

For many years our lives were turned upside down. As a young child our son, Tyler was diagnosed with ADD and then most recently as a teen with depression and anxiety. We made the very difficult choice to send our son to a therapeutic boarding school in Utah. We hoped that this would help him making significant changes in our son's life and give him a real future. We felt great trepidation not only sending our son to a boarding school but to one in Salt Lake City. This all seemed so foreign to me in many ways. Not only was it far but it felt so culturally different from our lives in New York City. Not only because our son was a real city kid but the lack of a Jewish community felt quite alienating to us as parents as well. As a mother I knew that there were compromises I needed to make to save my son and Utah had the best resources to do so. We gave up the idea of Jewish holidays and keeping kosher to forsake the best interest of our son's well-being.

After a month we received a call that Tyler had attempted suicide while at his school in Utah. He was sent to a psychiatric hospital for a week. We rushed out to care for Tyler and after being with him for several days I left the hospital feeling completely exhausted only to find parked outside of UNI (University Neurological Institute of Utah) Rabbi Zippel with his son and daughter in law in their Sukkot mobile! I looked around...was I still in Utah? This couldn't be possible-certainly so in New York City but not outside a psych ward in the middle of Utah. I was curious and peeked inside where I found a lovely family who embraced me immediately and asked very comforting questions about my child and his needs. Rabbi Benny asked if he might visit with my son. I told Rabbi Zippel that Tyler is a 14 year old boy and he may be resistant to a visit but please try. I assumed Rabbi Zippel would be back immediately as Tyler would have no interest in meeting with him. I waited in the Sukkot mobile during their visit with Rabbi Zippel's son and daughter in law who were both so lovely and calming. This waiting felt like an eternity so I was very surprised when Rabbi Zippel returned outside almost a half hour later. He had said Tyler was very receptive to the visit and had even asked for him to return. Rabbi Zippel and I spend a long period of time discussing placement for Tyler and he helped me tremendously by making recommendations for a new school for Tyler upon leaving the hospital.

Rabbi Zippel had told me that he travels across Utah checking in on the over 300 therapeutic schools in his state and making sure that these kids don't lose their Jewish identities while in treatment centers. I was so astounded and awed by his commitment to Judaism and making sure that no child is forgotten. He touched base with me every day while I was figuring out our next steps and then continued connecting with me even after I returned home to New York.

Not only did Rabbi Zippel check in with me but he was committed to checking in with Tyler as well. It was difficult for Tyler to leave his program but I knew my son was not alone in Utah with Rabbi Zippel watching over my son. Eventually Tyler was able to join Rabbi Zippel and his family for Pesach and my husband and I were thrilled for Tyler to celebrate while in treatment. What Rabbi Zippel does for his community is nothing less than awesome. I am even more grateful that my son was touched by his kindness and passion. Tyler is now on the East Coast but I will never forget the warmth, the care and the embrace that I have and still continue to feel from Rabbi Zippel.

June 17, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

Rabbi Benny Zippel and Project Heart are literally saving lives every single day. I'm not just writing this as a donor for the past few years. I speak from direct experience as a parent of a young man who went to Utah for boarding school alone..or so we thought. The truth is that while we worried from thousands of miles away that our son would be alone with no one to turn to, in reality he had a father figure down the block that was literally an angel sent from God to watch over him. More than three years later, our son still keeps in regular touch with Rabbi Zippel even from across the world. We cannot even begin to imagine how different his life, and our lives, would be had Rabbi Zippel and Project Heart not been there in our time of need. All we can do now is show our support and ensure that parents who are thrown into this daunting and devastating experience have a local partner in Utah named Rabbi Benny Zippel - a man who has made his life's work helping children and families in need. The world is a much better place with angels like him and the others at Project Heart in it.

