



Helping Hands

The Israeli Public Forum for Youth Villages and Boarding Schools for Children at Risk was founded in 2012 to find ways to better respond to the needs of at-risk youth in boarding schools and youth villages, and to help them successfully integrate into Israeli society.

Israel's youth villages and boarding schools currently serve approximately 22,000 children aged 5-18. Originally planned to help new immigrants integrate into Israeli society, these facilities now cater mainly to disadvantaged children and youth with diverse needs.

The Forum's members include founder Avi Naor (Oran Foundation), Benny Levin, Einat Reich, Yehuda Zisapel (RAD-Binat Group), The Jewish Agency for Israel, The Fellowship Foundation, Rashi Foundation, Association Kiriath Yearim Switzerland, Boaz Dotan, Fisher Foundation, Louis Factor and Joel Koschitzky.

Forum members have partnered with representatives from youth village and boarding schools, Israel's Education and Social Affairs and Social Services ministries, as well as professionals and academic experts. During 2012-13, the Forum helped increase partnerships and resources for these facilities and expanded and strengthened their management and professional capabilities. The Forum also met with Knesset members and government ministers to press for greater funding.

To build partnerships, the Forum attempted to build a network between youth treatment facilities and the nonprofit sector, philanthropists and various influencers within Israel's civil society. The Forum also tackled the idea of creating criteria for professional team recruitment and training, in order to best meet the needs of youth village and boarding school residents.