



# IMPACT REPORT

**SPECIAL EDITION** SEPTEMBER 2020



## DEAR FRIENDS,

I am delighted to share with you this special edition of our Impact Report. This report will give you an inside look into Beit Issie Shapiro's work during the Coronavirus pandemic and what we have learned from this unprecedented year.

As the pioneering leader in the field of disabilities, we are constantly innovating and researching to create shareable models for best practice. We set new precedents by challenging what currently exists and adapting to best fit the real needs of people with disabilities.

The stresses of COVID-19 did not hold us back; **the foundation of our organization enabled us to leverage this as an opportunity for meaningful impact and growth.** As you will read in this report, we quickly adapted to the situation while staying true to our mission and professionalism.

As we reflect on this past year, we are thankful for all we have learned that will enable us to continue to play a key role in building an inclusive society. While this was not the year anyone expected, **we also found opportunity for celebration with our Founder Naomi Stuchiner's acceptance of the prestigious Israel Prize for Lifetime Achievement and Contribution to Society.** The daughter of Issie Shapiro z"l, Naomi's passion and drive have guided our work for the past 40 years, and we were thrilled to celebrate her well-deserved recognition.

None of this would have been possible without you. As social entrepreneurs, we rely primarily on our philanthropic partners to help us carry out our mission. As our fee-for-service income (25% of our budget) including outpatient therapies was reduced to zero during the lockdown, **your support is the reason we have been able to serve the community so thoroughly during this period. Only with your continued partnership will we be able to expand our impact and improve the lives of people with disabilities around the world in the year to come.**

Wishing you and your families a Shana Tova: a healthy, safe and happy New Year,

**Ahmir Lerner**  
Executive Director



# COVID-19 EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

## 450+ families

Led by expert psychotherapists and social workers, the COVID-19 Support Hotline and proactive outreach by the Beit Issie Shapiro team **provided urgent emotional support and practical guidance** for people with disabilities and their families across the country, helping them cope and protecting their well-being during this tumultuous time.

This initiative also **helped clarify the real needs in our communities and empowered us to create solutions.** Outreach to families in Israel's Arab community helped us understand that the lack of technology in individual homes prevented children and families from participating in virtual therapies and schooling. As a result, Beit Issie Shapiro mobilized and initiated a program to deliver laptops and technological training to families in need.

*"Guy, a young man with disabilities living with his parents in the periphery would call the COVID-19 Support Hotline every week. The hotline served as his safe haven during this difficult time. Each time he called, he was frazzled and incoherent. He suffered from tremendous anxiety due to the uncertain and constantly changing situation. By the end of our calls, he was calmer and more at ease."*

- Dr. Dalia Nissim, Beit Issie Shapiro Support Hotline Counselor,  
Trump International Training Institute Director of Learning Programs



# ONLINE EDUCATION

## 189,000+ views

To respond to the urgent needs of our children at home, our expert tech professionals worked hand-in-hand with teachers and therapists to create overnight a new Virtual Special Education Kindergarten and School. The series of 200 videos that we created in Hebrew and Arabic and uploaded to Youtube daily during lockdown **served as the daily curriculum** not only for Beit Issie Shapiro's children but **for all children throughout Israel.**

The online educational content includes singing, games, storytelling, and even virtual physical and occupational therapy.

This solution has **allowed us to develop a new scalable range of tools to treat children with disabilities remotely** when they must be home for extended periods due to sickness or procedures unrelated to COVID-19.

*"At first, it was hard for Amir to participate in virtual school. With encouragement from the staff, he agreed to participate, enjoyed his school and therapies and even looked forward to these sessions every day. Thank you Beit Issie Shapiro for never giving up on us during this challenging time. Virtual therapies helped Amir progress with his speech and emotional development. He is now able to express himself and better manage his emotions."*

- Parent of Amir, 10 year old student at Beit Issie Shapiro's Special Education School



## VIRTUAL THERAPIES

### 4750+ sessions

With limitations on in-person treatments due to social distancing guidelines, Beit Issie Shapiro developed new ways to deliver therapies online. Virtual therapies expand the possibilities of care and treatment for children and adults with disabilities, **creating access to high-quality services for people whose geographic location, resources and socioeconomic status previously limited them.**

To explore the potential of this opportunity and to learn how to maximize the benefits of this service, we are currently **conducting a pilot program** of online therapies in the Israeli peripheral cities of Dimona and Eilat.

In true Beit Issie Shapiro fashion, our Research and Evaluation Team are **conducting an international study** among allied health professionals across the globe to assess the experience and effectiveness of providing online therapies. This evaluation will **empower us to create a new model for best practice for the world to use.**

*“As a therapist, it is empowering to see our ability to help people from afar. My patient is a 6 year old girl who lives in the periphery. Because of her geographic location, she did not previously have the ability to receive proper speech therapy that she desperately needed. Virtual therapy creates opportunity to open doors for these families.”*

- Racheli Blum, Speech and Language Pathologist, Beit Issie Shapiro

## INTERNATIONAL TRAINING and KNOWLEDGE SHARING

### 2,200+ participants from 30 countries worldwide

During COVID-19, we continued our mission to disseminate knowledge and train disabilities professionals around the world.

A series of well-attended webinars allowed us to spread our expertise **with a further reach and greater impact than ever before.** For the first time, participants joined from countries such as Kenya, Nepal, Myanmar and Uruguay. Additionally, as a leader in the field, Beit Issie Shapiro was invited by organizations including UN Habitat and the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs to present its mastery in the field.

The restrictions on site visits pushed us to **develop remote training capacity.** Our Trump International Training Institute went virtual overnight with online courses. We are currently **developing infrastructure for customized training for our partners around the world.**

*“Thank you for offering this webinar. It’s intriguing to listen to another therapist from across the globe, and it’s fascinating to confirm that despite the distance and even culture, therapy concepts are unifying because they’re the same everywhere. Hope to learn more from you and your team next time!”*

- T.D., Occupational Therapist, Philippines





## SOCIAL CHANGE AND POLICY 110 adults with disabilities advocating for social change

From the onset of COVID-19, Beit Issie Shapiro's Social Change Unit was **in contact with government officials to ensure the rights of people with disabilities and full accessibility** of all newly announced regulations.

Beit Issie Shapiro's Leadership Center, powered by adults with disabilities dedicated to social change, continued to identify emerging needs in the community, advocate for social change and actively participate in policy implementation.

The pandemic confirmed that in times of crisis the **barriers and challenges for people with disabilities are that much greater. Our Social Change Unit and leadership groups are committed to creating protocols** to ensure people with disabilities are a part of future decision-making processes.

*"Your role is important and your work is critical. Your voices need to be heard."*

- Avremi Torem, Commissioner for Equal Rights for Persons with Disabilities at Israel's Ministry of Justice to Beit Issie Shapiro Leadership Center Participants

## YES! I WANT TO HELP BEIT ISSIE SHAPIRO CONTINUE ITS MISSION TO BUILD AN INCLUSIVE SOCIETY ACROSS THE GLOBE!

Every donation makes a true difference and improves the lives of people with disabilities. Donations are tax deductible in Israel, the US, Canada and the UK.

To donate, visit [en.beitissie.org.il/donate](https://en.beitissie.org.il/donate) or mail check payable to:

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