There are many charities that support cancer research and schools and hospitals and so on. There is only one Benny Zippel working with children sent from all over the world to boarding schools in Utah. There are no other organizations doing the work that Project Heart does. They are unique in their efforts, in their objectives and in their effectiveness. They have my highest recommendation and that is backed by my words and my wallet.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. Zippel', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

4319 10th Avenue Apt. H
Brooklyn, NY 11219

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Gershon & Elana Gershenson

June 14, 2015

Rabbi Benny Zippel
Project Heart
Chabad Lubavitch of Utah
1760 South 1100 East
Salt Lake City, UT 84105-3400

Dear Rabbi Zippel,

As you may recall it is only three and a half months since Leah was placed into a residential treatment center in Utah. The decision to place her there was one which both of us made with a serious amount of trepidation. The idea of sending our 15 year old daughter to the other side of the country, and put her in the hands of total strangers, who we doubted had any concept of what it meant to be from a Jewish home, was frightful. At the same time her staying at home in Brooklyn was even scarier.

As you have gotten to know us, we maintain a house with strong Jewish values, and we did not want Leah to lose those values. We had heard that the treatment center she would be placed has kosher meals, and a Rabbi speaks to the kids. As we have come to learn you do much more than just speak to the kids. Your insight into Leah on many levels including: psychological, emotional, spiritual, and over all well being is well beyond what we expected.

There is no way that words could explain the deep appreciation that we have for you, and the help you have provided Leah. The support for both her and us is remarkable. On our end we would be lost without your assistance and guidance. During the middle of Pesach, that you took the time out to call us, and update us during a critical time of Leah's treatment goes way beyond what any person could expect or imagine. On Leah's end we would seriously question where her Jewish identity would be at this point if it were not for your involvement. Leah on countless occasions has expressed to us how much she looks forward to the classes given, and the help you provided for the holidays. The positive influence you have imparted upon her we believe will last a lifetime.

We thank you again for all your hard work, and may Hashem bless you with continued success in all of your endeavors.

With warmest regards,



Gershon & Elana

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When I first met Rabbi Zippel over ten years ago, I was impressed with his caring heart, kindness, and concern for the wellbeing of those around him. As I have continued to get to know him and have been fortunate enough to work more closely with him, those initial impressions have proven to be very accurate.

Rabbi Zippel has helped countless young people that have been sent to ours and other residential treatment programs over the years. The reasons why these youth have been sent to us have been quite mixed and varied but the love and support that the Rabbi shows them is unchanging. Our students look forward to his visits with great anticipation.

Rabbi Zippel holds many events throughout the year and he and his lovely wife always make sure we are aware of them and have an invitation. Our students talk about these events for weeks afterward, which to me indicates that they clearly have a very positive impact on them.

Please support Rabbi Zippel in his work and help bless the lives of countless people.

Sincerely,

Sean Maynard, Program Director

I am writing to express the importance of the work that Rabbi Benny Zippel is doing with Project HEART. This program is personally affecting my family.

I would like to share my story as to how we were introduced to Project Heart and Rabbi Zippel. My son has struggled with ODD/ADHD/Anxiety disorder for years. During this past year we felt it was time for my son to attend a school that could help manage his behaviors and help him succeed in school. It was not an easy search. During my search process I would inquire if there were other Jewish kids who attended the programs and if there was a Rabbi that visited the kids. This was very important for my son and myself. My son has grown up in a Jewish home. We have celebrated all the holidays; he was involved in his youth group, including being on the board. He recently participated in our synagogues youth play. This past summer he traveled to Eastern Europe and Israel with USY pilgrimage. The trip had an enormous impact on my son's Jewish identity. So when we thought about my son giving up his involvement in his Jewish culture it was very difficult for us and for our son. For this reason I felt the importance of finding a place that could continue to offer my son exposure to his Jewish culture.

