



NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2023

YOU DID IT!

526 students
513 mentors

Israel Connect has grown to be the **LARGEST** external provider of special education services to Israel's Ministry of Education

YOU DID IT!

2,200 + hours
of one-on-one sessions a month

A Message from Dr. Tziona Levi

First and foremost, I would like to acknowledge the immense impact you have made on our students' educational journey. Your guidance and expertise have fostered an environment where our students feel inspired to learn and grow. The enthusiasm you have brought to each tutoring session has not only enhanced their language skills but has also ignited their passion for knowledge. Through your guidance, you have empowered them to reach new heights and embrace the endless possibilities of education. Your dedication has not only transformed their academic performance but has also instilled in them the importance of perseverance and hard work. Your contributions as a mentor will undoubtedly impact their lives, shaping them into confident, well-rounded individuals.

Education is the foundation upon which a bright and prosperous future is built. Your selfless commitment to the development of our students is a testament to your understanding of the vital role education plays in shaping the next generation, the State of Israel, and the entire nation as a whole. By investing your time and knowledge, you have not only enriched the life of one individual student, but you have contributed to the advancement of our entire country.

A Message from Dr. Ronen Hoffman

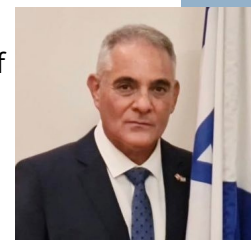
In Jewish tradition there is a phrase that states 'Kol Yisrael Areivim Zeh L'Zeh' that means all of Israel are responsible for and interconnected to each other. Your contribution as a volunteer has increased that interconnectivity and has brought the people of Israel closer together.

As a mentor, you have let your actions be guided with understanding and kindness, fostering valuable connections and respectful dialogue. Your passion and commitment to your work have enriched the life of someone else; someone you have never met and who may be different from you in so many ways. You have taken your time to empower a child with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in an increasingly complex world.

As the Ambassador of the State of Israel to Canada, I am so grateful for individuals like you who have given your time, knowledge and experience to positively impact the lives of young Israelis. Through your volunteer work with Israel Connect, you have helped to bridge the gap between the Jewish community in Israel and the Diaspora.



Dr. Tziona Levi
Director of English Language Education
Israel's Ministry of Education



Dr. Ronen Hoffman,
Ambassador of Israel to Canada



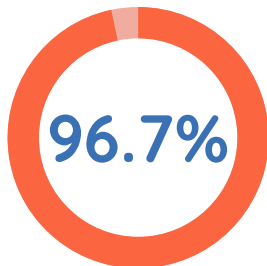
Sarah Gordon
Founding CEO,
Israel Connect

A Message from Sarah Gordon

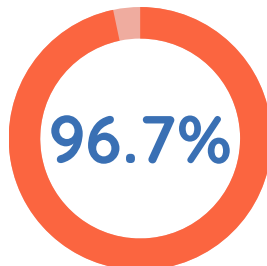
Over these last few years, we have all been thinking a little more about systemic barriers and how they can impact a child's future. We have seen clearly how not being proficient in English can cause large lifelong problems for a student. In Israel, upper education and business are primarily conducted in English. Without mastery of the language, individuals are locked out of the global economy that is also conducted in English. "English privilege", as it has been coined, is a worldwide problem. Thanks to your time and devotion, this is slowly no longer proving to be true in Israel.

Israel Connect is now the largest external provider of services to Israel's Ministry of Education, slowly removing the most significant barrier to social and economic mobility. Your weekly support has given your student the immersion needed to learn a language and an experience they could not receive in their large classrooms. One student at a time, and one mentor at a time, we have become quite a team! At Israel Connect, we believe nothing is more important for the world's future than education. No task is more important than removing systemic barriers that leave hundreds of children behind. Thank you for bringing this ideal into reality.

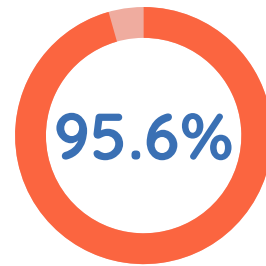
The outstanding feedback from students speaks volumes!



