Volunteering Opportunities in Israel

“All Israelites are responsible for one another”, Talmud Sanhedrin 27b

The concept of helping others and making a difference to other people’s lives is found in countless Jewish sources including the Talmud as quoted above. We have many volunteering opportunities within our US Community Cares groups and Project Chesed so if you are looking to volunteer and make a difference please do be in touch with us via email [1].

Alternatively, have you thought about volunteering when you are next on holiday in Israel? Even if you already volunteer here in Britain, how about enhancing your next trip to Israel with some voluntary work?

These charities below will hopefully inspire you to roll up your sleeves and get stuck in! These charities are looking for YOUR help. They all welcome volunteers from abroad to help out whether it be for an hour, a morning, afternoon, week, month, 6 months….the opportunities are endless. If you’re planning a trip to Israel, why not look into one of these charities. Whichever one you choose, the experience will definitely provide you with an authentic taste of real life in Israel and enable you to volunteer with inspirational and amazing people.

Short Term Volunteering:


Aleh provides 650 severely disabled children & young adults in Israel with high-level medical and rehabilitative care in four residential facilities. Aleh is their home and family – 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Aleh offers many rewarding volunteer opportunities for families, individuals and groups.

ALEH has a multitude of volunteer opportunities to meet each person’s skills, time availability, and preferences. If you are able to commit yourself to a month or more, you can volunteer hands-on here in Israel and really get to know and love one of our children. For a one-time experience, you can participate in our organized Volunteer Day, paint a classroom or help in the gardens. You can also join dozens of past volunteers who are ambassadors for ALEH in their respective cities all across the world. If you are here in Israel and have time to visit any of our facilities on a steady basis, the staff can assign you to a specific child as a big brother/sister. There are also opportunities for groups and schools to help out at one-time special events and programs.

Contact info@aleh.org [3] to discover the opportunities that suit you best – and get ready to change lives! Unfortunately, short-term volunteering does not work out best for the children, since it takes time for them to “warm up” to the new volunteer. Therefore, they can only accept hands-on volunteers if you are able to commit to a month or more.

In Israel

Visiting Israel? ALEH offers many rewarding volunteering opportunities.

ALEH's kids love having visitors. You can accompany our children on local trips and outings, or join them in celebrating a holiday. Music, singing, dancing, shows and crafting are just some of the ways you can bring joy to our kids during a visit to one of the ALEH facilities.

To see how you can make a difference in the life of a child, contact dov@aleh-israel.org [4]. We'll help you customize the perfect activity for your family or group!
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Celebrate your Bar/Bat Mitzvah in the Holy Land of Israel! What a special and meaningful way to embark on your journey into Jewish adulthood. While you are here, transform your trip into an experience that will have a real impact on your life and the lives of others by including ALEH in your Israel celebration.

ALEH’s children love visitors, especially kids with lots of spirit! Arrange a visit to ALEH with your family and friends and participate in an activity that spreads joy and love.

Some great ideas:

- **Put on a Concert** - Join a music therapy activity at ALEH and watch the children rock!
- **Customize your favorite activity to include ALEH's kids** - Arts & crafts, games, a show, music, movies, or whatever you like – contact us and we’ll be glad to help make it happen.
- **Have your ALEH “twin” join you at your Kotel celebration** - Enhance your Kotel experience by having an ALEH Bar/Bat Mitzvah child join you there!

  - Volunteers are an intrinsic part of the ALEH family, enriching the lives of ALEH’s children with their enthusiasm and love. And our hundreds of volunteers can attest to the difference the children have made in their lives, impacting them immeasurably.

2) **Meir Panim**

According to the latest poverty report from the National Insurance Institute in December 2013, there are 1,754,700 people living below the poverty line; among them are 817,200 children! One out of every three Israeli children is suffering from hunger, one in four people are living in poverty, and one in five of the elderly are in need of immediate assistance.

Meir Panim provides essential food and social programmes to help in the short-term and provide long-term solutions to break them out of poverty to become self-sufficient.