When my search led me to a school in Utah I was skeptical. I knew that Utah had a large Mormon community. When I inquired at the school about a local Rabbi visiting my son at their school the staff person was quick to answer that they have a Rabbi that comes weekly to visit any students of the Jewish faith. You can imagine my delight in hearing this. This helped make our decision to send our son to Utah. Soon after our decision to enroll my son I reached out to Rabbi Zippel. He was very kind and supportive. He acknowledged the very difficult decision we were making and offered words of comfort. Knowing that he would be able to visit my son weekly through his program HEART, it brought comfort to my husband and I. We knew that he could support our son in his Jewish culture and identity. We are so grateful for this program. Our son has had weekly visits with Rabbi Zippel. Rabbi Zippel has offered our son additional support through Judaism. When a close family member passed away, our son was not able to come home for the funeral. Rabbi Zippel was there to comfort our son through prayer and wrapping Tefillin. Rabbi Zippel has formed a special friendship with our son. He speaks of Rabbi Zippel with great fondness and looks forward to the Rabbi's weekly visit. Our son also appreciates Rabbi's humor to help him through his sometimes-difficult days. As a parent with a child miles from home, these visits bring great comfort to my husband and myself. Knowing that my son can continue to believe in his Jewish faith, continue to learn Judaism, receive support from a Rabbi who is invested in the well being of teens is immeasurable. I hope this much needed program can continue to receive the support of the community.

Sincerely,

Michelle Katz



June 17, 2015

To Whom it May Concern:

I am honored to write a letter on behalf of Rabbi Benny Zippel and PROJECT HEART. I have the privilege of knowing Rabbi Zippel for over 5 years and have been amazed at the tireless efforts, dedication to students and families as well as his selfless acts of service on behalf of Project HEART.

Specifically here at New Haven, an all girls residential treatment center serving over 100 families at three locations, Rabbi Zippel has attended weekly meetings with our students who are Jewish and wanting to connect with a local religious leader. Over 25% of our student population identify as Jewish, and this serves as an invaluable growth opportunity for our students and families.

In addition to driving to our program virtually every week for the last 6 years or more, the Rabbi provides counsel for parents about the exhausting process of looking for placement, keeping tabs on the students progress and helping students transition back home.

We have been extremely fortunate for the Rabbi to assist in our students celebrating their faith through many wonderful activities in honor of the Jewish Holidays such as, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Purim, Chanukah, Passover and Shavout. Students attend the honoring or celebration of the various activities throughout the year and interact with other members of their faith. These critical experiences allow students to stay connected to their culture, community and heritage.

In teaching our program an increased sense of spiritual and religious sensitivity the Rabbi has provided in service trainings about keeping Kosher, how to run a Kosher Kitchen, offered himself as a resource for Sensitivity in understanding Jewish faith and culture.

Perhaps maybe one of the most impressive pieces of all of Rabbi Zippel's accomplishments in sustaining Project HEART is the service he provides is free of charge. Project HEART nor Rabbi Zippel are paid employees of our program or any other dozens of residential program that benefits from the kindness and generosity.

If you have any other questions about this outstanding cause, please feel free to contact me directly at 801-380-4376.

Warmest Regards,

David Mayeski, LCSW

New Haven Teresa House Clinical Director

Phone 801-794-1218 Fax 801-794-9558
Saratoga Springs Campus (228 West 400 North, Saratoga Springs, UT 84045)
Spanish Fork Campus (2172 East 7200 South, Spanish Fork, UT 84660)

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June 11, 2015

To Whom it may Concern,

It is my honor and pleasure to write regarding Rabbi Benny Zipple and Project HEART! The wilderness program I work for, Second Nature Therapeutic Programs, has worked with Rabbi Zipple for the last 4-5 years. He has been very helpful in coaching and instructing our staff on working with Jewish families, how we can celebrate and honor Jewish holidays and better awareness about how we can provide our Jewish students with Kosher food options, and in general, more sensitivity around our Jewish clients.

Rabbi Zipple has been a wonderful resource for Jewish families who are struggling with the decision to seek help for their struggling children and helping parents understand the validity of a therapeutic intervention when a child is genuinely struggling at home.

The service that Rabbi Benny and Project HEART provide is remarkable and I have found it to make all the difference in working as a team to help Jewish children and their families.

I also have great admiration for the Rabbi, and his contribution to the community. Rabbi Zipple is highly respected in the Salt Lake community for his care, integrity, and contribution in the community regarding social needs & concerns, as well as his influence in the religious community.

