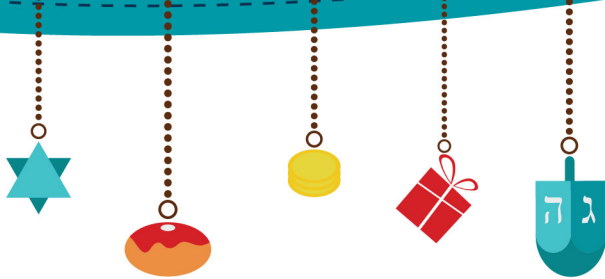


FRIENDS OF NEVE MICHAEL in the news

Hanukkah 5785
December 2024

Happy

HANUKKAH



Dear Friends,

As we prepare to light the candles of Hanukkah, the holiday of light and miracles, we are reminded of the power of resilience, hope, and the impact of bringing light into the lives of others.

This past year, despite immense challenges, we have witnessed the extraordinary strength of the children at Neve Michael, who have faced unimaginable hardships with courage and determination.

Your unwavering support has been the light that has guided them through their darkest moments. Through emergency funds, heartfelt acts of kindness, or your ongoing care, you have been their beacon of hope, ensuring they receive not just their basic needs, but also the emotional, psychological, and educational support necessary for healing and growth during this unstable time.

This Hanukkah, as we gather to kindle the flames of the menorah, let us celebrate the miracles we have created together—miracles of renewed strength, healing, and brighter futures for the children of Neve Michael.

Let us also unite in prayer for the swift and safe return of our hostages and brave soldiers, carrying the hope of peace and safety for all.

May this season fill your hearts with light, gratitude, and the joy of knowing the difference you have made. Thank you for being part of our Neve Michael family and for continuing to believe in the transformative power of love and care.

Happy Hanukkah!

Love,

Hava



NEVE MICHAEL
Children's Village
A Home With A Heart



Dreidel

A dreidel is a four-sided toy that Jewish children play with during Hanukkah.

It has letters on each side that stand for a phrase meaning "A Great Miracle Happened There" in Hebrew.



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A Night of Pride and Hope: Neve Michael Honors Its Brave Soldiers



On a crisp evening, Neve Michael Children's Village welcomed back 25 soldiers who had grown up within its supportive walls. These young men, now serving or having served in Gaza and Lebanon since the events of October 7, returned to reconnect with the mentors, counselors, and friends who had shaped their formative years. The evening began with a warm and generous feast, followed by a moving presentation of photos capturing their younger days—smiling faces from a time when their challenges were those of adolescence, not war. Key figures shared heartfelt speeches of pride and gratitude, setting the stage for an evening of deep connection and reflection.

The highlight of the night was the soldiers' turn to speak. One by one, they took the stage to share their stories, recounting the diverse roles they served in—from Border Police to Paratroopers, the Air Force, and even the IDF Orchestra. Their words, charged with emotion, painted vivid pictures of resilience and courage amid the horrors of war. They spoke of pain and loss, but also moments of pride and hope, embodying the strength and determination instilled in them by Neve Michael. For the soldiers, it was a return to the roots that nurtured their character, and for those listening, it was a powerful reminder of the enduring impact of Neve Michael's values and love. The hall was filled not only with stories, but with hope, pride, and the unbreakable bond of a family reunited in the face of adversity.

Big Sister Program Recognized by Israel's First Lady, Michal Herzog

A year ago, the "Big Sister" program was launched as a collaborative effort between the girls of the onsite seminary, Midreshet Emunah Be'eri (MEB), and the children of Neve Michael. This effort fosters meaningful mentoring relationships, offering the children love, support, and positive role models. Through weekly sessions that include activities such as games, arts and crafts, and heartfelt conversations, the program helps the children build confidence, develop social skills, and cultivate a sense of belonging.

Following the events of October 7, the project was expanded to include families in the Pardes Hana area who have experienced loss. The remarkable success of this endeavor garnered the attention of Michal Herzog, the President's wife, who extended an invitation to share more about this impactful initiative during a special visit.



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Commemorating October 7



At Neve Michael, the air was filled with both somber reflection and tender acts of remembrance as our children gathered to commemorate the tragic events of October 7. Each moment, whether small or profound, carried the weight of deep loss but also the warmth of gratitude for those who gave their lives in the service of others.

The youngest among us, with hearts full of love, baked cookies in memory of the brave soldiers who fell while saving lives. Their small hands carefully shaped the dough, each batch a gesture of thanks for the heroes they never met but will always remember. As the sweet aroma filled the air, it was a reminder of how even the smallest act of kindness can carry the biggest weight of love.

For the older children, the day was marked by a deeply emotional ceremony. A father stood before them and spoke about his son—a soldier who was tragically killed on October 7. His words, though heavy with sorrow, were also a tribute to his son's bravery and the values he lived and died for. There wasn't a dry eye in the room as he shared the memories of a life cut short but lived with honor.

David Friedman, Neve Michael's Director, also spoke at the ceremony, offering words of strength and unity.

As we commemorated October 7, we remembered the fallen, honored their sacrifices, and found comfort in each other's presence. The pain of loss is profound, but the strength of our shared love and unity is even greater.

May their memories be a blessing, and may we continue to honor them by living with kindness, compassion, and unwavering hope.

We stand together—young and old, united in memory and hope.
Am Yisrael Chai!!

Honoring the Legacy of Sergeant Uri Locker z"l

On October 7, 2023, during Simchat Torah, 19 year-old Sergeant Uri Locker of the 51st Golani Battalion made the ultimate sacrifice defending the community of Netiv HaAsara and the outpost near Zikim. Uri fought with unmatched bravery and unwavering determination alongside his comrades, protecting civilians and his fellow soldiers until his final moments.

Uri z"l, who grew up in Pardes Hana, left behind a legacy of courage and selflessness that will never be forgotten. In the wake of his heroic sacrifice, Neve Michael honored his memory by dedicating a small garden—a space of reflection and remembrance—to ensure that his spirit lives on.

Thanks to the heartfelt generosity of a group of donors who deeply care for Neve Michael's children, the amphitheater and park at Neve Michael will soon undergo a beautiful renovation with a special section named "A Garden for Our Heroes" to honor the soldiers from Pardes Hana who gave their lives in battle. Among them, Uri z"l will hold a cherished place, his bravery and sacrifice serving as a beacon of inspiration for generations to come.

In a touching tribute, Neve Michael's children recently participated in the inauguration of a soccer field in Pardes Hana dedicated by Uri's family in his memory. The ceremony was deeply emotional and inspiring, a testament to Uri's enduring spirit. Our children were thrilled to receive soccer balls as gifts and join in a game on the newly inaugurated field, creating a moment of connection and joy while honoring Uri's legacy.



Finding Light in the Darkness: An Inspiring Morning at Neve Michael

Neve Michael's staff experienced a deeply emotional and inspiring morning. Over a hearty meal, they had the privilege of hearing Iris Haim share her incredible story about her son, who was tragically kidnapped and killed by our forces. Her words stood as a testament to unwavering strength, faith, and the remarkable ability to find light even in the darkest moments. There wasn't a dry eye in the room as everyone was profoundly moved by her powerful message of hope and resilience

