

Yossi Samuels at 19 – Sign of the Times

Certainly one of the most popular boys at the Institute, Yossi Samuels is always curious. He grabs your hand, eager to communicate, touching your face as if to know who you are. Yossi's world of darkness seems penetrated by his inner light, despite the fact that he has been blind and deaf since he was given a routine vaccination at 11 months. The effects of the injection left him as handicapped as a modern-day Helen Keller. Until age eight, Yossi was thought to be mentally impaired, and suggestions were made to institutionalize him. His parents were extremely optimistic, however, as they constantly witnessed Yossi's curiosity. He investigated every toy, and even tried to take apart the vacuum cleaner as he was so eager to learn about the world around him. Eleven years ago, Shoshana Weinstock, a deaf Jerusalem teacher found a way to communicate with Yossi by signing into his palm.

Once Yossi's world was opened up, he literally never looked back. His family and educators are constantly surprised at his progress, and today at the JIB, Yossi swims, jogs and rides a tandem

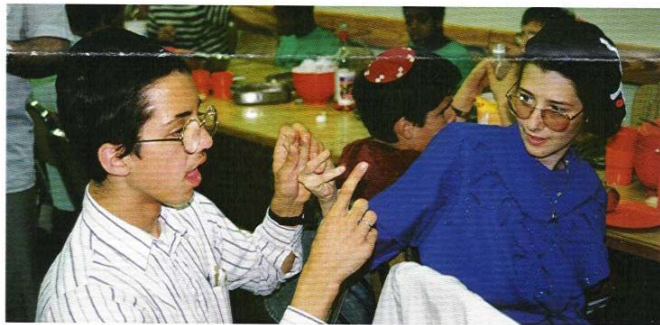
bicycle with volunteers. In addition to tackling geometry, he also learns Talmud weekly with a volunteer. In addition to the National Service volunteers who work full time with Yossi, helping him educationally, numerous people have learned sign language to communicate with Yossi, simply because he is so ...communicative.

"Yossi is an extraordinary person; bright, someone who can blow your mind with his witty insights," explains

Tali Ohayon, a former volunteer at the Institute. "He really teaches us who we are, and I have learned a lot about myself through him." Today, Tali is one of Yossi's full-time teachers, and she has watched his development through the years. Tali began working with Yossi when he was only 12 and she was a National Service volunteer at the Institute.

"All the volunteers learned sign because it seemed strange that there-

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Yossi communicates avidly with Institute teacher

One of the Institute's Outstanding Employees

Moshe Levy began working at the Jewish Institute for the Blind over forty years ago as a gardener. His love of nature and a beautiful garden is still apparent as he walks around the gardens of the Institute admiring the plants. And he obviously feels the same way about the flowering and development of the students at the Institute.

"I have seen so many pupils grow up, marry and find their livelihood through the years I have been here," recounts Levy. "It is very satisfying to see how they have matured and succeeded in life." Although he is not an educator, all of the students know him, and his kind manners and respect for everyone ensure that he is one of the favorites of students and staff on the campus of the JIB.

Today Levy has a varied array of jobs at the Institute, and he is very



Moshe Levy

often on the run between government offices and various departments of the Institute. "Moshe is certainly a man we can depend on for everything, and today he serves us well in the office as an excellent worker," describes Chaim Reshelbach, Institute Director. Although

Levy officially retired last year, he still works four hours daily.

"I hope I am making a contribution to the Jewish Institute for the Blind with my work, but I also think that my job is important to me as an individual," says Levy. "A person that works hard should also live long!" Levy began working at the Institute as a young man of 21, and in the close environment of the Institute he knew all the pupils in a short time. "The students used to come and help me with the gardening," he reminisces. "Only later was it actually incorporated as a course of study for pupils."

"It has been very interesting seeing the change in the Jewish Institute for the Blind and the students who are the reason for all of our efforts," Levy concludes. "I hope to continue to be of service here for years to come."