Tzofim –
The Israeli Scouts Movement

Excerpt from the Tzofim Mission Statement

Established in 1919, Tzofim was the first Zionist youth movement in Israel and remains today the largest “National Youth Movement” in the country. Tzofim is famously known as the first egalitarian scouting movement in the world, where boys and girls participate together on an equal basis.

Tzofim teaches its scouts Jewish values and Zionism, with the goal of building an Israeli society that is Zionist, ethical and activist and that will benefit and satisfy all its citizens.

There are over 300,000 Tzofim graduates and approximately 80,000 current members in 200 “tribes”. Our members, both children and teenagers, reflect and represent the country’s great diversity: they come from Israel’s center and its periphery, they are native-born and immigrants, secular and religious, and they include young people with special needs (physically and developmentally challenged) and youth at risk.

Whether it be emphasizing the integration of unique sectors of the population, empowering and integrating immigrants into society, or strengthening Jewish and Israeli identity in Israel as well as in the Diaspora, Tzofim’s main goal is to ensure that we reach as many young people as possible, so as to build a better tomorrow, today.

We aim to provide the necessary tools to achieving one’s goals and we want to ensure that our scouts flourish in a quality environment, while acquiring the leadership skills needed to grow into dynamic adults who will lead and initiate positive change.

For over 90 years, Tzofim has stood as a symbol of socially conscious, dedicated and involved teen leaders, helping to build a better, stronger Israeli society.

Through exciting activities such as trips, camps and bi-weekly meetings, scouts leave the movement with the skills needed to become caring, contributing community members. Twice a week, Tzofim members in over 105 cities and towns around Israel proudly wear their khaki uniforms and help to promote three important social and Zionist values:

Positive young leadership – Tzofim scouts maintain an optimistic outlook toward Israel’s future. Out of that optimism stems positive leadership, emphasizing responsibility and initiative.

Jewish identity – The scouts strive to instill a love of Israel, Jewish heritage, Judaism’s rich history, customs, traditions and universal ethics, in all its members.

Community building – Tzofim members focus on working together for a common cause. Through positive group dynamics, they initiate and implement community projects that strengthen neighborhoods throughout Israel.

What We Teach:

- **Social responsibility**: Affection and respect for all people; the importance of helping others and the responsibility every individual has for addressing social problems.

- **Democracy**: Equal rights and equal opportunities for all; the importance of being a good and active citizen and upholding law and justice.

- **Jewish and Zionist identity**: Strengthening the connection between the Jewish people and Israel and teaching a love for the land; developing a meaningful Israeli identity, while maintaining a dialogue about our cultural heritage and the values of the Jewish people.

- **Multiculturalism**: Tolerance and recognition of peoples’ different cultures, opinions and ways of life; making an effort to bridge the gaps between ourselves and within society.
**TZOFIM BY NUMBERS**

- Established in **1919**, we are the first and largest youth movement in Israel.

- The **first** egalitarian Scouting movement in the world, where boys and girls participate together on an equal basis.

- Over **300,000** Tzofim graduates.

- Approximately **80,000** current members in **200** "tribes".

- About **400** volunteers among our graduates, who are working together to build an Israeli society that is Zionist, ethical and activist and that will benefit and satisfy all its citizens.

- During the past **5 years**, Tzofim received **over 10** national awards, including the Israeli Prime Minister’s Award for work with youth with special needs, and the Charles Clore award in honor of Israel’s Jubilee.

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**GARIN TZABAR– Lone Soldiers Program**

Garin Tzabar is a unique Israeli Scouts program established in order to provide a support system for lone soldiers. It is the only Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) immigrant program in Israel, with more than **2,500** soldiers since its inception.

Founded in 1991 and run by Tzofim Tzabar Olami, Garin Tzabar is supported in part by the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption, The Prime Minister of Israel’s office, The Ministry of Defense, The Jewish Agency For Israel and Masa Israel Journey.

Garin Tzabar members are Jewish, living in the Diaspora, mostly American, and choose to move to Israel, leaving their life and families behind, to serve in the IDF. Garin Tzabar creates a special group framework of guidance and support. Starting with their countries of origin and continuing with their arrival to Israel, absorption into the Israeli community, and military recruitment, Garin Tzabar helps members with every step of the way.

