



# Malka Hager Fitness Center

## 2011 Activity Summary



## A YEAR OF EMPOWERMENT AND EXPANSION

*The Malka Hager Fitness Center is a success story and it is growing! The Center has expanded its services beyond the borders of Bnei Brak to Elad, Netanya and a full-fledged Center in Petach Tikvah.*

*Beyond the direct impact of the Center's activities on the seniors' physical fitness, the programs also greatly enhance their quality of life, helping them promote and maintain their function and independence. Seniors who would otherwise be lonely "stay-at homes" are motivated to go out and to be socially active.*

*The Malka Hager Fitness Center participants gain a lot of practical knowledge that is relevant for them and that they can apply on an ongoing basis. Through the Center's programs, they gain a feeling of being informed and experience the power of knowledge. Their self confidence is boosted, their sense of self-esteem is upgraded and their self-image is enhanced.*

*The knowledge and the way it is imparted to them, reestablishes their sense of control by restoring to them responsibility for their own health and other needs. The seniors come to recognize their own capacity, and in applying what they learn and taking responsibility for themselves, they are rejuvenated.*

*This is the approach embraced by the Malka Hager Fitness Center: to reach out in a non-threatening way to the senior population and provide them with an empowering experience they can take home with them!*

*As part of the implementation of this philosophy and the strengthening of the combined physical and emotional wellness of the seniors, every lecture and activity includes both of these aspects: physical and emotional. The results through the course of the year have been uplifting and gratifying for the participants, their families and the Center staff and volunteers.*

*Because the courses and information are available for free or at a minimal charge, a much larger senior population is able to access and benefit from the Center's activities. In fact the number of overall participants has grown nearly 20% in 2011 over the previous year to 4,260 seniors!*

*It is gratifying for us to share with you the achievements of this past year. This is the opportunity for us to express appreciation to our funding and program partners for the financial and moral backing that is an integral part of our achievements and success. Thank you for your trust and partnership.*

*This is also the place to salute our outstanding Malka Hager Fitness Center team: Idit Edelstein CSW, Project Chayil and Volunteers Coordinator, Benny Kelner, Physical Fitness Director and Project Developer, and Orit Raz CSW, Enrichment & Lecture Coordinator as well as our committed and dedicated steering committee. Your professionalism, heart and unmatched devotion make our programs truly exceptional. Sincerest thanks!*

*Last but not least, sincerest thanks to Rabbi Dr. Chananya Chollak, Ezer Mizion's International Chairman, Chaim Freund, Executive Vice President, along with Ezer Mizion's senior administrators, who are a listening ear and pillar of strength. They are a source of constant inspiration and guidance as they infuse in us a sense of mission and vision to do the best for the population we are coming to serve.*



**Sarah Topper**

Director, Geriatric Services Division



## NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN 2011

2011 brought with it a range of innovative activities and opened new vistas for the senior population at Malka Hager Fitness Center. These included:

### STRENGTHENING THE CAREGIVER SUPPORT SYSTEM KESHER BITNUAH - "Bonding through Motion"

"My father is so invigorated by the activities we do together that I learned in Keshet Bitnuah. It has made my weekly visits with him a time that we both look forward to."  
– Baruch, engineer

"I taught my children how to do the exercises with Savta. They love it and have fun challenging her: 'Savta, let's see you do this!' She was an angry old woman. No one wanted to come visit her. Now, she laughs and jokes and has become so much more pleasant to be with... This project has turned over our relationship for everyone in the family!" – Sima, social worker

"Ever since we began with Keshet Bitnuah, Ima has become so much more bold and willing to take on challenges. Her balance and coordination has improved drastically and she is not so afraid of falling. She is much more positive, accepting and is willing to try new things. This has restored her initiative." – Rachel, teacher

Keshet Bitnuah (Bonding through Motion) is an innovative program formulated by Malka Hager Fitness Center staff to train family members to implement guided physical activity with their elderly homebound relative.

