



# “Swords of Iron” Peoplehood in Wartime

## ENTER

The Jewish Peoplehood Alliance

היוזמה לקידום עמיות יהודית

*ENTER’s vision is to ensure the Jewish people remain a dynamic, diverse, global community that is united, secure and inclusive.*

December 2023

ENTER has adapted its portfolio in response to the wartime emergency that continues to consume Israel and the Jewish world. Alongside the trauma and travails the war has brought, “peoplehood” has surged as the rallying cry and defining paradigm shaping unprecedented mobilization in every Jewish society.

This brief update spotlights ENTER’s education and public awareness initiatives, both in Israel and across North America.

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Since the onslaught of October 7, Israelis have shifted attention to immediate wartime responses, driven by new and urgent needs. Some organizations and networks are focused exclusively on care for survivors, soldiers, and evacuees, and others have been seeking ways to adapt existing frameworks to align with new necessities generated by the war.

At ENTER, in the war’s earliest days we realized that Israel-Diaspora connectivity had a wartime calling: interaction as first aid, especially between young people. This is why we decided to harness ENTER’s expertise and the unique programmatic, technological, and networking assets developed over the past three years toward emergency responses.





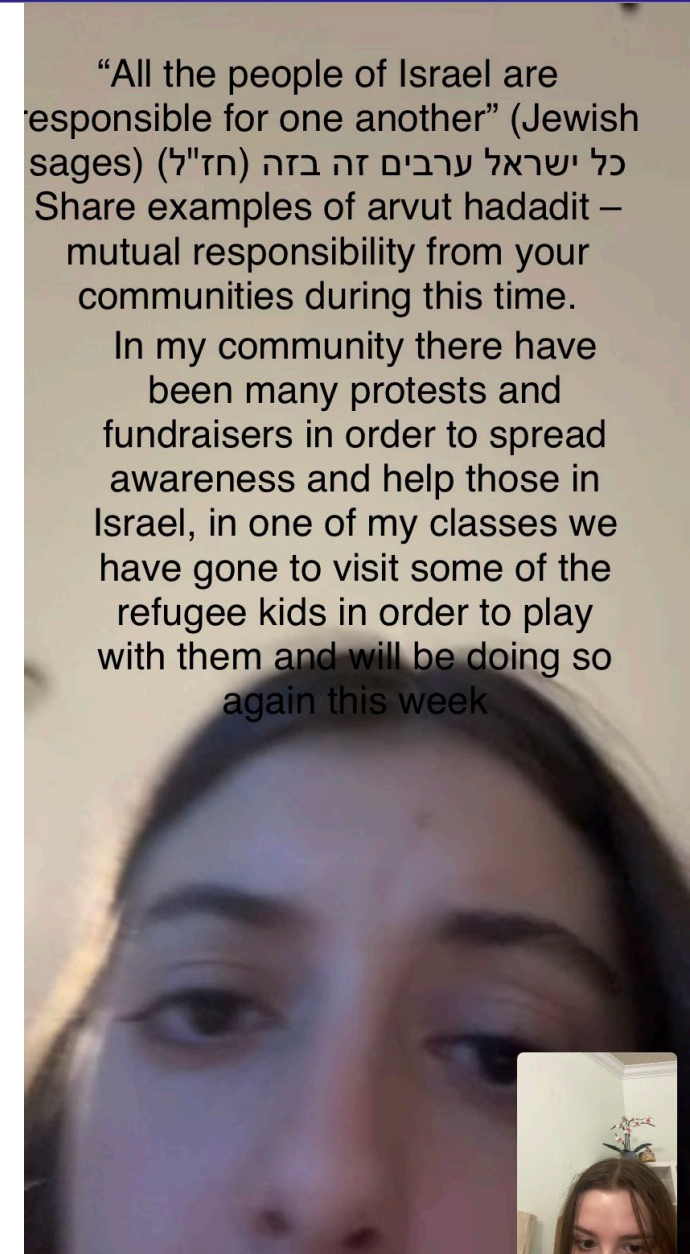
## One2One – Israel–North American high school exchange

These are historically challenging times for Jewish communities in Israel and worldwide. If our shared past is any indicator, times of crisis can be an opportunity for growth and strengthening bonds.

ENTER, together with RootOne and the Israeli Ministry of Education, launched a wartime One2One cohort. Through November and early December, we hosted over 200 teens from North America and Israel. These individualized, virtual “*mifgashim*” do not specifically address combatting antisemitism or promote advocacy. They are rooted in personal relationships and connections, touch points we know feed positive, pride-infused Jewish identity. One2One also counters the harmful influence of misinformation and polarization that is all-too-often magnified by the social media platforms that have captured the attention of so many young people.