Every week, hundreds of children, teenagers, singles, young adults and older guests - caring people just like you! - are making their trip to Israel even more meaningful by adding a visit to a 'Meir Panim Free Restaurant' or 'Power of Giving Centre' to their itineraries. Make arrangements today for yourself or a group of any size to visit Meir Panim. Visits usually consist of preparing food, cutting and peeling vegetables, followed by serving diners at one of Meir Panim's 14 restaurants. You'll then sit down for a presentation and a short discussion. Often visitors like to sit down alongside the diners and enjoy a meal, getting a real feel of the place. The experience is guaranteed to enrich your trip and your life. Call 1-877-736-6283 or send an email to volunteer@meirpanim.org [5]. With 30 locations throughout the country, there's a Meir Panim branch not far away from where you'll be staying.

Meir Panim welcomes the whole family to come and volunteer at its branches.

Meir Panim branches: Northern Israel-Accor, Tsfat, Hatzor, Tiberias, Yokneam, Haifa, Or Akiva, Migdal Ha Emek, and Netanya. Central Israel - Jerusalem, Ashkelon, Kiryat Arbah, Sderot, Kiryat Gat and Kiryat Malachi. Southern Israel-Dimona, Be'er Sheva and Yerucham

3) **Ezrat Avot**

Ezrat Avot's mission is to provide the services, resources and education necessary for Israel's elderly to age in the comfort and dignity of their own homes and communities. Ezrat Avot have volunteering opportunities every day of the week, for individuals and groups, adults and children. Individual volunteers can go see the work Ezrat Avot are doing, and volunteer for as little as a couple of hours. Groups are invited to meet the director, Naomi Sharabi, to hear about the history of the organisation and help prepare hot meals or food packages for distribution. Students coming to Israel who are interested in volunteering or interning at Ezrat Avot are also welcome. Email info@ezratavot.org [6] to arrange a convenient time to volunteer.
Leket Israel, the National Food Bank, is the leading food rescue organization in Israel. Unique among all other organizations that serve the poor in Israel and food banks worldwide, Leket Israel’s sole focus is rescuing healthy, surplus food and delivering it to those in need through partner nonprofit organizations.

Each year, with the help of over 47,000 volunteers and a staff of over 100, Leket Israel rescues about 2.2 million hot meals and over 15,500 tonnes of fresh, quality produce to distribute to our 200 non-profit partners all over the country, serving 175,000+ recipients in need, on a weekly basis.

Get Involved! How can you help create an Israel where all surplus, nutritious food is rescued and directed to those who need it?

At Leket Israel, we welcome volunteers of all ages to choose from a variety of volunteer opportunities that we tailor to your needs, level of ability, and location in the country.

- **Picking produce for the needy:** Join Leket’s gleaning initiative Harvest Helpers to help pick fruits and vegetables for distribution to Israel’s needy. This takes place at two locations:
  - Moshav Nahalal in Emek Yizrael in the north
  - HaTov VeHametiv fields in central Israel
  - To register [fill out this form](#), and a Leket staff member will be in touch with you.

  **Sorting and Packing Rescued Produce for Distribution:** Volunteer and tour Leket Israel’s Logistics Center in Ra’anana, the heart of the organization, and help sort and pack produce in preparation for distribution to the non-profit organizations that Leket serves.

  To volunteer [fill out this form, and a Leket staff member will be in touch with you.](#)

- **Celebrating a Bar or Bat-Mitzvah, wedding or other special occasion?** Interested in engaging in a personalized hands-on project, or having your guests donate to charity in lieu of gifts for your simcha?

  Create your own [personalized charity registry online](#) to support Leket Israel and help feed Israel’s needy today. To open your own registry, contact shira@leket.org.

  Customize your own hands-on project for Leket Israel. Contact elena@leket.us to get started today.
Celebrating your wedding in Israel? The leftovers from your wedding can help feed the needy. At no cost and no effort from you, Leket can collect the leftover food from your wedding the following morning, for distribution to needy populations in Israel. Learn more about our wedding initiative Match Made in Heaven [15].

- **Visiting Israel in honour of a special occasion?** Leket Israel offers several hands-on activities, and special bnei mitzvah programs as part of these activities. If celebrating a Bar or Bat Mitzvah, contact jessica@leket.org [16] to learn more.

Would you like to speak to someone immediately? Please contact Leket Israel offices at: +972-9-744-1757, info@leket.org [17] or volunteer@leket.org [18].

