

Youth Visions

Friendship Circle Presents: Life Skills!

A major challenge to children with disabilities is getting used to the outside world—being comfortable and competent in uncontrolled, unpredictable environments. With our new Life Skills program, children will be exposed to ordinary-life basics such as library-going, visiting the doctor, or going shopping. With practice, they can become as self-sufficient and unassisted as possible. Each activity will be supervised, and each child will be paired with his/her special buddy and teen volunteer.

Life Skills will encompass three different programs. The first will be a visit to the library and will incorporate several behavioral skills; the second will be an excursion to the supermarket to focus

on shopping skills; and the third will be a trip to a movie theater. The dates will be January 5, February 1 and February 8.

For more information, email info@friendshipcircenc.org or call Bentzion at 704-366-5983.

Friendship Circle Awards B'nai Mitzvah Trainees as "Volunteer Certified"

After six weeks of sensitivity training, eight students have become officially "volunteer certified." Each week's session focused on a different disability, its causes and challenges and what the volunteers can do to help those affected by that disability. Now they will team up with veteran Friendship Circle volunteers and participate in actual programs for children with special needs. Each

trainee received a certificate documenting his/her involvement in the program. Disabilities covered included autism, ADHD, cerebral palsy, and Down syndrome. All courses were taught by Mushka Weiss.

Congratulations to Alex Catenazzo, Noah Goldman, Aaron Lipsitz, Sean Lerner, Julia Marx, Niki Plaus, Zachary Rosen, and Zack Rabinowitz for completing Friendship Circle's B'nai Mitzvah Training Course.

For more information about future B'nai Mitzvah training courses, email info@friendship-circenc.org.

The Friendship Circle is a project of Lubavitch of North Carolina. ✧



Mushka Weiss leads the B'nai Mitzvah class in discussing children's disabilities.



Friendship Circle members Sean Lerner and Sam Lahn prepare their presentation for the B'nai Mitzvah training class.



Hebrew Highlights

By Marci Goldberg

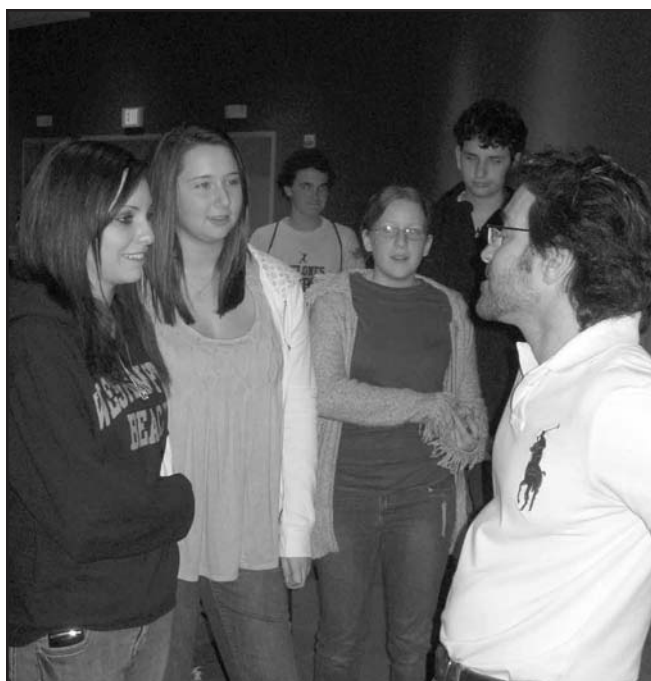
Hebrew High was both pleased and proud to invite Scott Fried, AIDS Educator/Motivational Speaker, back to speak to our Charlotte community on November 18. Scott's message is one of responsibility, self-confidence, love, and self-respect. Scott uses himself as Exhibit A. He begins each lecture with his story of how he got infected with HIV in 1987 at the age of 24, during his first and only unsafe sexual encounter. His unstoppable approach to educating others can be encapsulated into one thought: one must understand the value of one's own life, and hold it sacred, in order to refrain from dangerous

behaviors that could lead to HIV infection and other crises.

Scott has spoken at over 500 institutions, including colleges and universities, high schools and middle schools, summer camps, synagogues and churches. In addition, he has lectured widely at youth retreats, juvenile detention centers and prisons, alternative schools, learning disabled populations, gay/straight alliances, PTO meetings and teacher training workshops. Topics include sexual responsibility, abstinence, dating, transmission of HIV, homosexuality, eating disorders, body image, self-mutilation, suicide, alcohol and drug misuse, dealing with divorce and broken-heartedness,

among others.

Scott's ability to relate to teens is an amazing thing to observe. As soon as he starts talking, the room quiets down and all eyes are on him. He pulls the audience in and his story becomes their story. "Everyone has something that's in their closet," Scott says. His message to teens is to respect yourself and believe in yourself enough and never put yourself in a situation where you are too afraid and not strong enough to say "no" to anything. By opening up his own life to us, he lets us believe it can happen to us....we can get hooked on drugs if we try it once, we can betray one's trust if we don't keep our word, we can be infected with a disease if we can't say no. ✧



After his presentation, Scott Fried met with several Hebrew High students and answered their questions.



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