Upon their arrival in Israel, the group (a “garin”) is adopted by the Israel Scouts and placed in a hosting kibbutz/city, which quickly becomes their home away from home throughout the duration of their army service. There are **55** kibbutzes and **3** cities participating in the program. The soldiers are assigned adoptive Israeli families, they learn Hebrew, and they experience every step of their military service together as a social unit of mutual support and camaraderie.

In the past **7 years**, the program has grown significantly from **40** members a year to **400**.

There are about **400** lone soldiers supported by Garin Tzabar every year. **52%** of these are men, **48%** women, and the soldiers hail from **17** countries around the world. Tzofim offers much needed assistance in the absorption process of both the individual and the group, prior to and during the military service.
Integration of Unique Sectors of the Population: Youth & the Community

“The Scouting Association will maintain equality between people, equal rights and equal opportunities... and will work towards tolerance and respect for those who are different.” - From the Tzofim Doctrine of Ethics.

Tzofim Tzabar has established branches around the world whose activities are based on the Israeli Scouting principles, and which foster connections between Diaspora and Israeli young Jews.

Range of Activities Include:

- **Tzofim Chapters:** Centers for Scouts’ activities conducted in Hebrew for Jewish children.
- **Garin Tzabar - Lone Soldiers Program:** A unique program enabling Jewish youth living in the Diaspora to immigrate to Israel and enlist to the IDF.
- **Tzofim Chetz v’Keshet - Summer Program:** A five week Israel summer program. This joint project of the Tzofim and the IDF provides teens from all over the world an exciting and intensive introduction to Israel and encourages them to become more involved in their Diaspora Jewish community and to develop their connection to Israel.
- **The Friendship Caravan:** A summer delegation made up of 10 Tzofim members in their final year of scouting. The Caravan travels across the United States and Canada, bringing Israeli culture, music and dance along with a message of peace.

**Tzofim – Absorbing Aliyah**

Integration of Immigrants and Children of Immigrants into Israeli Society

The Tzofim work hard to absorb new immigrants and to integrate them into Israeli society so they will feel that they are citizens who belong. We do this by striking a delicate balance between empowerment and leadership training, while preserving the youth’s unique traditions, their community’s way of life and their connection to home.

**Tzamid – Integration of youth with special needs**

Basing its foundations on tolerance, equal opportunity and acceptance of others, the Tzofim Movement has made it a goal to integrate both special needs and mainstream youth in its activities through the Tzamid program. We help these youngsters enjoy equal opportunities and foster a feeling of value and belonging.

**Youth At-Risk**

Some 40% of Tzofim chapters are located in communities that are geographically and/or economically marginalized. Tzofim work with a wide range of at-risk youth between the ages of 10-21, with the aim of helping them restructure their lives, to become actively and positively involved in their communities, while increasing their self-confidence, their abilities of self-expression, enjoyment, and sense of belonging.

Community involvement and social responsibility are the cornerstones of all Tzofim activities. Our activities with youth at-risk include projects with Ofek Juvenile Prison as well as ‘Ogen la’haim’, a unique program based on maritime therapy operated by the Sea Scouts, among many others.

There are approximately 330,000 youth who are or may be at-risk in Israel.

**TZOFIM – Staying Connected with the Diaspora**

Over 4,500 youth in the United States participate in weekly activities of Tzofim Tzabar, the Tzofim branch in the United States, which works with Hebrew speaking youth, offering Tzofim activities very similar to those in Israel.

The Tzofim are doing an outstanding job with the kids in Tzamid. They gave my daughter Netta the one thing that she wanted the most: the company of other children. She receives transportation because we live far away, and personal attention and love from her counselors and the scouts who have graduated.

Doron, father of Netta, a Tzamid scout

- Strengthening values of competence, value and belonging
- Helping to develop new skills
- Changing attitudes and eradicating misconceptions
- Creating equal opportunities
- Fostering pride in inclusiveness

Maintaining, deepening and strengthening ties with Jewish communities around the world

Tzofim Tzabar has established branches around the world whose activities are based on the Israeli Scouting principles, and which foster connections between Diaspora and Israeli young Jews.

Over 1,500 youth in the United States participate in weekly activities of Tzofim Tzabar, the Tzofim branch in the United States, which works with Hebrew speaking youth, offering Tzofim activities very similar to those in Israel.
With your help, Tzofim will continue to provide thousands of youngsters with the warm and embracing environment of home, ensuring that young people become productive and contributing members of society.