The goal is to maintain and improve their loved one's general physical state and help him preserve independence and retain maximum range of motion and function in everyday tasks.

In addition, the physical activity serves as a medium to create a positive bonding experience between the elderly person and his family.

Training courses in Petach Tikvah and in Bnei Brak, trained a total of 100 caregivers (spouses, children, grandchildren of the elderly). The courses were followed by six month supervision with house visits, telephone conversations and forms completed by the caregiver reporting weekly on the project's impact.

An evaluation of the project was done by an external independent firm and the results have been analyzed in order to upgrade future courses. With adequate funding, we hope to open further courses and expand in additional cities and in other areas, such as massage, music, etc. as sources of stimulation and to maintain good relationships between family members and their homebound parents/grandparents.

This project has been undertaken in part by the Shanbrom Foundation whose generous sponsorship will fund part of its expansion to Ramat Gan, Hasharon area (Kfar Sabba, Herzlia) and Ashdod.



## HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR PROGRAM GETS UNDERWAY

The elderly Holocaust survivors population has been found to be especially prone to illness, nutritional deficits, and social isolation. Ezer Mizion, with the help of government funding, launched a program to train a select group of volunteers to work with these survivors, one-on-one, in order to help meet the complex needs of this unique segment of the population. The volunteers were chosen based on their qualities of caring and commitment.

As a first stage, the volunteers underwent a six week training course. The course included lectures on: The world of the holocaust survivor, nutrition for the survivor – both psychological significance and practical guidelines, tools for communication and documentation of the survivor's memories, and skills for "bonding through motion" to increase the survivor's physical capabilities (see discussion of the program above).

Following training, the volunteers began home visits to Holocaust survivors to whom they were individually matched, with supervision and follow-up. The objective of these visits is to engage the survivor in conversation, provide companionship, record life experiences for those who are interested in sharing them, offer nutritional counseling, and do stamina-building physical exercises with the survivors who are physically capable.

Most of the volunteers report that warm, close relationships have developed between them and their charges. The survivors look forward to the visits and benefit from the conversation. Some, though not all, cooperate in doing the physical exercises and engaging in games with the volunteer. Some volunteers have also managed to enhance their survivor's quality of life in additional ways – arranging for safety accessories in the home, hot meals, etc.



**התנדבות בקהילה  
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- תמיכה רגשית ועוד

במסגרת התנדבות נטות קשר של התנדבות עם ניצולי שואה

המתנדבות התקבלו ליוזמה המרכזית לניצולי שואה במסגרת התנדבות

המתנדבות המעוניינות לתרום מזמנן יוזמות לערב התנדבות

לפרטים והצטרפות פנו בהקדם ל"עוד מציון" 03-6144600  
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## INNOVATIVE WORKSHOPS AND CLUBS

### PETANQUE

Seniors who attend municipal activity clubs have been trained in the popular "Petanque" outdoor game by trained Malka Hager Fitness Center volunteers.

This game is a gentle form of competitive bowling and combines fitness and physical activity with social interaction.

Two groups of the age 60+ seniors who were trained, joined Israel's National Petanque League for Seniors and took part in the annual competitions.

Two additional groups were trained in 2011 in the popular game in the Beit Marko Senior Activity Center, in the Beit Hadekel Home for Seniors and in the Yoseftal Senior Activity Center.

A Petanque sport field is being set up in the Petach Tikvah Achdut neighborhood by the local municipality where the seniors will be able to play and enjoy the game's benefits.



### AROMATHERAPY

The Fitness Center ran a highly successful workshop for women on "aromatherapy." The workshops were delivered by Orit Rosenberg, a reflexologist and highly regarded lecturer on natural alternative medicine. The workshop was so successful that by popular demand, it was followed up by an additional round of four sessions on this enlightening topic.

Aromatherapy is a form of alternative medicine that uses volatile plant materials, known as essential oils, and other aromatic compounds to enhance a person's mood, cognitive function or physical health.

