



THE K.E.S.H.E.R. SCHOOL PROGRAM (Kids Enriched by Schools Helping Enhance Relationships)

Overview:

The KESHER School Program was launched in the fall of 2005 to help educators respond to the changing needs of students in the yeshiva system. It began in one elementary school. As our pilot-program grew, we responded to requests by elementary, middle, and high schools for both boys and girls, from modern orthodox, *Litvish and Chassidish* chadorim.

After a preliminary 90-minute orientation for faculty and administration, a KESHER provider becomes available weekly during school hours to work one-on-one with *hanhala* members, *rebbeim*, and teachers. KESHER is currently (Feb '07) serving 12 schools in the United States with services provided by a local professional or via videoconferencing.

Since KESHER's inception, the program has progressed to focus both on the needs of students, as well as those of the teachers. In every class there is a handful of children who come to school with poor social skills and an inability to cooperate with teachers and friends. Many children come to school not knowing how to resolve conflicts -- resulting in disagreements which sometimes escalate into heated arguments. Children seek more attention and nurturing than they are getting elsewhere, and they want it from their teachers -- placing more responsibility on our schools than ever before. Teachers may sometimes come to school with outside stresses which allow these children to "press their buttons" and make the classroom unpleasant or ineffective. The KESHER Program helps *rebbeim* and *moros* introduce skills to individual children within their classroom, helping them to manage classroom stress and frustration more effectively. It provides staff with an opportunity to "check" their performance with an impartial, confidential third-party, and recharge their own emotional batteries. We come back every week throughout the school year because the children keep growing and classroom needs are ever-changing.

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Project Y.E.S. is a division of
Agudath Israel of America
Community Services, Inc.
and is dedicated in memory of
R' Shloime Horowitz ז"ל.

Our telephone services hotline
is dedicated by Reuvain and
Mordechai Eissenberg and
Raizel Harrar ז"ל their parents
and ר' פנחס בן ראובן
מרת זאווטיל בת ר' מרדכי.

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