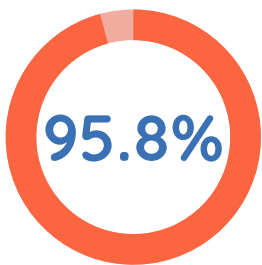
of students felt their mentor cared about their success



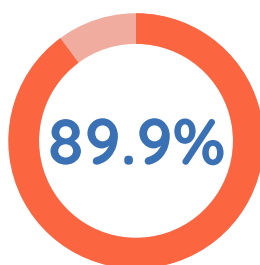
of students would recommend the program



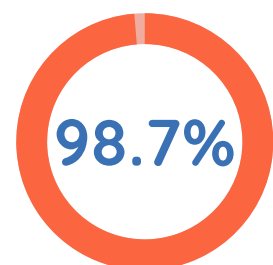
of students felt the program was high quality



of students felt their English improved



of students felt more comfortable speaking English



of students liked their mentor

Spotlight on a Mentor and Student

From one of our mentors, Debbie Rozenberg



Having retired after a fulfilling 28-year teaching career, I was not ready to let go of my passion for education. Little did I know that this program would not only benefit the students I worked with but also provide me with a profoundly positive experience.

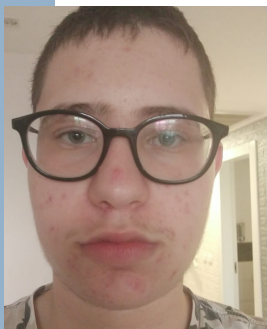
Creating a Safe Space for Growth:

By engaging with these students, I hoped to enhance their vocabulary, improve their pronunciation, and most importantly, boost their confidence to speak English. It has been heartening to witness the transformation of these students, as they gradually shed their inhibitions and become more at ease with speaking English. I realized that even if they didn't possess extensive knowledge of the language, confidence played a crucial role in their progress. Encouraged by their willingness to practice and try, I focused on alleviating their fear of making mistakes. Emphasizing the low-stakes nature of our interactions, I assured them that their reading and speaking abilities were not being graded. This freedom allowed them to take risks and learn without the fear of judgment.

Nurturing a Supportive Environment:

Building their vocabulary was a priority, but it required patience and perseverance to make the students feel comfortable enough to make mistakes and ask for help. I pushed myself to ensure they comprehended the new words and concepts introduced during our sessions. Over time, their openness to feedback and eagerness to learn became apparent. This one-on-one engagement proved to be immensely valuable, particularly for those who were nervous or shy. Being able to contribute my knowledge and skills, even in retirement, gave me a sense of purpose and fulfillment.

Participating in the Israel Connect program has been an incredibly rewarding experience. By helping these students develop their language skills, gain confidence, and embrace the joy of learning, I have witnessed firsthand the positive impact of this initiative. Even in retirement, I find immense satisfaction in being able to make a difference and remain useful to others.



From Debbie's student, Michael Guralnik

My name is Michael Guralnik and I live in Yeshuv Nevei Menachem in Karnei Shomron. I am a 9th-grade middle school student. English has always been important to me, and I wanted to improve my confidence in speaking the language. Being naturally shy, conversing in English with others was a challenge for me. My mentor, Debbie Rozenberg has been a great help to me. Initially, I was extremely reserved and hesitant to speak up. However, as we continued our sessions, I started feeling more at ease. The program was not only educational but also enjoyable.

We had the opportunity to discuss personal topics, which made the experience even more engaging. In school, English classes focus heavily on grammar, which can be quite complex.

Participating in the Israel Connect program holds immense significance for me because I aspire to travel and work internationally in the future. I am aware that to pursue my interest in cybersecurity in high school, where I hope to specialize, I will need a high level of English proficiency. Devices used in cybersecurity operate with English-based operating systems, making language proficiency crucial in this field. Fortunately, my mentor's patience and dedication have been instrumental in my progress. Her ability to create a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere during our sessions has made the learning experience even more enjoyable. I highly recommend this unique program to others in my neighborhood as it not only teaches English effectively but also boosts confidence, leading to increased language usage and enhanced learning.