Among the topics addressed in the workshops were: Understanding the skin and its functions; the various aromatherapy forms – oils, gels, butters – and their use in medical, cosmetic and emotional intervention; distinguishing between genuine forms and diluted imitations on the market; "indirect aromatherapy" – the use of aromas to create an atmosphere

The field of aromatherapy, which harnesses the strong effects of scent for constructive medical and psychological purposes, is a fairly new therapeutic venue. Ezer Mizion as a whole, and the Malka Hager Fitness Center in particular, is always on the alert for new ideas that can be used to further empower the elderly and enhance their quality of life. Ezer Mizion makes these sophisticated, costly workshops available at a highly affordable price, without compromising on the quality of the lecturers.



## “BETWEEN YOU AND ME”

A unique personal relationship coaching course was given by Ezer Mizion trained Chayil volunteers. The coaching training course was geared primarily to empower seniors in their encounters with doctors and medical professionals.

The group workshops delivered by the trained volunteer coaches come to counter the senior's sense of vulnerability and feeling of ignorance when faced by the medical system and modern technologies that are implemented.

The workshops teach the seniors how to prepare technically and emotionally for doctor appointments. The program gives them the tools to define what their expectations should be and what their rights are as patients. The seniors learn how to present their issues to doctors with clarity and brevity.

“Forewarned is forearmed.” Seniors who have participated in the workshops report that they now feel secure and confident when dealing with the doctors and capable of caring for their own needs as a result of this personal training.

The workshops have become among the most popular offered by the Malka Hager Fitness Center.



## “POSITIVE THINKING” WORKSHOP

These high impact workshops were delivered by experts in the field and contributed to the development of self awareness and understanding by the elderly participants of the issues they are facing. This opened the way for learning how to develop a positive framework and attitudes. The workshop was especially empowering in dealing with loss of loved ones and of physical function and relationships and family issues. The workshop was instrumental in enabling participants to come away in an inspired and uplifted frame of mind and able to generate a positive self-image.



## JEWELRY MAKING WORKSHOP

Joining the jewelry making workshop is a medium for elderly women to experience creativity and connect to beauty and things that are expressions of their feminism. This workshop is a source of enormous satisfaction and a testimonial to the women's abilities and imagination. The social setting and patience and concentration required provide tremendous fulfillment as well.



## NUTRITIONAL REFRESHER WORKSHOP

In a style switch, the 2011 nutritional workshops were structured, informative but differed from earlier lectures in their brevity. A lot of focus was placed on food preparation for a single portion, which many of the participants surprisingly were not adept at. Nutritional requirements for the elderly were raised, medical issues were addressed, with focus on eating habits and the digestive system. There was a greater focus than in previous years on the practical applications, recipe ideas and food preparation techniques.



## HEALTH PROMOTION

In 2011 the health promotion among Geriatric Day Activity Centers (run by local municipalities) was greatly expanded. Over 800 participants (an impressive 300% over 2010!) took part in the weekly activities which included structured physical activity in the Fitness Center gym room or in the Yankel Kornwasser Hydrotherapy Pool, nutritious breakfast with the group (lots of social interaction) and a relevant lecture on senior issues. This once a week activity concluded each week with folk dancing, a movie, etc. the seniors loved it!

## SOCIAL ACTIVITIES AND OUTINGS SEASONAL FUNCTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

The yearly cycle is joyously felt in the Malka Hager Fitness Center, as each holiday is celebrated with special attention. Chanukah and Purim parties for seniors took place in a number of cities across the country. As part of the party programs, schoolchildren came to the clubs and residences, danced together with the seniors and brought a ray of joy to their hearts. Ezer Mizion considers involvement of the younger generation in activities for golden-agers of prime importance, both because of the young, cheerful atmosphere that children radiate to the elderly, and because of the hands-on education the children receive in how to relate to the elderly with understanding and respect.

