

The Unit for Learning from Success
and Ongoing Learning
in Human Services

INCLUSION OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN DAYCARE CENTERS IN ISRAEL – LEARNING FROM SUCCESS IN THE *FROM RISK TO OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM*

Editors: Jona Rosenfeld ✦ Miriam Gilat ✦ Orna Shemer

Conducted with the assistance of the Mandell L. and Madeleine H. Berman Foundation

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Dedicated to those working to create opportunities for children, parents and society

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Abstract

From Risk to Opportunity is a program that strives to include children with special needs into local mainstream daycare centers. The program is implemented in partnership with JDC-Ashalim, WIZO and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Services and is based on the principle that integrating children with special needs into a normative environment will improve the functioning and the quality of life not only of those with special needs, but also of the other children in the group.

The publication presents the success stories of directors and inspectors of educational and social services who played key roles in the program. These women participated in a group in which they learned from one another how each one contributes to the inclusion of children with special needs in the daycare centers. Each of the participants brought with her a story of her own experience of a success. In order to understand the action principles that contributed to the successful inclusion of the children, a process of Learning from Success, based on the method developed by the Learning from Success and Ongoing Collaborative Learning in Human Service Organizations Unit at Myers-JDC-Brookdale Institute, was conducted. The appendix presents two examples of methods of documentation that were used in the learning process.

The publication presents six success stories, which are presented according to the inquiry stages of the First Method of Learning from Success. Each story shows the context of the success, its products and its costs, and specifies the principles of action followed to achieve the success. The stories end by presenting the key principles of action identified as well as unresolved issues. In order to disseminate what had been learned, each of the participants took it upon herself to disseminate and implement the Method and the principles of integrating children with special needs in her own workplace. Thus, additional Learning from Success groups in this area opened up throughout the country facilitated by the participants.