

## Around Israel



The Chasdei Shmuel building in Har Chomah.



With Harav Ovadia Yosef, zt"l.

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Virginia. The Rav is planning to visit the United States next year.

Last year the Rav was invited to London, where he delivered *shiurim* in various *kollelim* and *batei medrash*.

Although the Rav travels extensively to deliver *shiurim*, he never asks for money.

"Last week the Rav asked me how much money has been spent on the *mosdos*, and I came to a rough estimate of NIS 5 million," says Rabbi Harush.

On hearing the amount, the Rav commented: "I don't have an idea how we had the money, it is pure *siyata diShmaya*."

Rabbi Yitzchak Harush asked the Rav why he doesn't collect for his *mosdos*.

"We have been taught that yeshivot aren't built with money, they are built with tears," the Rav replied. "We build with the heart, and if a person really wants to build a home for Hashem, *li hakesef v'li hazahav ne'um Hashem*, G-d says that all the silver

and gold is Mine. Hashem provides — as long as the person really and truly intends merely *kevod Hashem* and not his own honor."

### 'He Is Our Rebbe'

"The Rav is the same to us as an *Admor* in Chassidische communities," explains Rabbi Harush.

"We consult with him before taking any step in life, major or minor; businessmen ask his advice before clinching million dollar deals, families seek the Rav's guidance when buying an apartment, and no decision is made without first speaking with the Rav."

The Rav acts as *sandak* for the community's babies, who are often named after him, as is customary in Sephardi communities.

Just recently one of the community members came to the Rav with his 3-year-old son, asking the Rav if he remembered the *bris*. "The child is named Eyal, after the Rav," the father proudly declared.



Children of the Talmud Torah visit Harav Yitzchak Yosef to mark the end of the summer term.

## Making the Summer Work for You

If you don't feel guilty about needing to work during summer vacation, get in touch. You're going to be the speaker of the month at the Jerusalem Hub, and I'm offering you a free hot seat for the month of August!

If you have all your kids' vacation plans coordinated, everyone is happy and you don't need to rob a bank, lose your job or have any angst about juggling summer and work, send me your contact info — I'm nominating you for woman of the year!

A yearly conundrum, with a heavy price tag in terms of money, effort, unhappy little people and big people. What's a body to do?

Some countries are taking matters in hand by shortening the summer break. Nonprofits try to fill the gap. Teenagers see easy money opportunities. And we working moms need to find a balance that doesn't leave us with the short end of the stick no matter how we hold it.

So I reached out to some of the fantastic, got-it-all-together women at the Jerusalem Hub, and here is a compendium of ideas, out-of-the-box thinking and tips:

Rifky, a mother of 10, says that she makes it an intergenerational thing. Her

mother-in-law is always anxious to spend time with the grandkids. They sponsor a ticket to Israel for Bubby, plan one outdoor activity a week, she closes her eyes to the mess in the kitchen, and the results are hours of fun for Bubby and *eniklach*, memories that will last a lifetime and the gift of true peace of mind while she must keep her nose to the grindstone.

Leah, a mother of teens and little ones, goes the usual route of day camps for the kids, and morning jobs as counselors, etc., for the bigger ones. Afternoons are dedicated to a family project. Decided before the summer, the family chooses an area of focus, a skill to learn and practice or a goal they want to reach (one year learning various crafts, one year painting/updating their living room). With the older teens in charge, a set budget, specific goals, purchase items and schedule, everyone enjoys the satisfaction of a job well done. When the target is met by summer's end, Leah's family celebrates with a big-bash BBQ dinner.

Brocha, a grandmother, remembers her days as a young mother of boys — who thankfully have less summer vacation, at least here in Israel. *Bein Hazmanim* saw her take a long weekend with the family

for requisite family time, making sure to include beach/pool time, a major trip and special activity. For the rest of the intersession time, she and two friends with kids the same age traded off. Each took a one-week leave from work and ran a "day camp" for all the kids together. This way, no one took too much vacation, each family had together time at home and away, and "day camps" allowed for fun group activities not always possible just with the nuclear family.

Dina has a different approach. She has a bunch of teenage girls and has taught them to use the summer to build their future resumes. Long before the summer, she helps them identify areas that interest them. They work on getting their "resumes" out for volunteer or paid work in their chosen fields. One volunteers in a special-needs school — her help is greatly appreciated, and she is gaining valuable contacts and experience for that day in the not-too-distant future when she will want a real job in the field. Another daughter interns at a doctors' office as a secretary. She may be making minimum youth wage, but with the regular staff under summer-related pressure, her help comes in very handy. Her earnings are saved to fund her music lessons. A third



daughter loves to cook and temps with a local caterer. Her reward is firsthand training from an eminent chef in making picture perfect petit fours and desserts, after hours. Even her tween works as a mother's helper at a local "happening" day camp, getting to go along for all the great trips and activities without the big ticket price. With everyone gainfully employed during the same hours, they relax together in the evenings. Picnic dinner in the park, an evening walk on the seashore, and other family-oriented summer treats of together time.

We are a creative lot, us working mothers. We find solutions, negotiate terms, think out of the box at work every day. Employing these skills to create summer enjoyment for us and our families goes a long way to banishing the old tug-of-war summer seems to bring.

May this summer be one that you will look back at and cherish always.