

February 25, 2020

Dear Geoffrey and our friends at PEF-

Although we have not finished the first quarter of 2020, I wanted to share with you all some exciting events and achievements at AVIsrael.

AVIsrael is celebrating 25 years of activity this year, and, as someone here from the beginning, I look at these events with pride. We have really come a long way, bringing the message that deaf children CAN learn to listen and to speak and live as equals in the hearing world.

We recently completed an 11 week course for speech therapists on “Rehabilitation of Toddlers with Hearing Loss” that was sponsored by the Ministry of Welfare. As the government ministry



responsible for children (0-age 3) we have been working with the Ministry for many years. And yet, the recognition by the Ministry of the AV approach as the recommended strategy to be applied when working with children with hearing loss today – this was a milestone. The feedback from the participants was overwhelmingly outstanding and we are now in preparation for the Advance Professional Training programme. We are offering a small group of professionals from the north of Israel the opportunity to delve deeper and apply the theoretical knowledge that they acquired in the course through mentoring by our AV Israel staff who are internationally certified Listening and Spoken Language Specialists of the AGBell Academy. We are proposing a year-long training course with hands on guided therapy sessions and group sessions for sharing cases and creating a cadre of AV professionals.

It has long been our interest to spread the AV approach to the corners of the country so that every family that seeks the AV approach for the rehabilitation of their child with hearing loss can access to a professional with this AV specialty. We are focusing on the north at this time as a pilot for increasing the number of AV specialists in the hope that this will become a model that can be emulated in other parts of the country.

On March 20, a group of over 40 members of our extended AVIsrael family will be participating in the Jerusalem Marathon. This is our first venture into this event- it is a great opportunity to raise awareness as we will all be wearing AVIsrael Tshirts, do some fundraising, and for me, get into shape!!! We are working hard on the PR and fundraising fronts as this is the way to support our excellent project.

I thought that you may also be interested to know that I have been selected to join the Advisory Board of the Commission for the Rights of People with Disabilities of the Ministry of Justice, representing the population with whom I work towards fulfilling the goals of the law on the subject of accessibility and inclusion. This three year term is an exciting opportunity to try and move our agenda forward in the government. I confess that we have not been successful enough to date in getting the recognition and government funding that we deserve. I am hoping that change will be possible through this new channel.

After twenty five years of activity, we are beginning a strategic process to determine the directions of AVIsrael for the coming years. This is an opportunity to assess what we have done, recognize our accomplishments and prepare to face the future challenges. I for one am excited by the prospects of discovering our strengths and the areas of contribution for the future.

I thank you again for your support of our work and hope to be able to report to you many more exciting achievements soon.

Toda Raba and Happy Purim!!

Best-



Elaine
AVIsrael Executive Director