Prior to working with Rabbi Zipple, I personally didn't have a clear understanding or knowledge of the Jewish religion. With his help I have greater understanding and more insight, in working with families of the Jewish faith. I am very grateful for this awareness.

I consider the Rabbi and his work a true blessing for Jewish families in Utah and around the world, as these families send their precious children to treatment programs in Utah.

With Deepest Regards,

Shahara Davis
Admissions Director
Second Nature Programs
801.824.3945
Shaharad@swnp.com
www.secondnatureprograms.com

Rabbi Benny Zippel
Chabad Lubavitch of Utah
1760 South 1100 East
Salt Lake City, UT 84105-3400

RE: Utah Project HEART

Dear Rabbi Zippel:

My husband William Klein and I want to thank you for the wonderful work you have and continue to do with Project HEART.

Our son Jonathan is attending school in Utah and we were concerned about his lack exposure to Judaism and "Yiddishkeit". Our current Rabbi – Mendel Solomon told us of the wonderful work you were doing with teenagers in Utah and we were thrilled when you agreed to meet with our son.

Jonathan meets with you each Wednesday and he reports to us how much he enjoys talking with you about the weekly Parsha and issues that he as a young man and Jew is facing. He attended functions with your organization – Menorah lighting, Purim festival and Seder and reports back to us how much he enjoyed each experience.

We thank you for your efforts on his behalf and it gives us comfort to know that there is someone "looking out" for his interests and welfare as he works through his issues so far from home. Please continue the special work you do!

Best regards,
Ellen Braverman

To Whom It May Concern:

It is with pleasure that I write this letter about Rabbi Zippel and Project H.E.A.R.T. My daughter was in Utah for 17 months while dealing with some personal struggles. Rabbi Zippel was by our sides from the beginning, always available to support our family. He has a magical ability to connect with kids and has tremendous insight into what they are going through. My daughter immediately related to him and somehow he was able to get through to her, even when we could not. She looked forward to his weekly visits and she especially enjoyed the holiday programs that he hosted in Salt Lake City. Throughout her journey, Rabbi Zippel encouraged her and guided her. He was a key part of her recovery process, both spiritually and emotionally. Our Utah experience is long behind us, but Rabbi Zippel continues to be a part of our lives. We are forever grateful for all that he has done for us and we credit him with bringing our daughter back to us.

Sincerely,

A Grateful Parent

Confidential Information

June 21, 2015

Dear Rabbi Zippel,

As our son ends his time in Utah, we wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for all you have done for him. Please feel free to share this with your supporters, and if you want to post it online, that is fine (of course, please then remove our names and identifying information).

From the moment we realized that our son needed a Residential Treatment Center, you have been the go-to address in helping us choose the best school, adjust to the reality, and deal with a son going through a difficult period far away from home.

Coming from Israel, and without any similar institutions local to our home, it was a huge and difficult decision to entrust our son to strangers.

In our initial phone calls to you to hear your thoughts on the options and find out about which schools were more open to Jewish students, you gave us much time and support.

In our initial visit to the area, you welcomed us, spent time with us, fed us, encouraged us.

Quickly after our son's arrival, you reached out to him and established a good connection to him. Throughout his time in Utah, you have been a regular source of positive personal connection. Those words were chosen carefully: your love of him, warmth towards him, and acceptance of him has been a core support for him.

Furthermore, your meaningful teachings, tefillin, warm and Jewish role-modeling have done much to re-establish our son's positive Jewish attitude

Our son's positive attitude to you is not surprising. He is delighted by your regular visits and your holiday and other events for the students in the area.

With warmest regards and MANY thanks

Anonymous

June 19, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

After completing a wilderness therapy program, it was recommended that I continue therapy in a residential treatment center. I was only 17 at the time and because of difficulties going on in my life I found myself in Salt Lake City. I had never been away from my family for so long, especially not on the opposite side of the country.

