



The Niot Project

**HELPING TEENAGERS WITH LEARNING
DIFFICULTIES SUCCEED AT SCHOOL**

Perpetuating the Life and Learning of Niot Watzman (z"l)



Niot Watzman did not have it easy at school. A classic “problem” child, Niot found it nearly impossible to sit still in class and concentrate on lessons. His parents, both of whom had been good and cooperative students at his age, grew increasingly frustrated as neither discipline, positive incentives, nor extra help seemed to provide a solution.

They consulted with experts and learned that children with ADHD and learning disabilities can, with proper interventions and a supportive and appropriate learning environment, succeed in school and in life. But the school system did not provide diagnosis or the full range of interventions Niot required. Teachers and administrators, while well-intentioned, often did not have the training they needed to understand and help Niot. As a result, much of the extra assistance had to be found and paid for at the family’s volition and expense.



Eventually, their efforts began to pay off. Progress did not come easily and required ongoing effort on the part of Niot, his teachers, and his family. Slowly and steadily, Niot progressed to the point where he became an eager student and one able to joke about his special needs. In the end, he completed the full battery of Israel's high school graduation exams, receiving one of the highest scores in his class.

After high school, Niot enlisted in the IDF, successfully completing the Golani Brigade's grueling training course in the spring of 2011. After celebrating the Passover Seder with his family, he went to Eilat with three friends to engage in one of his hobbies, scuba diving. A mishap occurred and Niot died on April 23, 2011 (19 Nissan 5761) at the age of 20.

Help other teenagers benefit from Niot's experience

Niot's family, in partnership with the Society for Advancement of Education, Jerusalem (SAE), is using Niot's example to help other teenagers with learning disabilities.

The Niot Project is creating a comprehensive model to enable students, parents and school staff to work together effectively to improve the scholastic performance and emotional resilience of teenagers with learning disabilities. The model is being implemented at the eight Israeli high school and boarding school campuses operated by SAE, among them "Dror", Niot's former high school. At a later stage it will be offered to other Israeli high schools.

Project goals

- To improve the overall scholastic performance and emotional resilience of learning disabled students.
- To provide parents, schoolteachers, and boarding school staff with educational tools and methods that will make them more sensitive and effective in their interactions with learning disabled teens.
- To create an administrative structure in each institution that can effectively track the needs and progress of students as they progress through secondary school, with the flexibility needed to tailor solutions to individual needs.
- To honor the life and learning of Niot Watzman (z"l)

Remembering Niot

Project participants and their parents will be made aware of Niot's personal journey to scholastic success as a way of motivating them to overcome their own struggles with learning difficulties.

Project Objectives

- To ensure that teenagers with learning disabilities receive all the adjustments, support and testing offered by the Israeli Ministry of Education.
- To enable round-the-clock assistance for learning disabled teens in SAE boarding schools and high schools by providing intensive professional training for staff members.
- To reduce the stress and financial strain experienced by families of learning disabled teenagers by subsidizing diagnostic testing and through professional counseling.

Who will benefit from the Niot Project?

Of the 2,000 youth learning on SAE campuses, approximately 600 have been identified as struggling with a learning difficulty or disability.

The Niot Project targets teenagers aged 13-18 in all eight high schools and boarding schools operated by SAE, and the school staff. These schools attract youth from disadvantaged communities across Israel's geographic periphery, and are located in Jerusalem, Kfar Saba, and Netanya.



Your support will enable the Niot Project to offer the following services

- Advanced level psycho-didactic testing for teenagers who require a detailed mapping of their learning difficulties, beyond what is funded by the public education system. SAE staff will then translate these diagnoses into a comprehensive plan, tailored to the specific needs of each student.
- Workshops to help students reduce test anxiety, teach them effective study techniques, and small-group and individual tutoring when needed.
- Professional counseling and support for parents so that they will be empowered to create a supportive home environment for learning disabled children.
- Teacher training programs to enable early detection and interventions that will help students succeed in regular classroom settings.

About the Society for Advancement of Education, Jerusalem (SAE)

SAE is a non-profit organization empowering youth from disadvantaged communities in Israel to attain distinction in all their social, educational and leadership endeavors. SAE reaches over 15,000 youth every day through a network of high schools, residential education campuses and national projects. The primary beneficiaries of SAE's work include children from outlying areas in the economic and geographic periphery of Israel, Ethiopian-Israeli youth, and teenagers from Jewish communities across the world. SAE is governed by a Board of nine volunteers – six of whom are graduates of SAE schools.

How to make your contribution:

Online: Secure online donations can be made via the SAE website:
www.kidum-edu.org.il/en/donate1

Israel:

Tax-deductible donations may be made by mailing checks made out directly to the Society for Advancement of Education, together with a cover note indicating that the donation is for the Niot Project:

The Society for Advancement of Education, Jerusalem (SAE)
PO Box 16252, Jerusalem 91162

USA:

Donations in US dollars, tax deductible in the United States, may be made by sending a check made out to PEF-Israel Endowment Funds Inc. with a cover letter designating the contribution for The Niot Project at The Society for the Advancement of Education, Jerusalem (SAE).

PEF: Israel Endowment Funds Inc.
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האגודה לקידום החינוך, ירושלים (ע"ר)

The Society for Advancement of Education

