

## Welcome to the September 2011 Newsletter

from the Talia Trust for Children.

### What's happening in Kiryat Shemona?

Kiryat Shemona has been in the news recently as the place where cultural facilities have had to close due to lack of available funds. This fact makes the Talia Trust even more determined to give the young children there a better start in life by providing learning enrichment for those who need it. It appears that governmental funds are especially slow to reach the primary schools, so we are really glad that this is the sector in which we have been concentrating our efforts.

Thanks to the Oxford Jewish community, three 9 year olds there are much better equipped for learning than they were a year ago before beginning Fuerstein method instrumental enrichment classes with a specialist teacher. This is what their home class teacher says about them:

"A" can cope so much better with his emotions when he gets angry since he began the instrumental enrichment classes. He now often can control his desire to be in charge and his immediate demands, even on days when he is not receiving medication. His peer relationships have improved and his social standing in the class has strengthened. He is concentrating more on task fulfillment and shows judgment together with use of the correct learning strategies.

"B" is a pleasant pupil who likes to tell everyone about his personal experiences. There has been a very marked improvement in his reading and writing this year. He has begun to carry out tasks independently. The most important thing is that he has begun to believe in his own ability and this has caused the improvements in language subjects.

"C" is now more mature in his peer relationships. He still has difficulties concentrating and sitting still, so will be tested for specific learning difficulties. He has good comprehension and carries out tasks independently. He has certainly been helped by the strategies he learnt in the enrichment programme.

In the coming year, the pilot project is being expanded to three groups from different classes in that same school, spanning ages from 8 to 11. A,B and C will continue in the programme and we look forward to more news of their success.

Schools here begin on September 1<sup>st</sup>, after a long, hot summer holiday. This year teachers have the best part of a month to get their pupils back into the swing of things, before the "haggim", from New Year until the end of Simchat Torah with a few days of schooling in between. Hopefully the Talia Trust projects will therefore be able to take advantage of an early start this year, which should benefit everyone later on.

We wish all our supporters, project participants and volunteers a happy and healthy New Year.

Maurice Hyman