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Overcoming Obstacles: Free Brief Therapy Option Offered at Bnei Zion Adolescent Clinic in Haifa

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Haifa

The Bnei Zion Medical Center Friends Association has launched a project to provide free emotional therapy to teens following a 200 percent increase in inquiries from parents and educational staff regarding teens experiencing difficulties of various kinds during the COVID-19 outbreak.

The project is called “Overcoming Difficulty” and it offers counseling and support sessions aimed at making it easier for teens to cope with the new routine in their lives.

The lockdowns during the COVID-19 epidemic and the conduct within social distance have significantly affected the lives and wellbeing of the youth in Israel, while social distance also continues to create many and varied challenges to the expected and healthy stages of development.

Fears of the virus, which continues to cause significant upheavals in the world, are intensified among adolescents, who tend to see the world in black and white and in more dramatic colors than people who have already matured.

The medical center's Adolescent Health Clinic is unique in Haifa and the northern area of the country; it provides a short-term therapy (6 sessions) option designed to relieve the symptoms of returning to routine.

"The situation of the lost youth during this past year and following the spread of the coronavirus raises many concerns: depression, loneliness, self-harm, eating disorders, use of addictive substances and more," said Dr. Ohad Hochman, CEO of Bnei Zion Medical Center.

Dr. Noga Kerem, senior pediatrician, Medical Director of the Adolescent Health and Medicine Clinic at the Bnei-Zion Medical Center, added that the clinic is seeing "a 200 percent increase in inquiries to the Adolescent Health Clinic in a variety of distresses: anxiety, depression, difficulties in parent-adolescent communication, social difficulties, eating disorders, sharp weight gain, out of balance in chronic diseases, increase in physical symptoms, self-harm, addiction to online networks and more.

"The clinic employs a multi-professional and skilled team working with youth, who in light of the distress and clutter in requests for help decided to launch in a project of short-term interventions, with the aim of preventing today's lost youth from becoming the lost youth of tomorrow."

The Adolescent Clinic has a multidisciplinary team which includes an expert in adolescent medicine and eating disorders, a clinical dietitian, a family therapist, clinical social workers, clinical and medical psychologists, expression and creation therapists and expert counselors from various fields.

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