Fertile collaboration between the Senior Care Department of the Netanya Municipality and Ezer Mizion produced an exciting and unusual event on Tu Bishvat – the New Year for the trees – at the "Shelulit HaChoref Park." Over 250 senior citizens from the various Golden Age clubs across the city participated in the event, which focused on promoting health awareness among Golden Agers. The event opened with relaxation and breathing exercises, to the strains of soft music, after which each group engaged in a different sport activity under the guidance of certified physical education teachers: Folk dancing, fitness exercises, t'ai chi exercises, and a walk around the park.

## WALKING THE LAND

The Fitness Center joined a national seniors program of "Walking the Paths of Israel." In the framework of this innovative program, groups of senior citizens around the country went for day hikes, suited to their physical capabilities. All the groups together covered the length and breadth of the land of Israel, enjoying its magnificent and varied natural beauty.

Members of the Bnei Brak and Petach Tikvah Senior clubs took part in this project. The Bnei Brak group's itinerary included a visit to Tel Afek and the sources of the Yarkon river – a four hour trip, with a total of about two hours of walking. The Petach Tikvah group spent a whole day hiking in Nachal Chadera – Cheftizba and visiting Caesarea, Ramat Hanadiv, and other attractions.



## NORDIC WALKING

"At first, the women were skeptical - and frankly, so was I - but the results speak for themselves!" - Ruth Carmeli, director of Nordic Walking program.

Nordic Walking, a sport resembling cross-country skiing, involves walking with the help of two poles that facilitate movement of the upper torso. The use of the poles enables the walker to engage in aerobic activity while working on muscle strengthening, flexibility, coordination and balance. This sport is especially suitable for the senior population.

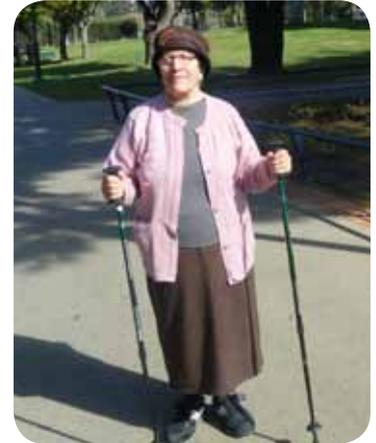
The technique has a dual purpose: improving posture and balance - especially helpful for the elderly and for people who are recovering from leg injury - and muscle strengthening which is appropriate for young, healthy people as well.

In 2010, with the support of Eshel, geriatric physical education teachers were trained in giving Nordic Walking workshops. The course included both theoretical material and practicum. At the conclusion of the course, the Fitness Center opened Nordic Walking workshops in the various Centers.

Senior centers that participate in the program are reimbursed 75% of the cost of the equipment. Eshel also trains seniors who have participated in workshops and are interested in continued walking on a regular basis as volunteers to accompany new groups.

After briefly enjoying Nordic walking, the women get sold on it. One 90-year-old woman, whose back was stooped to one side as a result of years walking with a cane, has noticeably straightened up, enhancing her physical and emotional well-being!

Another participant, a mother of young children who comes to accompany her elderly mother on the walks, insists on being assigned her own pair of Nordic poles. "It has done wonders for my back!," she says.



## THE TASTE OF LIFE

Coca cola's national production plant hosted a large group of seniors at an interesting tour of its plant. MHFC guests were fascinated and enjoyed the free can of bubbly cola that topped the day.

ציבור הנשים בגיל השלישי מוזמן:

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## MORE MALKA HAGER FITNESS CENTER UPDATES COLLABORATION WITH KUPOT CHOLIM

Since the founding of the Fitness Center, a steering committee has been meeting quarterly to offer their advice and support. The committee includes representatives from the various relevant government departments, such as Ms. Kachal, the Health Ministry nutritional supervisor and Ms. Elka, Health Ministry regional supervisor of senior citizens' homes, as well as Ms. Orbuch, social worker and head of the Social Services senior citizens' department and Ms. Sharvit, head of the department in the Bnei Brak municipality.