I was very lonely and discontent, almost as if something was missing. It took me a very long time to open up to the program and I felt very uncomfortable most of the time.

After a few weeks, I was asked if I would like to see the Rabbi, I was a bit skeptical but I said I would give it a try. I came from a very religious background, part of which I resented and at that time was not involved whatsoever with Judaism.

When Rabbi Zippel came to visit me it was not at all what I expected. He was very genuine, warm, welcoming, caring and most of all accepting. No matter what we talked about he was always listening and never judged. I looked forward to seeing him every week, sometimes we talked about issues going on in my life, other times about Judaism, no matter what each time we met, my spiritual connection was elevated.

I finally felt like someone understood me, it gave me the opportunity to converse with a neutral and very wise figure who can guide me through the difficulties that I faced. Whenever I had a question or something on my mind I felt the most comfortable when I talked to Rabbi Zippel.

In addition to visiting every week, he would always invite me to come for Shabbat, on the holidays and to events going on at the Chabad Center.

For over twenty years he has been visiting hundreds of kids in a variety of facilities, and I know that he cares and loves each and every one that comes in contact with him. Today, I have a deep, personal relationship that I have developed with Rabbi Zippel. I have re-established my life and I still keep in close contact with Rabbi Benny.

I want to thank you so much for all you have done and are doing for me and everyone else out there. Words cannot describe the gratitude that I feel and how grateful I am.

Anonymous

Before sending our teenage child to a residential treatment program in Utah, we reached out to Rabbi Zippel for counsel and guidance. We were impressed how conversant he was with challenges teenagers face, programs available to them in Utah, and his keen understanding of our religious concerns. We subsequently met Rabbi Zippel in his office in Salt Lake City. Rabbi Zippel gave us hope. His counsel was bold, matter-of-fact, and full of love and encouragement. He described his activities and intra-state travels to youth treatment centers in a typical week. Only later did we realize how much more he did to help nourish Jewish souls, to provide guidance, meaning and spirituality to youth seeking to rebuild their lives – especially our own child's. His dedication and tireless efforts were exemplary, and they continue. Rabbi Zippel understands that each person is climbing their own ladder in a quest for life's meaning and a relationship with Hashem. His inspiring approach is nonjudgmental, non-coercive, full of love and "Yirat Shamayim".

Rabbi Zippel is in the business of פיקוח נפש – saving a life. His work is that serious, that far reaching. It was for hundreds of youth in treatment in Utah, it was for our child, and with Hashem's blessings, will continue in years to come for others.

With gratitude,

Dina & Jesse Schwartzman and Family

Rabbi Zippel

Keep up the good
work in Utah. Our
daughter Ryann is doing
great.

Thank you,

Dale

MGM GRAND.
LAS VEGAS



June 23, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:
Re: Rabbi Benny Zippel
Chabad Lubavitch of Utah
1760 South 1100 East
Salt Lake City UT 84105

It has been my pleasure, for many years now, to know and associate with Rabbi Zippel. As the Executive Director of Logan River Academy, a residential treatment center for "at-risk" youth, we early in our operation saw a real need for our students to have their spiritual needs met as well as their emotional and physical. The search for such spiritual help for our Jewish students quickly lead us to contact Rabbi Zippel. The Rabbi has been very kind through these years to meet, associate with, and council our Jewish students.

He has accepted the invitation to drive over an hour, each way, to come to our campus and spend time with deserving and anxious students. The Rabbi's experience with troubled teens, in both spiritual matters as well as basic life skills, has been helpful, gratifying, and enlightening. Our students have benefited. Our staff is appreciative, and the students' families remain very grateful.

I fully appreciate that his sacrifice in time and money has been far greater than any occasional reimbursement that may sparingly come his way.

We would ask any worthy organization able to assist his invaluable services through additional funding, to kindly do so.

His dedicated service will impact these young lives well into the years that follow, and help not only the Jewish community but our overall society as well.

If I may be able to answer any questions or be of service in any way, please let me know.



Larry W. Carter
Executive Director
866-755-8400