



### **Camp By The Sea Shlichim: An Honored Camp Tradition**

One of the essences of the traditional Jewish view on relationships is found in the mitzvah of Hachnasat Orchim – hospitality to strangers (literally, bringing in guests); an important act of kindness. This mitzvah is also found in the *Talmud (Shabbat 127a)*: “Rabbi Judah said in Rab’s name, ‘Hospitality to strangers is greater than welcoming the presence of the Shechinah.’” It is a Jewish behavior to extend hospitality, because of the way Abraham opened his home to the three strangers who came to his tent (*Genesis 18:2*), and because of the lesson of the Exodus – that we were strangers in the land of Egypt. At Camp By The Sea, we practice the mitzvah of Hachnasat Orchim through our successful tradition of welcoming Shlichim from Israel into our camp, our community and our personal lives.

At Camp By The Sea, we believe that it is an important goal for both our campers and staff to learn, teach and identify with Judaism and the State of Israel. We are constantly trying to build bridges between our community and the Jewish community in Israel. As a result, we find the contribution of the Shlichim to be an invaluable step on the way to achieving that goal. The Shlichim bring with them many prepared activities that they will incorporate into the overall camp program. But that is only the tip of the iceberg. By simply being at camp and integrating into our community they provide us with the unique opportunity to learn about another culture, teach them about our own culture and connect with new people in many different ways. It is up to us to utilize this wealth of knowledge about Israel and Judaism as much as possible.

The Shlichim program at Camp By The Sea has grown in many ways since our first Shlichim arrived many years ago. This program has been successful for so long and will continue to be successful because of the tireless commitment of both our camp staff and the local Jewish community.

## **How to Make Home Hospitality a Success**

### **Upon the Shlichim's arrival:**

- Remind your Shlichim to call home and let their families know that they have arrived safely to your home.
- Familiarize them with your household and let them know what they can and cannot use. Show them where the food and linens are kept and how to operate such household appliances as the dishwasher, laundry machine and coffee maker. Please keep in mind that North American electronics operate differently than Israeli ones do.
- Suggest a house meeting early on to discuss house rules and expectations, guests, curfew, how to do laundry, meals, phone use and so on. Communication must be open and honest. Try to make the Shlichim feel welcome as a guest, but responsible like a family member.
- Make the Shlichim feel welcome by showing them around your immediate neighborhood. Point out the closest bank; good places to eat or drink coffee, movie theatres, and anything else that you think would be of interest. You may want to use this as a first opportunity to introduce your guest to some of your neighborhood friends.
- Do things as a "family," yet remember to give the Shlichim space to appropriately experience their new environment.
- Try to make any and all transitions as smooth as possible for both your family and the Shlichim.

## **During the Summer:**

- Communicate with your Shlichim on a regular basis. Don't let small misunderstandings lead to larger conflicts. **Israelis tend to be much more direct than Americans** and will most likely appreciate you being open and honest with any concerns that you may have.
- Remember you are not alone. The Camp By The Sea Staff members are there to guide you and are always available to help you out! Stay in touch with us. Francesca Parisano is the direct supervisor of the Shlichim while they are working for camp. We are available throughout the summer to answer any questions or concerns. Nothing is too trivial.

## **Host Family Guidelines**

*Please read the following guidelines carefully. They are based on suggestions from our past experiences and include input from previous host families. These should not be read as strict rules, rather as recommendations to optimize your time with your Israeli guest.*

- Host families should provide their Shlichim with comfortable living conditions that offer as much privacy as possible. Please have separate sleeping spaces for your guests.
- Most of the time the Shlichim will use Facetime and Skype to communicate with their families so they may need access to a computer and/or wifi.
- The Shlichim is expected to help around the house with general chores such as meal preparations and clean ups. Families should explain their children's responsibilities in the home and can expect similar contributions from the Shlichim. While the Shlichim should chip in, They are not hired help, or a full time, unpaid babysitter.
- We suggest that the host family provide the Shlichim with a set of house keys.

- In general, we encourage Shlichim to eat what their host family eats. However, we suggest that you take your Shlichim to the grocery store early on and help them pick out a few favorite snacks. Please inform the Shlichim if you have family members with allergies to certain foods or special dietary needs.
- Host families are requested to provide all meals for the Shlichim, lunch is provided on camp days.
- Every Shlichim should carry their host family's name, address, and telephone numbers at all times. They should also keep a copy of their camp's name, director and phone number with them in case of emergency.
- All Shlichim have medical insurance provided by the Summer Shlichim Program. If the Shlichim should become ill or injured during her stay at your home, please arrange for a doctor's visit. The Shlichim is responsible for all bills under \$200. Anything over that amount should be forwarded directly to the camp director, **not paid by you.**
- Host families are not expected to host the Shlichim's visitors. Shlichim can only have visitors stay with them if the host family grants permission.
- Shlichim come to North America with a desire to experience its lifestyle. Please include your Shlichim in some family activities and outings. Please note that it is not acceptable for Shlichim to miss days at camp for family outings/vacations.
- Shlichim are allowed to travel on the weekends. We suggest that the Shlichim coordinate their departure and arrival times with the host family.