

# HEART OF BENJAMIN SPECIAL NEEDS BUILDING PROJECT

**T**he Heart of Benjamin Special Needs Program was established in 1998 to assist special needs children and their families, living in the 35 rural communities of the Benjamin Region, overcome a myriad of educational and social challenges. **The program was initiated by parents of children suffering from a variety of disabilities, as well as chronic and genetic diseases.** These include Down and Williams syndrome, brain damage, paralysis and retardation.

The Benjamin Region begins just north of Jerusalem, and includes the modern day communities of Ofra, Talmon, Dolev, Kochav Yaacov, Psagot and Neve Zuf. These are small communities and no one community is capable of providing services for their handicapped children. These children are usually bussed to special schools in Jerusalem or Tel-Aviv during the morning hours, but the after-school hours and weekends present a formidable challenge for these children and their families.

**Many of the children require constant care. Others are more independent, but their overall development and well-being is dependent upon their receiving appropriate stimulation throughout the day.**

**The "Heart of Benjamin" program currently operates on the campus of the Ofra Regional High School, primarily in temporary facilities and outdoors.** High school students volunteer to work with the children and compliment the professional staff of recreational therapists, occupational

therapists and other special education professionals. Watching these children arrive each day on the special transport is a blessing in and of itself – the happy faces, the smiles that reach from ear to ear. These children love coming to Heart of Benjamin because they, in turn, are loved and cared for so deeply. And parents are thrilled with the program as it provides them with valuable hours to work or to care for their other children, a break from the incredible burden of caring for a special child. But it also provides their special children with much needed therapy and recreation, enabling them to grow and develop in a way they never would if left at home during those afternoon hours.



**The current facilities are small and woefully inadequate, consisting primarily of old mobile homes and renovated shacks. Heart of Benjamin has recently embarked on a capital campaign to build a permanent structure that will include two wings – a day center for the physically**

**handicapped and a recreation center for the mentally handicapped.** The Government of Israel has already agreed to allocate funds for this project and funds have also been raised from a number of private donors. We need your help to complete the project.

Your donation to Heart of Benjamin's new facility will enable the handicapped children in a rural area in Israel to receive the very best in after-school enrichment and care despite their distance from the larger urban areas. With your help, we can keep so many special children in Benjamin smiling.

# PROJECT SUMMARY HEART OF BENJAMIN SPECIAL NEEDS BUILDING

- The facilities that the Heart of Benjamin Project uses are dilapidated mobile homes and shacks located at the Ofra Regional School
- The Heart of Benjamin Program desperately needs facilities that are in good repair and are able to accommodate the special needs children who use the facility.
- Although the Israeli government and a few private donors have given to this project, more help is needed.



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## Project Budget

<b>Construction of the Entire Facility</b> .....	<b>\$1,990,000</b>
<b>Physically Handicapped Wing</b> .....	<b>1,630,000</b>
<b>Mentally Handicapped Wing</b> .....	<b>360,000</b>
<b>Government Participation</b> .....	<b>-600,000</b>
<b>Private Funding</b> .....	<b>-730,000</b>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS REQUIRED:</b> .....	<b>\$660,000</b>

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Or mail a check with the project name in the memo to:  
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