5) Yad Ezra V'Shulamit

Yad Ezra V'Shulamit helps thousands of people who are unable to help themselves.

Yad Ezra V'Shulamit packs thousands of food baskets every week and is always looking for help. You could help Yad Ezra V'shulamit to pack its food baskets on Wednesday and Thursday mornings from 9 am – 2 pm. Contact Chassia at 073-217-9241 or feedisrael@yadezra.net [19]. Both groups and individuals are welcome. If you will be visiting in a group, it is best to call on 00972-2-540-0058 (from the UK) or 02-540-0058 (in Israel) to reserve.

Yad Ezra V'Shulamit welcomes families with children of all ages to come and volunteer. They’ve even been known to watch a baby whilst the rest of the family is packing baskets!

20 Yoel St., Jerusalem, Israel

6) Pitchon Lev

Pitchon Lev is a non-profit and a-political Israeli humanitarian umbrella organisation for the underprivileged sectors in Israel. Pitchon-Lev activates four aid centres: in Rishon Le Zion, Or-Yehuda and Tel Aviv and in Carmiel (northern region). The centres distribute food products, clothing and footwear to underprivileged families. You could help out:

You may volunteer at one of the “Touching the Horizon” Educational and Empowerment program centers. Please click the following link to fill out your personal information, and one of their representatives will contact you. http://pitchonlev.org.il/en/acontact%20us/ [20]

You may volunteer to pack baskets and distribute them at the Pitchon Lev’s National Aid Centers. Please click the following link to fill out your personal information, and one of their representatives will contact you. http://pitchonlev.org.il/en/acontact%20us/ [20]

More information about Pitchon lev can be found on their website at www.pitchonlev.org.il [21].

12 Hachoma Street, Rishon LeTzion Industrial Area 756551 Israel

Volunteering with your kids?

Child Friendly Organisations include:

- Aleh
- Ezrat Avot
- Yad Ezra V'Shulamit
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- Pitchon Lev (children must be aged 13 years and up)
- Yad Sara (children must be aged 12 years and up)

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Long-Term Volunteering

If you plan to stay in Israel for an extended period there are plenty of organisations who would really appreciate a regular volunteer (including the ones above). You could also apply to participate in a special volunteer programme. Below are some of the organisations you might be interested in:

1) Yad Sara [22]

Yad Sarah, the largest voluntary organization in Israel, provides a spectrum of free or nominal cost services designed to make life easier for sick, disabled and elderly people and their families. Yad Sarah’s mission is to keep the ill and the elderly in their homes and out of institutions as long as possible. Home care in the natural environment of the family is most conducive to healthy recuperation, both physically and emotionally. Yad Sarah has 103 branches throughout Israel run by more than 6,000 volunteers.

Israeli Residents

Men and women from all walks of life, young and old, rich and poor, from every religious and ethnic background, give of their time to volunteer at Yad Sarah, whether for two hours a week, or on a daily basis, or anything in between. The variety of things that Yad Sarah does, the spectrum of help we give, lets each person who wants to help - find an area of volunteering that suits him or her.

Yad Sarah gives its volunteers ongoing training, guidance and a feeling of belonging to one big, warm family. There are also special social and cultural activities for volunteers. Thousands of people find challenge, satisfaction and pleasure in volunteering at Yad Sarah.

Want to volunteer? Walk into the Yad Sarah branch nearest your home, or call the Department of Volunteer Coordination at 02-644-4418. Or email volunteering@yadsarah.org.il [23] for more information.

Visitors to Israel

If you are visiting Israel for extended period and would like to volunteer, you can talk to Yad Sarah about the possibilities. Please be aware that the minimal commitment required for overseas volunteers is three months, elementary Hebrew skills are essential, and that Yad Sarah does not provide accommodation.

Contact Yad Sara’s Department of Volunteer Coordination at 00972-2-644-4411 or email volunteering@yadsarah.org.il [23] for more information.

2) Ezer Mizion [24]

Ezer Mizion, the Israel Health Support Organization, offers an extensive range of medical and social support services to help Israel's sick, disabled, elderly and underprivileged populations. Since its founding in 1979, Ezer Mizion has grown to become one of the largest non-profit organizations in Israel, benefiting over 650,000 people every year.

