

Harav Zisha Ausch Shlit"a



The founders with Rabbi Ausch

This past Thursday, a unique event was held in Monsey, attended by 150 volunteers who take calls for The HelpLine. The HelpLine was originally set up in Manchester UK, by Shaya Halpern and AY Goldman in response to two teenage tragedies in their Kehilla.

The best way to prevent anyone giving up on life is connection. And so, The HelpLine was set up to take calls from anyone in our community with any challenge. THL spreads a net with their anonymous volunteers so that no one should struggle alone.

The HelpLine callers are anonymous too. The HelpLine cannot see or trace the callers' numbers, nor do they record calls, allowing complete confidence for our kehilla to be able to talk through anything that is on their mind without fear of disclosure or stigma. Little did they know at the time that the highest numbers of calls come from the ages between 25-50.

The HelpLine has volunteers all over the world and is guided directly by Rabbonim in each location. Last year, The HelpLine advertised widely for new volunteers across Brooklyn and Monsey. The success of this campaign led to The HelpLine training another 150 volunteers. The total number of volunteers is now approaching 300. These volunteers take over 4500 calls a month from New York, UK, Gibraltar, Antwerp and now Boca Raton.



Rav Chaim Ozer Geldzahler Shlit"a



Lipa Lefkowitz - board member

The volunteers cannot tell anyone besides their spouse that they volunteer for The HelpLine. As Rav Chaim Ozer Geldzahler shlit"a, the guest speaker at the event, so eloquently said, "People in crisis don't need solutions, they need someone to walk in the dark with them, it's not always about having someone to turn on the light".

Indeed, the volunteers from the privacy of their homes, walk the callers in the dark through anxiety, depression, hopelessness, as well as loneliness or just being there for those who cannot talk to anyone else.

To celebrate the selflessness of their volunteers, The HelpLine arranged a stunning appreciation event. The heads of the organisation flew in from the UK. The volunteers were treated to a royal banquet, befitting the sacrifice these volunteers give 24/7 with no recognition from those they help.

The HelpLine's Ruv, Harav Zisha Ausch shlit"a, travelled in from Williamsburg just to address the volunteers and express the privilege he felt to be under the same roof as the volunteers who truly embody what means a chessed shel emes.

All the volunteers felt rejuvenated, including those who travelled for 5 hours and more to be at the event. The divrei chizuk gave the volunteers new strength to be there for those that need 24/7 365.

Anonymous. Safe. Never alone!

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