



TIKVA
Children's Home

HOPE

SUMMER 2016 • USA EDITION

TIKVA AND MASA SHORASHIM

Masa Shorashim is an annual international program designed for school children from the 10th and 11th grades initiated and supported by the Jewish Agency for Israel and the Israel Ministry of Education. This year, nearly 400 students from 34 schools took part, including our 50 delegates from Tikva... other students hailed from Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Moldova.

A key element of the program involves the students learning through visiting historical memorial sites associated with the victims of the Second World War and the Holocaust in Eastern Europe.

Visiting Warsaw, Krakow, Radom and Kielce brought to life what the students from across the Former Soviet Union and Baltic States had been learning about in previous months – the beauty and vibrancy of the culture and traditions of their grandparents' and great-grandparents' generations.

But it was the last day, the visit to Auschwitz-Birkenau, which made the biggest impression. 10th grade Tikva student Ivanova Nastya vividly recalled:

"I'd heard a lot about this place; I'd read about it, watched movies about it, but all this was not enough. My hair stood on end when we arrived. I still can't get over it; sometimes I wake up with those scary images in my mind. But I'm still glad I was there because it has made me think in a different way. I see the world differently now."

This impactful program promotes national and cultural identity of Jewish students, deepens their knowledge about the history of the Jewish people and leaves them with a lasting vivid memory to hand down to the next generation.

Intense preparation for the project began early last December when chosen Tikva participants prepared with research work on the topic "Missing World: Jews of Poland Between the Two World Wars."

All participants of "Masa Shorashim" noted that the trip to Poland had a profound effect on their understanding and appreciation of what had transpired:



Auschwitz- Birkenau Concentration Camp

Podufalov Slava, 10th grade: *"It is impossible to experience this while sitting at home or in the classroom. It seemed that every stone, every tree remembered about this horror. Everyone needs to see this terrible place with his own eyes at least once in life. Everyone needs to do everything possible to ensure that this does not happen again. But there were wonderful moments in Poland, I visited beautiful cities Krakow and Warsaw, which are so different, but so beautiful. In each city Jewish history and tradition left a tangible mark on the cultural and spiritual heritage. After all, if you look closely, you can see a trace of mezuzah at an aisle of house, the Jewish monuments, synagogues."*

Abdulaev Amir, 10th grade *"The program was really hard, both physically and spiritually. I was struck by a trip to Auschwitz, shocked by every small detail. Such programs as "Masa Shorashim", are needed in order not to forget the past, seeking the future. We will never forget this trip, these places, these stories and persons accompanied us. We will remember and we will be united. And such a catastrophe should never happen again, should not happen with any of the people in the future."*





UPDATE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



In April, Leah & Ed Frankel graciously hosted our annual gala for all of our 350 supporters of Tikva in the greater Jupiter Florida area. One of the true highlights of the evening was the question and answer period that Ed led from the gala stage. The questions were insightful and very helpful in making sure our donors have a full understanding of our mission and Tikva itself. Those questions, in my opinion bear repetition here for all our supporters.

- Sylvia Spitalnick, June 2016

1. HOW DO YOU KNOW ALL THE CHILDREN ARE JEWISH?

Tikva employs 30 full time staff members who have the expertise to seek out, document and rescue destitute Jewish children from the Former Soviet Union, specifically Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus and Russia. The team confirms each child's Jewish identity by researching family records kept by local authorities and USSR archives.

2. WHY NOT SAVE NON-JEWISH CHILDREN AS WELL?

Tikva was founded to save and house Odessa's abused and abandoned Jewish Children, and over the past 15 years, we have saved over 2,250. However, there are still an additional 2,000 (approx.) documented Jewish children waiting to be rescued. Limited funding precludes us from reaching out beyond our Jewish Community.

3. CAN THE CHILDREN BE ADOPTED?

No. Under Ukrainian law, an organisation can only hold a license either as an educational institution or an adoption agency. Tikva was initially established as an educational institution. Within a short time, founder Rabbi Baksht, became aware of the plight of homeless Jewish children in Odessa, and initiated a mission to save them under the auspices of Tikva educational institution. As an educational institution, Tikva can provide

a home and an education to children who are both social orphans (children who have been abandoned by unfit, living parents) and orphans. In addition, as an educational institution, Tikva is able to protect its children from the Ukrainian 'child barter market', which potentially exposes children to a nationally corrupt adoption system.

4. MAY I SEND USED CLOTHING OR TOYS?

No. Tikva children have lived in abject poverty most of their lives. As such, giving them new clothing and new toys builds their sense of worth and self-esteem. Once a year, Tikva hosts an appeal to collect new goods for the children. In addition, older children receive a modest allowance so that they can shop for their own clothing to reflect their personality and individual style.

5. WHAT HAPPENS TO THE CHILDREN WHEN THEY GO TO ISRAEL?

Tikva's young immigrants arrive with the usual challenges confronting new Olim. Among the most daunting is the inability to find suitable employment in their new surroundings. In response, Tikva established an employment, placement and vocational development program in 2007 in order to assist Tikva participants in identifying and gaining viable employment. The project offers career counselling, employment related workshops, vocational course subsidies, and most importantly, meaningful job placement.

6. HOW MANY JEWS ARE STILL LIVING IN THE UKRAINE?

Today, there are still approximately 45,000 Jews remaining in and around Odessa, with many more born each year. An estimated 1% of the total population (45 million people) of Ukraine are Jewish.

