

The Swiss youth village of Kiriat Yearim in Israel



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High quality awareness

High quality, transparency and seriousness are the guiding principles of the Kiriat Yearim Association. The annual accounts are audited twice, and meet the quality requirements of the certification body officially recognised in Switzerland (ZEW0). All our projects are monitored and controlled from Switzerland.

Broad-based commitment

120 voluntary staff throughout Switzerland provide around 4,800 working hours annually for Kiriat Yearim. The 14 regional committees generate income from a wide range of events, which goes to the association and hence to the children and young people in Israel. Each year for Yom Hayelde, the association publishes a fascinating yearbook of art, and each autumn it publishes a comprehensive Annual Report.

Kiriat Yearim

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Charitable organisation

Kiriat Yearim is recognised by the Swiss monitoring agency ZEW0 as a charitable organisation and entitled to use the ZEW0-Quality Seal



Giving a Future to all Children in Israel

A caring and safe home for the weakest

The youth village of Kiriati Yearim was founded in 1951 by Swiss Jews and Christians together with the Israeli "Youth Aliyah". At first, the village primarily provided a new home for those children who had survived the Holocaust. Today, it is mostly disadvantaged, injured and traumatised children from immigrant families to whom the village offers help, safety and education. Located in the picturesque hills near Jerusalem, Kiriati Yearim is a home providing children and young people with emotional support and stability and encouraging them in self-reliance, tolerance and a sense of community, through a daily routine, loving care, purposeful schooling and therapeutic support.

Over the years, Kiriati Yearim has thus to many people become a beacon and symbol against hopelessness and fear.

Giving children and young people a perspective

The intention for young people at Kiriati Yearim is above all to give them a professional perspective. The vital condition for such a perspective is success in final exams at school. Since the school year 2007/2008, pupils at the village's own school have even been able to complete their high school graduation there. So they are intensively looked after and educated up to the age of 18, enabling them to go on to make their way "out into the world".

180 children and young people in the village

The youth village is continually being adapted and enlarged to meet current needs, so that it will in the end be able to host up to 180 children and young people. The young people's parents are mostly immigrants, 50% from Ethiopia, 20% from Russia and 5% from South America. 25% of the children and young people were born in Israel.

Many families have fallen through the social safety net since immigrating, meaning that their children have grown up in surroundings dominated by criminality and drugs. Often, by the time they enter the village, they are already on police files. Hence, most of the children and young people struggle with serious learning and concentration problems.



Comprehensive infrastructure

The core of the central infrastructure of the village is made up of the children's and young people's living accommodation and the school house, in which they are educated in small classes. The village also has a multi-purpose hall, a synagogue, the library, the "Carmen" cafeteria (which the young people operate under their own management), the therapy centre, a scientific laboratory, the dining hall and offices and accommodation for staff.

Important support: leisure activities

Because the young people are not allowed to leave the village alone, the extra-curricular programme at Kiriati Yearim is of very great importance in addition to schooling. Opportunities are thus provided to take part and develop interests in musical studies, sports, textile work, gardening, taking care of small animals, cabinet-making and jewellery design. There are plans for the future construction of a sports complex, a carpentry workshop and a petting zoo.

The village's own choir, "The Spirit of Yearim", had the opportunity in spring 2008 to give thanks to its audiences in music for 57 years of loyal friendship, when it toured Switzerland. That friendship is one that allows us all to face the future with confidence.