The steering committee also includes representatives from the Klalit and Maccabi Health Funds, and at times, also from Leumit. Through the years, Ezer Mizion has developed a firm, productive collaboration with the various Health Funds. While the Kupot Cholim focus on medical care, they have come to trust Ezer Mizion's capabilities and professionalism in regard to working with the public and increasing their health awareness. As a result, the Kupot Cholim have increasingly opted to join Ezer Mizion in organizing and publicizing seminars and other events focusing on specific medical areas, with the goal of preventing or identifying health challenges through knowledge.

Kupat Cholim sends lecturers one morning a month at their expense to speak on subjects related to cardiac health, for an audience of 100-200 women. Twice a year, they help fund an awareness evening on various topics, for some 250-400 attendees. The Maccabi Fund brought in Ezer Mizion trainees to do hearing and vision screening tests on their elderly members at the Kupah medical center.

During 2011, ads and widespread newspaper publicity of the Fitness Center's services and events were sponsored by Kupot Cholim Maccabi and Klalit and by the Bnei Brak Municipality's Social Services Department. Expanded publicity enables the Center to increase awareness of available assistance to those who are in need of the services.

Kupat Cholim Maccabi also mails brochures with information on the Malka Hager Fitness Center services to their clients in order to keep them informed of services that are available. In addition, a flier is currently being prepared that will list all the diverse activities and the phone numbers for registration.



משרד הבריאות



## CHAYIL TRAINEES BRANCH OUT

Over the past year, the corps of Chayil volunteers, who are specially trained to work with the senior population, have expanded their reach. Now, in addition to screening (for balance, hearing and vision) and running workshops on a variety of topics in the Bnei Brak and Petach Tikvah Ezer Mizion senior centers, the Chayil women are going out to other city-run day centers for seniors in Petach Tikvah to provide these same services.

The Chayil volunteer corps, a program sponsored by Eshel, is primarily manned by volunteers from Ezer Mizion. These volunteers are given support and enhancement by Ezer Mizion, which trains them in understanding the elderly population and building them up emotionally and physically. The volunteers are given the tools to do professional health screening and deliver a variety of workshops, such as nutrition for seniors and therapeutic gardening. The volunteers themselves are “youthful” senior citizens who are greatly empowered by their work. In fact, they probably benefit from their involvement every bit as much – if not more – than the recipients of their services!

The following chart shows the numbers of Chayil volunteers trained in the various areas – a total of 107 volunteers (some are trained in more than one area):

CHAYIL VOLUNTEERS TRAINED	
Course	# Trained
Walking companions	60
Vision/Hearing screening	9
Balance & coordination	9
Between Me and You/ Interpersonal coaching	5
Petanque	10
Memory enhancement	14
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>107</b>





## HEALTH MAINTENANCE

### 3. Courses and Ongoing Workshops

Courses and workshops are continuing at full swing in the various branches, serving the senior citizens with the following breakdown in Bnei Brak alone.

WORKSHOP	FREQUENCY	PARTICIPANTS
Laughing Yoga	Weekly (40 meetings a year)	25
Advanced Memory	2 Series, 4 meetings each	40
Memory Improvement	1 Series, 6 meetings	30
Wise Nutrition	4 Series, 6 meetings each	60
Gardening Course	3 Series, 4 meetings each	30
Between You and Me	4 Series, 1 meeting each	45
Nutrition Refresher	5 Series, 2 meeting each	45
Aromatherapy	3 Series, 5 meeting each	45
Jewellery Creating	3 Series, 5 meeting each	48
Positive Thinking	2 Series, 3 meeting each	30
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>28 Series, 140 meetings</b>	<b>398</b>



## HEALTH MAINTENANCE

### 4. Exercise Groups

A wide variety of exercise clubs meet throughout the week at the Malka Hager Fitness Center, serving men and women of varied ages and with diverse medical issues. The following typical exercise group schedule gives us a glimpse of the rich diversity.

