

# Support Center for Students with Learning Disabilities: inclusion of students

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# History

According to the report of the "Margalit Committee", which examined the treatment of learning disabled students in institutions of higher education in Israel, about 10% of the students in Israel's school system have some form of learning disability. These include dyslexia, dyscalculia, dysgraphic, and ADD problems.



Over the last few years, awareness of learning disabilities has greatly increased in Israel, and high schools have shown greater readiness to come towards their learning disabled students.

As a result, more and more learning disabled students have managed to complete their high school matriculations and enter colleges or universities.



It is estimated that between 5 - 10% of all the students in Israeli colleges and universities have some kind of a learning disability. There are more students with learning disabilities in the colleges than in the universities as a result of the psychometric exam.



# The Center

- The Support center provides services to all the schools in Beit Berl College.
- The Center is part of the services provided by the Dean of Students.
- The Center has been operating for the past 12 years.



- The support services are part of the “Leshem” association for learning disabilities.
- The association helps thousands of students with learning disabilities in 40 academic institutes all over Israel. It was established in February 1994 by a group of involved parents in order to obtain equal opportunities.



# Philosophy of the Center

*The philosophy is based on the humanistic literacy approach which views the student as a “whole individual.”*

- mature
- independent
- responsible for his own life
- able to contribute to the community



# Population of the support center

- Age: Between 20 to 50
- Diagnosed students who choose to receive support during their studies.
- Diagnosed students who take responsibility for their own learning.
- Students that were diagnosed prior to their studies.

- Number of students: 170 with learning disabilities per year.
- 70 students receive intensive support while others receive minimal adjustments for their exams given in different courses in the college.
- The students are fully integrated in their individual programs and receive additional support from the center upon request.



# How does it look?





המכללה האקדמית  
חברה, תרבות,  
אמנות וחינוך



# How does it feel?





 [FunFire.de](http://FunFire.de)



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אמנות וחינוך



# How does it sound?

***"If only every child and every teacher  
could wake up dyslectic one morning  
and try to function....  
Only then will they understand me."***

Words expressed by a disabled student.



# 5 years later- How does it sound?

***“It’s the first time after years that I don’t feel stupid, I feel I am becoming someone. At last my mother will be proud of me.”***

Words expressed by a disabled graduate student.



# Aims

- *General*
- *Awareness*
- *Practical*

# Aims

## General

- Ensure equal opportunities for students with learning disabilities
- Promote public awareness of learning disabilities
- Promote teachers' awareness within and out the college

- Promote the formulation of legislation
- Establish a center for distributing knowledge

## Jonathan Livingston Seagull / Richard Bach

“You must begin by knowing that you have already arrived ...”



## Awareness

- Assist students in understanding one owns learning disability
- Assist students in understanding one owns way of learning
- Help students focus on their strengths rather than on their weaknesses

## Practical

### Improving quality of life

- Empower each student to become an independent and successful learner
- Get students involved within their learning
- Help students succeed in their academic studies



# Working Principles

- Comfortable home learning environment
- Sensitive environment
- Choice
- Peer teaching
- Meta cognitive instruction

# Services

Services are provided on an individual basis and in workshop formats through out the year.

## Academic support

- o Learning how to learn
- o Note taking
- o Choosing topics for seminar papers, researching and organizing materials for presentations in class
- o Preparing for tests
- o Reading comprehension skills and strategies



- o Individual program plan
- o Technological support
- o Coaching
- o Tutors get professional training and work 4 hours a week
- o Students with learning disabilities are matched with advanced students as mentors
- o Learning disabled students can be tutors

Short term emotional support



# Support Technologies

- Voice recognition software
- Scanners
- Computerized dictionary
- Tape recorders



# Workshops

- Time Management Workshops : Learning how to organize time
- Organization – learn how to organize academic materials
- Self advocacy
- Employment workshops : searching skills; applying for a job, attending an interview



# Exams

- Students who wish to receive adjustments during exams must provide documentation to the Dean Examination Board.

## Adjustments:

- Extension time
- Use of laptops
- Computer labs; Text Aloud



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