

Ashdod - A Unicef & Child Friendly City



The concept of Ashdod as a Unicef was born in the of a local initiative designed for Unicef's work in the field of education for development, advocacy on behalf of children's rights and fundraising through the sale of Unicef products and other innovative activities.

city friendly to children and to summer of 2000. It was the result to support the Israel Committee

for Unicef on behalf of children's rights and fundraising through the sale of Unicef products and other innovative activities.

Mazal Shealtiel Coordinator for Youth Activities of the City of Ashdod and a member of the Israel Committee for Unicef, together with the Israel Committee, embarked on this long-term project in Ashdod, the fifth largest city in Israel, whose goal was to implement activities connected with Unicef amongst the many frameworks for youth in Ashdod

An initial meeting was held in Ashdod in the summer of 2000, with the participation of the Ashdod Deputy Mayor, Marco Ashkenazi, representatives of services for youth in the city together with Avraham Lavine, Chairman, and other members of the Israel Committee for Unicef, in order to exchange ideas for activities to be included in the project. The initiative received the blessing of Zvi Zilker, the Mayor of Ashdod and was immediately approved for implementation.

On 15th May 2002, in a special ceremony, the City of Ashdod will officially be declared a Unicef and Child Friendly City.

The following activities have already taken place within the framework of the project since its inception:

- ⌚ Within the area of informal education, a joint activity about UNICEF's work was held between parents and children at a local comprehensive school.
- ⌚ In a specially designed Bar-Mitzvah programme, 13-year-olds were asked to undertake activities on different subjects, such as community affairs, children's rights and the sale of Unicef greeting cards.
- ⌚ At the municipality's pedagogic centre, activities on children's rights were developed for use within informal educational frameworks. After the young people were made aware of basic children's rights, they were "prepared" emotionally and intellectually to undertake Unicef activities and fundraising.



- ⌚ In youth movements, activities were held that made young people aware of the situation of children in regions of conflict and emergencies, with the goal of presenting to them the problems of children in difficult circumstances and helping them to understand their situation. There was also an exhibition of Unicef pictures and videos. Following Unicef activities with youth groups, young people carried out Unicef activities in the community, in shopping malls, on the beach and other public places.
- ⌚ Social coordinators in junior high school classes carried out activities on Unicef. As a result of these educational activities, the pupils approached teachers on their own initiative and asked to fundraise on behalf of Unicef.
- ⌚ Mazal Shealtiel participated in school staff meetings in schools in the city, in order to explain to the teachers how pupils can work in the community focusing on Unicef.
- ⌚ Unicef products were sold in a wide variety of settings throughout Ashdod.
- ⌚ On Tu BeShevat, the Jewish New Year for Trees that fell on 28th January 2002 all the youth movements in the city sold a sapling together with a Unicef card. The activity was successful beyond all expectations, attracting a great deal of attention throughout Ashdod.
- ⌚ In anticipation of the ceremony due to take place on the 15th May 2002, when Ashdod will be declared a Unicef and Child Friendly City, all of the community centres and youth movements in the city are carrying out an intensive programme of activities focussing on basic children's rights such as the right to an identity and name, the right to a family and the right to study and play.
- ⌚ In other related activities young people are collecting games and clothes on behalf of disadvantaged children, children in foster families as well as for children from new immigrant families.



It is planned to carry this experimental project to other cities in Israel.

