traumatized.

At Arugot, she received trauma therapy that helped her process the shock and regain a sense of safety. Rivki was able to tap into her inner resources and find the resilience to overcome her fears, putting aside the frightening memories of that awful night.



Looking Ahead - New Project

Healing and Empowerment Program for Children who are Victims of Bullying

Need

In recent years, we have seen a troubling rise in referrals of children who experience bullying in the classroom, on the playground, and in social settings. Statistics show that close to 20% of children experience bullying and the phenomenon is on the rise. These children often exhibit anxiety, low self-esteem, withdrawal, academic decline, and behavioral regression. For children with special needs, the impact is even deeper: their vulnerabilities make them easy targets, while their ability to respond, seek help or defend themselves is often limited.



Families from disadvantaged backgrounds have very few affordable therapeutic options. Without timely and professional intervention, the long-term consequences can include trauma, chronic anxiety, depression,

social isolation, and difficulty in forming relationships.

There is an urgent need for an intensive therapy program to treat and support these children, to equip them with practical tools for coping, and to strengthen their emotional resilience.

Project Description

The **Healing and Empowerment Program for Children who are Victims of Bullying** is a specialized therapy initiative providing individualized and group interventions for vulnerable children. It is scheduled to begin in September 2026 with the beginning of the new school year.

Components of Program:

A. Individual Therapy

One-on-one sessions conducted by



professional therapists to help children: process and heal from the emotional impact of bullying; build self-confidence and positive self-identity; learn communication skills and self-advocacy tools; develop coping strategies for stressful social situations.

Participating in the program will be an art therapist, a drama therapist and a pet therapist. Each therapist uses her medium of expression to facilitate healing, change, and empowerment.

The program is scheduled to begin in September 2026 and will run for 6 months and include 18 sessions of individual therapy for each child. Children who need more than that will be able to continue therapy till the end of the school year. 30 children will receive individual therapy.



B. Group Therapy

For some of the children group therapy will be offered in addition to individual therapy. Small therapeutic groups are designed to: strengthen social skills and peer interaction; practice real-life scenarios in a supportive environment using drama and role-play; build friendships and reduce feelings of isolation; empower children through group validation and shared experiences.

Three groups (with 5 children per group) will run for 16 weeks starting December, approximately two months after the beginning of individual therapy, which provide indication who should participate in a group.

C. Parental Guidance

Parents will participate in sessions to: receive updates about their child's progress in therapy; understand the dynamics of bullying; support their child and reinforce skills acquired in therapy at home; communicate effectively with schools; advocate for their child's safety and well-being.



D. Workshops for Teachers

Arugot's staff will run a series of 3 workshops for teachers and school counselors.

This will facilitate awareness and provide information; promote strategies to prevent and address bullying at school; enable referrals of children for therapy.

It is important that teachers adopt strategies that educate children to accept those that are different from them.



The imbalance in power which defines bullying can be addressed when teachers rotate leadership roles and other classroom tasks.

Social skills can be developed in classroom settings through various initiated activities that reach out to all children in the class.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Arugot can provide vulnerable children with the tools, strength, and emotional safety they need to overcome bullying, reclaim confidence, and thrive socially and academically.

This project offers direct, life-changing intervention for children who would otherwise have no access to help.



"Sometimes the smallest step in the right
direction becomes the biggest step of your life."

Naeem Callaway



Supporting Institutions and Foundations

Haifa Municipality, Haifa Chevra Kadisha, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Economy and Industry, Ministry of Welfare and Social Affairs, Estates Committee, Health Services

P.E.F. Israel Endowment Funds, Inc., Grace Shua and Jacob Ballas Charitable Trust, Emouna Foundation, Salvisberg Wessely Stiftung, Baha'i World Centre, Checkpoint Technologies, The Jack Chester Foundation, June Baumgardner Gelbart Foundation, Perelstine Kagan Charitable Trust, Winograd Estate, Rami Levy

Thank you for your support and for making so much possible.

Partnerships

Oranim Academic College, Bat Melech Shelter, Haifa Community Center, Achiya, Yuvalim under auspices of Haifa Municipal Social Services

Yeladenu – a new cooperative venture with an organization that helps children and youth living on the front lines by providing therapies to children, adolescents, and adults including: lectures, workshops, outreach evenings, dyad therapy, and couples counseling.



Board of Directors



Jeremiah Lubasch, MD

President and Founder, born in Argentina, he studied medicine at the University of Buenos Aires. In 1977 he made Aliya and today lives in Haifa with his wife and family. Dr. Lubasch served in the navy and was promoted to rank of major. In 1989 he founded the Haifa Center for Children with Learning Disabilities, today Arugot, Child and Family Development Center. For close to 30 years he directed the Center on a voluntary basis while running his medical practice at the same time.



Jacob Vizel, Director (pro bono)

Daniel Hofner, Secretary

Eli Hartman, Treasurer

Alex Weis, Audit Committee

Nathan Cohen

Elimelech Knepelmacher





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