

January Newsletter 2010

Many thanks to all the friends of the Talia Trust for their tremendous help over the past 12 months. Thanks to each of you, the Talia Trust has been put on the map at last and is being approached directly by school counselors and teachers. As a result, the Trust was able to assist 91 children and young people in 2009 as opposed to only 41 the previous year. Their ages range from six or seven year olds in the S'dot HaNegev project, to young people starting further and higher education.

Two examples of the latter spring to mind. One is special help for R., a twenty year old, post-army, first year Haifa university student who is dyslexic. Her family immigrated some years ago from Ethiopia but she has to fund her higher education with their assistance. Before taking any university course exams, she had to furnish proof of her learning problem as the tests she had taken several years previously in high school were out-of-date. R. thought she would have to try to struggle through her first year exams without being able to take them under the special conditions she needs, as she could not find the extra money. She was quite worried how she would complete her degree, especial the English language requirements. Fortunately the Talia Trust was able to provide a subsidy and now R. is happily completing the first semester of her second year.

The second example is our small project in Midreshet Nov. The midrasha, which is situated in the Golan, runs a one year religious studies scheme, a kind of gap year, for girls between school and the army/national service, or after they have finished their compulsory service. A few of the girls' families have difficulty paying the modest fees charged there and the administration tries to help. From time to time, the midrasha is asked to accept a girl who has specific learning difficulties. The pressure to succeed which typifies daily life is absent in this program, so it makes a welcome break for a girl like this who has had to struggle all the way through school.

In cases when there is an economic need and the girl has specific learning difficulties, the administration applies to the Talia Trust. I would like to tell you the story of one of these girls which is quite unusual. Family Y heard about D's, deprived background and applied to foster her, even though she was already a teenager. Since then, they have given her a home and as good

an education as they could. In addition to the emotional trauma D had suffered, she has unrelated specific learning difficulties. The Talia Trust is honored to help family Y shoulder the expense of a year in the calm atmosphere of Midreshet Nov.

Marilyn Hyman