

Israel Association for Child Protection (ELI) is Changing Lives for the Better; President visits JFD, a long-time supporter

Dr. Hanita Zimrin is the Founder and Director of ELI, the Israel Association for Child Protection, and she was recently in Wilmington at the Jewish Federation of Delaware office meeting with staff about ELI and its needs. Dr. Zimrin said, "The Jewish Federation of Delaware is a long-time supporter of ELI. In fact, when a donation was first made to our cause years ago, we were asked to work in its sister city, Arad. Because of the JFD, we have identified great needs in Arad and have been able to help many children there because of it."

Since 1979, Dr. Zimrin and ELI have worked tirelessly to increase the awareness of child abuse by educating the public at large, training professionals, lobbying policy decision-makers, and providing vital information to potential victims and parents – all to increase ELI's ability to intervene, shelter and give assistance to victims of child abuse. ELI's staff approaches this painful problem in a unique and innovative way by offering single-point-of-entry comprehensive services. Families receive therapy, legal counseling, shel-

ter and other much needed support without having to go from agency to agency. Thus, ELI complements other welfare agencies in Israel by providing this totally coordinated

parents do not have money for childcare, and they must work two shifts to support the family. They have no support group, no family, and the children are locked in or out of the

that they can learn that if they are abused, they can get help."

Concerning individual cases of abuse, she talked about a young woman who uses the fictitious name, "Gili." The woman came to ELI after being abused by both parents. She explained to Dr. Zimrin, who was her therapist, that she did not communicate well with words. "She said, 'If I have something to say, I will draw it.' All of "Gili's" drawings showed a great deal of pain, but a progression of emotions as well. It was clear that she was beginning to manage the enormous emotional load of her traumatic experiences. Altogether, she was in therapy for four years, and she still maintains contact with Dr. Zimrin.

throughout Israel.

- Training Division – developing and disseminating knowledge to professionals in related fields of social services.

- Legal Department – providing legal aid and representation to victims of abuse.

- Lobbying – working with the government to influence legislation.

- Public Awareness – interfacing with the media to increase awareness of the issue of child abuse in Israel.

- Target Groups – working with immigrants, minorities and other closed communities.

The organization's hotline is toll free from anywhere in Israel. The emergency shelter, located in Tel Aviv, can accommodate up to 15 children from anywhere in the country. ELI's experience with a very diverse population and its remarkable accomplishments over the past two decades have served as a worldwide model of success in combating this difficult and painful problem.

Michael Hersch, ELI's Director of Development and Representative in the United States lives in Philadelphia and would be pleased to answer any questions you might have about ELI's work or about child abuse in Israel in general. Michael can be reached by email at mherch@comcast.net or by phone at 215-923-2940. For more information, go to www.eliusa.org. The Jewish Federation of Delaware supports ELI.



(Left to right) Karen Venezky, JCRC Director; Michael Hersch, Director of Development for ELI; Dr. Hanita Zimrin, President, ELI Israel Association for Child Protection at the Jewish Federation of Delaware office in Wilmington



"Gili," a young woman in the ELI program, drew this picture while in treatment.

array of services.

While at the Federation, Dr. Zimrin thanked the Federation for its continued support and explained current services and needs. She also talked of the many challenges in providing services to the varied

subcultures in Israel. "It is especially challenging for immigrants, who are occupied with their own work and needs, to the point that the children are very much neglected. These

house. Sometimes, these children drop out of school, and eventually they end up on the streets. Once on the streets, they become very easy targets for sexual assaults and abuse," explained Dr. Zimrin.

She also reviewed ELI's prevention program, "First, we bring our program to the educators. We train them on what to look for, signs of abuse. Then, we bring the program to the children, in the form of 'Edu-tainment.' Dr. Zimrin clarified, "It is a form of educational-entertainment presented in a way that is suitable for the child. That is, it can be a puppet show, a play, a theatrical performance, whatever appeals to the age of the child. It's geared for the children so

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