Ezer Mizion volunteers can:

- Drive disabled and elderly people to medical appointments and other destinations
- Prepare and distribute meals, sandwiches and snacks to families of hospitalized patients
- Visit sick, disabled and elderly people at home and in the hospital and offer assistance,
companionship and comfort
- Act as one-on-one counsellors for special-needs children in Ezer Mizion's summer camps and year-round activity clubs
- Donate blood to Ezer Mizion's blood bank and are available to give blood at any time
- Help promote health and fitness among the elderly . . . and much more.

Ezer Mizion, Yaakov Fried Building
5 Rabinov Street, Bnei Brak 51561, Israel
Tel: +972 3 614 4572
e-mail: rdd@ezermizon.org
Israel Amuta: 580079978

3) **KEDMA** [26]

KEDMA is an International student organization based in Jerusalem, with branches in Israel and the US. They work with university and yeshiva students, aiming to assist disadvantaged communities in Israel and to promote the concept of social justice and tikkun olam.

Contact KEDMA for more information on 00 972-2-500-3303 or email info@kedma.org [27]

4) **One Family Fund** [28]

One Family provides direct financial, legal, and emotional assistance to victims of terrorism in Israel.

Volunteers can work with us in our Jerusalem office or travel the country visiting victims of terror to show them they are not alone; Be a part of our youth camps or participate in one of our therapeutic retreats; Sit in on a workshop or support group and see how we help victims move past their tragedies. If you enjoy writing, you could help tell the stories of terror victims to the world.

*If you would like to volunteer with One Family in Israel, we want to make the best use of your talents to help victims of terror. We ask that you Download and Complete the volunteer questionnaire that you can request by email to info@onefamilyfund.org [29].*

5) **Yad B’Yad Association** [30]

Yad B’Yad believes that all children deserve the nurturing and love that can ensure a strong foundation for a meaningful life and an opportunity to realize their full potential. Unfortunately, there are still far too many children in Israel whose families are unable to provide this all-important environment and Yad B’Yad’s programmes aim to fill this gap.


6) **Zichron Menachem** [31]

Zichron Menachem is an Israeli Association for the support of children with cancer and their families. Children hospitalized in medical institutions throughout Israel benefit from Zichron Menachem’s broad-based activities and services.

As a large-scale organization with many departments and projects, Zichron Menachem needs volunteers aged 18 and over.

Volunteering activities include:
- Driving children with cancer and their siblings to and from Zichron Menachem’s Day Center once a
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- Teaching/tutoring: private or small-group classes; help students prepare homework and study for tests.
- Extracurricular activities: Leading professional enrichment series in a variety of fields.
- Participate in the national Big Brother/Big Sister Project to assist a child whose sibling is sick with cancer.

Zichron Menachem also needs volunteers with specific skills:
- Therapists: Offer therapy sessions to children with cancer, their siblings or parents.
- Chefs: Offer culinary series to parents, children, and volunteers.
- Hairdressers and wig stylists: Wash and set wigs worn by children with cancer.
- Beautician and cosmeticians: Treat an exhausted mother who has been sitting at her child’s bedside for weeks.

Indulge mothers and young women with cancer at a Zichron Menachem Special Event.
- Series instructors (art, enrichment, body and soul): Offer one-time series and workshops to parents or sick children. Series and lectures may be on any given topic.
- Alternative medicine practitioners: Offer supportive therapy sessions to children with cancer and relaxation technique series to exhausted parents.

**Driver with 4X4 vehicle**

- Drive a young cancer patient and/or his family on a Zichron Menachem field day.
- Volunteer applicants who complete the screening process are requested to present a Certificate of Good Character from the Police Department. Documents are issued at the Moriah Police Station in Talpiyot and in the Russian Compound Police Station. To receive the document, you will need to purchase a 30 NIS revenue stamp at a branch of the Israel Post Office and approach the CCS counter (Center of Citizen’s Services) between 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. The document will be issued immediately.
  - Contact Zichron Menachem to volunteer:


Zichron Menachem
23 Harav Frank Street Bayit Vegan, Jerusalem 91163
Tel: 02-6433-001
info@zichron.org [33]

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Still haven’t found a volunteering opportunity that’s quite right for you? Ruach Tova connects volunteers to organisations that need volunteers. Ruach Tova can help to tailor your interests to volunteering activities. Contact their office in Tel Aviv for more information.

