





It's hard to believe that Safed schools have been happily integrating Ethiopian and other new immigrants for the last 30 years. Safed children have been immensely enriched by their interaction with other cultures: these two are investigating electric circuits together at the Ari Primary School.



So far this year (2016) the Committee has paid **\$440** for **school fees and extra tuition** for Leah K., now in 6<sup>th</sup> grade in the same school. Because she suffers from Juvenile Diabetes, she often misses classes; her parents are extremely solicitous for their children's education, and have "make-up" lessons for her, for which they pay 40% and the Committee 60%.



Hanna T. (left, with her father) goes to the Agamim Primary School; her father works as a cleaner at a minimum wage, while her mother doesn't work at all, as she has to look after their baby. The family need help all along the line: occasional rent, electricity and gas bills; the Committee prefers to pay for education, and has undertaken to pay the **\$215 fees** for the 2016-2017 school year.

Children outside Safed are also helped: Mimi A., a single mother, who used to live here, now lives in Kiryat Haim. She requested some assistance paying **school fees (\$160)** for her children, Tigist and Omer.



Maybe I'll be on the bus route to Hazer one of these days; if so, it's possible that I'll take G. B., a Safed young man who studies there at the [Yemin Orde Mechina](#) (Gap Year Leadership Program). This is no small achievement for G., who - two years ago - was almost a school drop-out, suffering cognitive, emotional and social problems. At the request of his school, the Committee undertook to pay for intensive support (as described a year ago in the [2015 Rosh HaShana Newsletter](#)). This last school year (2015-2016) over **\$4700** was spent for **two**



**teachers to accompany him on a daily basis.** Not only did he overcome his problems, but he obtained his Matriculation Certificate. The photo was taken at teacher Mrs. Ortal Bitan's home – her little boy obviously adores G. !

All in all G. is finding **meaning** in his life, which is apparently [the most important factor for good mental health.](#)

In the [Pesah 2016 Newsletter](#), there was an account of the support given to two boys attending the elite Amit Yeshiva High School, which entails considerable extra fees. This expense (**over \$1100**) will continue this year, as well as subsidizing two girls, Tali K. and her cousin Rahel K., for whom **\$720** has already been disbursed.

<http://www.haaretz.com/opinion/premium-1.665068>

Here is where the picture of success emerges: ... 90% of the younger generation has high-school education, almost the same percentage as the Jewish population in general (93%) ... the 20% of second-generation Ethiopian Israelis with higher education is almost four times the rate of their parents' generation.

55% of Ethiopian university graduates are employed in high-quality positions, like the figure for the Jewish population in general.

While the Ethiopian community has long way to go before they can close gaps with the Jewish society in general, the figures show that the direction is definitely the right one.



This is the stop that passengers would prefer to avoid !

A.Y. is a 12-year old boy suffering from **drug-resistant epilepsy**. He has just been exhaustively examined at the [Assaf HaRofeh Center for Pediatric Neurology](#), where they decided to recommend treatment using the new drug [Briviact](#). While this has been approved for use in the USA by the FDA, and in several other countries, it has not yet been approved in Israel, and is consequently not available through the various Sick Funds.



However, a legal precedent was recently established: if it is acquired privately and proven to be effective in a specific case, then the Sick Fund will provide it to epilepsy sufferers. A.Y.'s parents could not afford the **\$616** needed to buy **two boxes (112 doses) of the drug**, so they turned to the Committee, who have ordered it. If - as we pray - it is successful, then the Sick Fund will reimburse the money, but if not, then this course of treatment will be discontinued.



Unfortunately that is not the only major expense this family has: A.'s parents are elderly (A. is his father's 12<sup>th</sup> child), and his father in particular needs large amounts of drugs, as does A. himself. In the course of 4 months (February-June 2016), his father needed over \$1000 worth, although after the subsidy from the Sick Fund, he only had to pay \$225; in the same period A. received over \$880 worth of drugs, but his parents only had to pay \$326. His mother also needed smaller quantities; these and other **prescription copayments** came to \$640; in light of the difficulty they have in meeting these expenses (in common with thousands of other Israeli families in a similar situation – see box, right), the Committee paid **\$400** to help out.

<https://www.oecd.org/israel/Health-Policy-in-Israel-April-2016.pdf>

There is evidence that those with low incomes currently forego treatment and medicines because of high out of pocket costs or because these are not covered under the benefit basket.

What can be done?

- Strengthen efforts to limit co-payments to reduce the burden on households and improve financial protection for low-income families.

The other major outlay, from year to year, is dental treatment. Batel T. is a working woman, but needs **major dental treatment**, costing **\$5300**. She asked the Committee to help her out, and will repay the whole sum in monthly installments spread over several years (i.e. she will receive an **interest-free loan**). The dentist is prepared to accept payment spread over 10 months, but this will be a major burden for the Committee in the coming year.



Maybe not strictly medical, but the Committee has been asked to assist in providing a **carer** for 92 year-old Bosana K. This will be a legal foreign worker, and she will be paid \$1510 a month. The National Insurance Institute will pay \$700, leaving the family to raise \$810. Her three sons who live in Safed take turns staying overnight with her, but they themselves are not so young and are limited both physically and economically. The Committee has promised a **monthly contribution of \$270** (\$3240 p.a.) – the wider family across Israel will be asked to contribute the difference.

Which project would you like to adopt ?  
Briviact for A. ? Dental treatment for Batel ? A carer for Bosana ?

**Lionel Okun** ל"ו  
1917 - 2016



*Lionel was my late father's first cousin. Over 21 years, from 1991 to 2011, he donated a total of \$50,500 to the Committee! For the last five years his health precluded his actively supporting our activities, but on his death I received a legacy which enabled me to make a further donation of \$5000.*

*"טוב שם משמן טוב... קוהלת ז', 1*

*"A good name is better than precious oil..." Kohelet 7,1*

*May his memory be for a blessing.*

*Yehoshua Sivan, Chairman*

**His passing emphasises how problematic fund-raising becomes, as our contributors age and not enough new ones are recruited. Anything you can do, to bring in new support, will be very welcome. We especially need help using social media, as in [this example](#) !**



A recent addition to the ranks of our supporters is British lawyer Natasha Boateng (left). Her sister and other family members have also supported us. She writes: "My family and I as Christians have an affection for Israel and the Jewish people. Continue the good work!" It is very heartening, both on the personal and national level, to get such a message !

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