“All the people of Israel are responsible for one another” (Jewish sages) (חז"ל) כל ישראל ערבים זה בזה  
Share examples of arvut hadadit – mutual responsibility from your communities during this time.

In my community there have been many protests and fundraisers in order to spread awareness and help those in Israel, in one of my classes we have gone to visit some of the refugee kids in order to play with them and will be doing so again this week







## One2One – Israel-North American high school exchange

With a special wartime grant from the Jim Joseph Foundation, specifically for expanding the reach of One2One, ENTER is now focused on recruiting more partner communities outside Israel to onboard high schoolers for our distinctive brand of cross-cultural encounters. These new series will take place this winter and spring, a period that is expected to continue to be marked by school disruptions in Israel and new challenges confronting Diaspora Jewry.

Video clip of “Maya and Ariel,” One2One wartime cohort, Fall 2023





## Peoplehood Infused Schools

During the first weeks of the war, most schools in Israel were not operating, regardless of location, due to lack of sufficient protected spaces and staffing shortages driven by the IDF reserve call up. Over time, more and more schools launched virtual learning, while some were able to rotate students on campus for limited in-person study.

ENTER quickly adapted to the new context, offering teachers online resources, including videos and images, showcasing Global Jewry's mobilization around the war, spotlighting "Jewish Peoplehood" and its core value of mutual responsibility (*Arvut Hadadit*). As public education struggled to navigate through enormous wartime challenges, ENTER was able to offer advice and content that was both accessible and relevant to educators in our network. We also connected schools with Diaspora counterparts and facilitated new opportunities to connect and sustain relationships during this emergency.

Hannukah activities – The Itamar School in Rishon LeTzion





## Public Awareness

ENTER staff and partners have fanned out to engage a wide array of audiences and communities, with a special emphasis on strengthening public awareness about the peoplehood paradigm.



Molly Buckman, Glazer Foundation, introducing Alon Friedman, Nov. 2023

In the Bay Area, Alon Friedman and Scott Lasensky participated in the Z3 Project's annual conference in Palo Alto in early November. Then, in Los Angeles CEO Alon Friedman addressed the plenary of the Jewish Funders Network (JFN) West Coast conference, sharing a first-hand account of the war, its aftermath and its impact on the peoplehood sector and Israel-Diaspora relations. See: [Hearts in the east, Jewish Funders Network in the West: L.A. convening focuses on crisis in Israel – eJewish Philanthropy](#)





## Public Awareness

In mid-November, ENTER partnered with the American Zionist Movement (AZM), which works across a broad ideological, political and religious spectrum linking the American Jewish community together in support of Israel, Zionism and the Jewish People.

At AZM's request, ENTER planned, choreographed and co-led plenaries and breakout sessions around peoplehood themes at the AZM biennial in New York, which was refashioned around the wartime agenda. ENTER recruited more than a dozen facilitators and speakers, all leading voices, new leaders and community partners of our "North American Peoplehood Coalition." The two-day gathering in New York brought together 150 leaders of AZM member communities, providing an unparalleled cross-communal opportunity to promote the idea and practice of peoplehood. ENTER staff worked closely with AZM CEO Herbert Block and the biennial conference planning committee and is continuing to engage AZM closely and explore opportunities for collaboration within our shared frameworks of Zionism and peoplehood.



Photo credit: Michelle Gevint



## North American Jewish Peoplehood Coalition and Hostage Advocacy

Under the rubric of “Peoplehood in Wartime,” in late November ENTER’s Peoplehood Coalition convened a Master Class co-chaired by Scott Lasensky and AJC’s Laura Shaw Frank. Bringing together nearly two dozen organizations and communities, the program examined surges in fundraising, in-person participation and hostage advocacy. A hybrid program, part of a series sponsored by the Coalition, the in-person component in November was hosted by the American Sephardi Federation and its CEO Jason Guberman and Director of Sephardi House Ruben Shimonov. Special presentations were given by JFNA, the World Zionist Organization, and the JCC movement.

In Washington, D.C., Scott Lasensky has represented ENTER at a number of forums, public events and private community gatherings focused on hostage advocacy, including convening grassroots, local and national organizations to meet with visiting hostage families and October 7 victims. ENTER also assisted with a World Zionist Organization-led delegation of hostage family members in mid-November that visited the Bay Area and Los Angeles, under the leadership of WZO President Tova Dorfman.

“Peoplehood in Wartime,” Master Class, Nov. 28, [www.PeoplehoodCoalition.org](http://www.PeoplehoodCoalition.org)







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*ENTER's* vision is ambitious and bold,  
and our stakeholders remain deeply committed to

**"MOVING THE NEEDLE"**





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