



Emotional Support Dogs Center

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT & EMPOWERMENT DOGS PROJECT



To: Head of the organization

Firstly, I would like to thank you for the time you devote to the Emotional Support & Empowerment Dogs Project, based in Afikim Kennels.

I am proud to present our two programs:

- **Dogs for veterans of the Iron Swords war.**
- **Dogs for families who have lost their dear ones.**

Some info about the kennels:

We have over 35 years of experience in the field of education & therapy through dogs, with more than 15000 children enrolled in our unique programs, and over 6000 families who have become proud owners of puppies bred by us (including a full procedure of dog training and follow-up).

Our current project now includes more than 20 veterans, and necessitates further financial support, in order to allow another 60 veterans to be enrolled in the program.



The rational behind the project:

Each dog is matched with the veteran, his/her partner, his/her family. The entire process of matching the dog with the veteran, training and meeting the unique needs of each veteran is carried out by highly experienced professional trainers. The pup joining the family allows an empowering, therapeutic familial experience. The basic training, taking place at the familiar domestic environment, allows for the normalization of the veteran's everyday behaviour, while at the same time enabling the veteran to set boundaries and direction for the pup, in close cooperation with the trainer.

Thus, a totally positive experience ensues, whereby a close, loving relationship leads to a well-balanced inter-dependency. The dog requires the veteran to provide a consistent, stable treatment on a regular basis.

The basically-trained dog starts its special, dedicated training at the age of approximately 10 months. This procedure encompasses elements similar to those characteristic of a service dog, however, in our unique model, it is carried out by the veteran himself, who subsequently acquires confidence and embarks on the path to success.



Phases of the procedure:

- Reaching out to the veterans, who in turn fill out the necessary forms.
 - Basic screening with the assistance of veteran associations, military commanders or mental health professionals.
 - The first group of veterans is selected, based on considerations of urgency & need. Each group includes five veterans.
 - A preparatory meeting takes place at the units, attended by the veterans.
 - The veterans and a social worker visit Afikim Kennes, a highly professional and fully certified dog breeding center. During this initial meeting, the veterans are briefed about the project, the procedure and the dogs. They are then taken on a tour of the kennels, which almost instantly arouses positive emotions, and makes them want to get a dog right there and then. However, some preparatory work is required first.
 - Each veteran is matched with a trainer, and together they make the decision about the most suitable dog.
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- Vocational training and preparatory procedure:
 - The budget is specific to each veteran, yet the overall procedural plan is similar:
 - 7 training sessions at home.
 - 4 lessons of basic training.
 - 6 vocational training sessions for special needs.
 - In certain cases, a 30-day professional training period at the kennels is required, including daily training sessions.
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- At the right age, the dog is spayed/neutered.

The family gets a four-legged friend for life, a furry therapist and a true friend who is not deterred by the natural difficulties which are a part of everyday life for the veterans.



Budget:

- **8-12K**- a purebred puppy, inclusive of all the necessary genetic tests, vaccinations and papers.
- **7-10K** - Basic training & vocational training.
- **3K** - professional training/boarding at the kennels.
- **1.5K** – spaying/neutering
- **1.5K** – accessories, dog food and crates for the home.

Average budget per dog – 25K (including VAT).

60 dogs x 25K = 1.5 million NIS.

It is to be noted that both the kennels and the professional activities are ensured and regulated by the humane society, Ministry of agriculture and the local authorities.

Thank you for your time.



Dogs for Emotional Support for families who have lost their dear ones.

The rational:

Matching the family with a young pup who will bring back joy and happiness into their lives.

An ability to raise the dog and take care of its needs is a prerequisite.

The procedure:

- Reaching out to "Yad Lebanim" organization.
- "Yad Lebanim" approaches the project management team.
- A trainer visits the family, and a decision is made jointly, regarding the time table, gender and race of the dog.
- A suitable puppy is selected and the family is invited to meet and collect it at the kennels. A pre-condition for getting a dog is full consent on the part of both parents/partners.
- The family is professionally supported during the training of the pup, which is carried out in 10 training sessions. During these sessions, the family members - both adults and kids - take part in therapeutic work suitable for their needs.

The professional trainer is also a therapist, entrusted with the duty of creating the dog's place at home. The dog is by no means a substitute of that which is gone or lost. Puppies have a unique comforting, therapeutic abilities, which are unprecedented.

The procedural matching with the dog is also accompanied by training and emotional therapy, according to the particular needs.



Budget:

- **8-12k** – a puppy
- **6-8K** – training
- **1.5K** – spaying/neutering
- **1.5K** – basic equipment

Total: 16-20K NIS.

Thank you for you time and your willingness to assist & support the veterans and families.

Written by Yaniv Osem, manager of Afikim Kennels.

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