7. WHY HAVE THE STAFF IN ODESSA OPTED TO RUN THE PROGRAM UNDER THE GUIDELINES OF ORTHODOX JUDAISM?

Tikva was founded as an Orthodox Jewish

educational institution and therefore the organization's values and philosophy respect religious teachings. Together with that, a great deal of thought and attention is given to the local culture, and all programs, schooling and home are sensitive to the needs of unaffiliated Jews. adoption system.

8. CAN YOU EXPLAIN THE ROLE OF THE TIKVA SCHOOL SYSTEM? IS IT SECULAR OR RELIGIOUS?

Tikva's schools offer a standard Ukrainian program of study in addition to a Jewish educational component which includes Hebrew, Jewish history, Israeli culture and tradition, Jewish holidays and Torah studies. With class sizes of 12 to 14 students, as opposed to the 40 found in the standard Ukrainian classroom, Tikva's students receive the personal attention they need in order to succeed. Tikva's schools emphasize hands-on, inquiry based learning, rather than lecture and memorization methods used in most Ukrainian public schools. As a result, Tikva's students continually receive academic and artistic awards in annual scholastic competitions between student teams from Ukrainian public & private schools.

9. HOW DOES TIKVA HELP THE WIDER JEWISH COMMUNITY IN ODESSA?

In a region where Jewish expression was once forbidden, Tikva's community-building activities have created a Jewish environment for the young families and older generations alike. Tikva's partnership with the Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) provides over 2,000 nutritious Kosher meals served to seniors who come to our Synagogue, and delivered to home-bound seniors in a JDC operated 'meals on wheels' programs. Tikva also created the Kosher Food Market and Chevron, a Kosher meat restaurant, enabling Jews in Odessa to purchase Kosher food and eat out. In addition, Tikva created an adult Jewish educational program offering lectures, Hebrew classes, and cultural activities reaching nearly 400 previously unaffiliated adults.

SAVE THE DATE • TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2016

Annual Gala 2016

AT ESPACE, NYC

HONORING - HARRY AND ANNA SCHIMMEL

TIKVA WELCOMES ESTHER

In the last year with your support, we have been able to accommodate the intake of approximately 100 needy children ranging from the tiniest at-risk infants to teenagers.

In fact, only a few months ago, Tikva gave a home to baby Esther - who was handed over to us by her mother at just one day old. Esther's mother had reached out to Tikva staff just a few days earlier to inform us of her impending delivery and asked Tikva to become the baby's legal guardian.

Sadly enough, this wasn't the first time that Esther's mother had come to us in desperation. Tikva also cares for Esther's brother Kolya. Esther's mother suffers from severe depression and extreme poverty. Without Tikva, Esther would surely have been taken into a state orphanage.

Fast forward, Esther is a happy and thriving three-month old with opportunities beyond expectation loved and nurtured at Tikva. Our missions are vital in giving our supporters a real insight into the extraordinary work that happens at Tikva.

No matter how much someone has heard about Tikva's work, it can't be fully appreciated and understood until it has been 'felt' by visiting in person in the context of Odessa.

If you are interested in joining an upcoming September mission please contact
Sylvia Spitalnick,
Tikva Executive Director US at
914-441-2165 or sylvia.spitalnick@gmail.com



YOUNG LEADERSHIP SUCCESS!

TikVA's Young Leadership first event in Miami, FL at White Hall of Sunny Isles on May 2nd was a success!

TikVA raised \$40,000 towards our extended summer camp program for over 550 kids! TikVA was fortunate to have the generous support of SMA Medical Laboratory, Universal Fundraising Organization and Sunshine Academy as sponsors of the evening. Guests enjoyed a great performance of Rony Gomez from CIRQUE DU SOLEIL. Thank you to all those that

helped us make this event a success!

TikVA is actively branching out in nationwide markets to raise awareness about our life-saving work and looking to expand its fundraising efforts.

If you know of any communities nationwide that would be interested in learning about TikVA and supporting TikVA's mission, please reach out to our Director of Development, Yanna Begelman at TikvaYB@gmail.com.



FROM ODESSA

In an island of uncertainty and chaos in Ukraine, there is a haven of stability at Tikva. We have seen Ukraine go through yet another year of political upheaval, war and instability in the region of Donetsk and financial crisis. In these trying times, Tikva has quickly recognised the current needs of our children. We have strengthened the psychological program by opening a Tikva Psychological Centre where children and students in need can receive advanced care from Western trained psychologists. We have also added another four psychologists in our homes and schools to deal with the traumas of the events in Ukraine.

In addition, we have added security throughout the institutions, giving our children and community members the additional feeling of safety they need and guarding them against outside threats.

Despite this difficult time, Tikva continues to grow and develop new important avenues of making the children's lives better. Tikva has signed a contract with The Helen Doron Group to give intensive English lessons to the children in the Tikva kindergartens and elementary schools, enabling them to study English from a young age and to give them the ability to excel above their peers. Tikva is in the middle of setting up a vocational program which will start in September of 2017. All the children in the 8th Grade and higher have been evaluated by a joint work team to help them choose professions suitable for them, be it vocational or academic. This is a program which will enhance the chances for all of our students to be successful in the line of work they choose.

We rely on you to help us save and help more children - thank you for your support!

- Refael Kruskal, CEO of Tikva Odessa



A new way to give and be recognized

Our new **Certificate of Gratitude** is a very personal way of celebrating a family milestone... Bat/Bar Mitzvah, birth of a child, wedding or a birthday while making a donation to Tikva!

Please contact Lori Donza at 917-262-1159 or Sylvia Spitalnick at 914-441-2165 and we will gladly handle getting the certificate to you to mark your special occasion.

Donate at: www.tikvaodessa.org