



## Welcome to the December 2011 Newsletter

As expected, November was a very **busy month** for the school counselors and their students as it is the **peak season for assessment** tests. The results are then presented to the Ministry of Education department which deals with students' requests to take Bagrut (matriculation) exams under special conditions. The students, their parents and their teachers learn a lot from these assessments. This month we bring you news about the **progress of one of the girls** who was sponsored last year by the Talia Trust and who lives in Or Akiva.

"Miriam's" school is a regular religious girls' high school but its local catchment area is typified by being **low socio-economically**, with a relatively high proportion of immigrant families. Most of the older students work every evening to help their families.

"Miriam", who is 17 and in 11<sup>th</sup> grade, found **learning English and mathematics** very difficult, although she had been having extra help within the school system for some time. Her teachers said

that "she gave up easily". Her **disappointment** with her own low achievement level was making her angry as she realized she wasn't reaching her potential. The school described her as a popular girl and a very pleasant student, but wondered whether emotional circumstances were **affecting her performance**. They recommended her for **extra assessment** but her parents, who both work in low pay employment, were unable to pay the fee. On the school's recommendation, the Talia Trust was pleased to help .

"Miriam's" assessment showed she had **gaps** in reading, writing and self-expression in English. The school implemented the psychologist's recommendation to use various teaching methods **to encourage her** and lessen her fear of failure. In addition, it was recommended that she be allowed to take her examinations under **special conditions**



which included having examination papers read to her by an outside examiner, taking a shortened Hebrew grammar exam and listening to the English examination on a disc (so that she could run the disc back and forth in order to "read" the test). These recommendations pertaining to future Bagrut examinations were accepted by the Ministry of Education. "Miriam" took exams in 5 subjects in the summer - English, mathematics, history, Hebrew

grammar and religious studies- and [did well in them all](#).

"Miriam", who, like all students who receive Talia Trust grants, does some extra volunteering within her school's framework in return, wrote:

"The test helped me so much and I succeeded in my exams.

Although I don't know who you are" (the Talia Trust donors)

" I understand that you are wonderful people."

We look forward to following "Miriam's" progress till the end of her formal education.

Follow-up reports are currently arriving from some of our other projects, so we hope to bring more news [soon](#).

If [your tax year finishes on 31<sup>st</sup> December](#) and you are able to send us a donation (can be done online-see below), [please](#) remember us at The Talia Trust.

Meanwhile, we wish you all a Happy Hanukah.

Best wishes

**Marilyn Hyman**