FITNESS ACTIVITY	DAY	TIME	AGE
Cardio-health + muscle strengthening	Sun	16:45	50-65
Cardio-health + muscle strengthening	Sun	17:45	50-65
Women's folk dancing	Sun	18:45	50+
Women's folk dancing	Sun	20:00	50+
Bone building + back health	Sun	20:00	50-65
Muscle Strengthening + aerobics	Mon	8:20	50+
Bone building	Mon	10:15	65+
Bone building + back health	Tues	10:15	50-65
Laughing yoga	Mon	11:15	50+
In dance	Mon	12:00	50+
Cardio-health + muscle strengthening	Wed	10:00	50-65
Cardio-health + muscle strengthening	Wed	11:00	65+
Cardio-health + muscle strengthening	Wed	19:15	50-65
Cardio-health + muscle strengthening	Wed	20:30	50-65
Muscle Strengthening + aerobics	Thurs	8:20	50+
Muscle Strengthening + aerobics	Thurs	9:15	50+



## HEALTH MAINTENANCE

### 5. Indance

In addition to the more standard exercise program, the Malka Hager Fitness Center offers new variations, such as "laughing yoga" and "Indance".

"Indance" is a dancing method that combines all styles of dancing with elements from martial arts, soft movement methods and holistic healing arts. Indance does not emphasize exact, uniform movements, but rather gives emphasis to freedom in guided motion. Steps are uncomplicated and allow harmonious flow of movement. All of these aspects make Indance the perfect exercise for the mobile elderly.

As one person described it: "Indance combines the expressiveness of dance, the power and explosiveness of the martial arts, the gentleness and awareness of Yoga and Tai'chi, and the wisdom of the healing arts."



## MALKA HAGER FITNESS CENTER - PARTICIPANT STATISTICS

ACTIVITY	PARTICIPANTS
Exercise groups for women	125
Exercise groups for men	30
Exercise in Kollelim	15
Aquatic exercise for women	300
Aquatic exercise for men	40
Walking groups for women	100
Walking groups for men	15
Health workshops	445
Health promotion days	800
Lectures and awareness evenings for women	1,930
Lectures and awareness evenings for men	250
Dance groups	25
Bonding through Motion Program	100
Holocaust Survivors Volunteer Program	25
Trip for volunteers	60
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,260</b>



## Malka Hager Fitness Center Renovation Completed

Renovations on the Malka Hager Fitness Center, a project of the Geriatric Services Department, has been completed.

The renovated center includes a state-of-the-art Gym Hall, equipped with advanced fitness apparatus that was generously sponsored by David and Judy Hager and the Claims Conference.

At the gym, seniors are given personalized, one-on-one exercise programs, tailored for each person's needs and capacity. The gym is on the same floor as the hydrotherapy pool, enabling the seniors to easily go from aquatic therapy to "dry" exercise. There are senior exercise groups as well, adapted to the group's particular issues.

The renovated facility also features lecture rooms exclusively designated for lectures and workshops given for the elderly on a variety of topics.

Over four thousand two hundred seniors participated in Malka Hager Fitness Center activities in the past year.

## WET AND DRY FITNESS PROGRAM

A collaborative project between Ezer Mizion's Yankel Kornwasser Hydrotherapy Pool and Malka Hager Fitness Center pulled together hydrotherapy professionals with geriatric physiotherapists and fitness experts to create a unique Wet and Dry Fitness Program, serving participants age 57 through 85.

The Wet and Dry Fitness Program is an exercise and fitness plan for seniors at the Yankel Kornwasser Pool, combining water exercise and calisthenics/exercise apparatus in the renovated Malka Hager Fitness Center. The program is a real hit and participants love it!

The program can accommodate up to 100 people. From among the participants, small groups are formed to address specific health issues such as Parkinsons, CVA and fibromyalgia.