Ruach Tova [34]
Volunteer Call Center +972-3-5436888  email: info@ruachtyova.org

- Other worthwhile activities to try out in Israel:

Holon Children’s Museum:
Feel what it's like to perform normal every-day activities as a blind person (walk around inside and outside, on a boat, order from a bar) at the "Dialogue in the Darkness" sensory exhibit.

1 Mifratz Shlomo St., Peres Park, Holon, Israel
+972.3.650.3005

Invitation to Silence

An experience that will leave you speechless

What happens to our communication skills when our hearing is impaired?

The exhibit opens a window to a world of alternative communication. The exhibit guides, who are deaf and hearing impaired, accompany visitors on an active, experience filled journey to the world of silence where people communicate in a variety of non-spoken languages (without sound): “hearing with your eyes”, “talking with your hands” and more...

The tour is intended for adults and children aged 9 and above.

Children up to 12 require an adult escort. The tour is approximately 75 minutes long and is held in groups of 12. The tour starts every 15 minutes.

Opening hours:

Sunday-Friday: 09:00-13:00
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday also between 16:00-20:00

The Tours are guided and require advanced reservations. Tel: 03-6503000 extension 3 or 03-6503005

http://www.childrensmuseum.org.il/

Na Laga’at Centre

The "Nalaga’at“ Center, located at the Jaffa port in Tel Aviv, was founded by the "Nalaga’at“ non-profit organization and opened its gates to the public in December 2007.

The Center is comprised of the "Nalaga’at" Theater, home to the Deaf-blind Acting Ensemble; Café Kapish, with its deaf waiters and BlackOut, the pitch-black restaurant with its staff of blind waiters.

The "Nalaga’at" Center currently employs some 70 people, most of whom are deaf, blind or deaf-blind.

Retsif Haaliya Hashniya, Jaffa Port
Box 6, Tel Aviv 68031, Israel
+972 (0)3 633 08 08
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http://www.nalagaat.org.il

Emunah children's Home, Afulah:

Located in the busy center of Afula is an oasis of caring, an island of serenity and stability for some of Israel’s most needy children, the Emunah Sarah Herzog Children's Center. The Center, a residential and afterschool therapeutic day care facility serving 180 children at risk aged 5-18, was established in 1949 to provide a haven for young holocaust survivors.

Emunah Sarah Herzog Children's Center
50 Yehoshua Hankin St., P. O. Box 2022
Afula 18255
ISRAEL
Tel: 04-6069801 Fax: 04-6596616
e-mail: emafula@gmail.com

Emunah Sarah Herzog Children's Center
Sarah Herzog Children's Center - Afula

This EMUNAH Children’s home in Afula is home to 140 children who come from dysfunctional families, families where the parents are suffering mental illness, or situations where the children have been abused, neglected and abandoned. The children are brought to Afula to help them overcome their past, and move on to a bright and productive future. Through a warm, stable environment, unconditional love, and intensive therapy, Afula has achieved tremendous success in turning around the lives of these children.

50 Yehoshua Hankin St. • P. O. Box 2022 Afula • 18255 ISRAEL
Tel: 972 - 4 - 6522463 • Fax: 972 - 4 -6596616

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Links
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[4] mailto:dov@aleh-israel.org
[5] mailto:volunteer@meirpanim.org
[6] mailto:info@ezratavot.org
[13] mailto:shira@leket.org
[14] mailto:elena@leket.us
[16] mailto:jessica@leket.org
[17] mailto:info@leket.org
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[18] mailto:volunteer@leket.org
[19] mailto:feedisrael@yadezra.net
[23] mailto:volunteering@yadsarah.org.il
[25] mailto:rdd@ezermizion.org
[27] mailto:info@kedma.org
[29] mailto:info@onefamilyfund.org
[33] mailto:info@zichron.org
[34] http://www.ruachtova.org/
[35] mailto:info@ruachtova.org
[37] http://www.nalagaat.org.il/
[38] http://www.emunahafula.org/
[39] mailto:emafula@gmail.com