



July 2009

Shalom,

We are delighted that you are considering going on Shnat with your youth movement and, as you probably know, Machon is one of the choices for the first few months of your Shnat year. We understand that you are either thinking seriously about choosing Machon or have decided that you definitely want to do it. We certainly think that Machon is a great programme, although, like most programmes, it is not suitable for everyone. As you have hopefully been told, one of the aspects of Shnat for those who are considering Machon or who are already certain that this is what they want to do, is the need for an interview process that involves both your movement, the AZYC and us the Machon. The aim of the interview is for us to get to know you a little, to make sure we are all clear about the expectations of the Machon and to make sure that you are suitable for the programme and that it is one that is really right for you. In our experience it is also a good opportunity to help you clarify your own thoughts if Machon specifically and Shnat generally is something you are still deciding upon. I, Colin, from Machon will be coming over to Australia in August to do these interviews together with Liam from the AZYC and one of your movement madrichim. One of them will hopefully be setting up an interview time for you very soon.

The interview will last about 45-50 minutes and will include among other things some questions about yourself, your background and involvement in the movement, your reasons for wanting to go on Shnat and your expectations of the programme, what you know about the specifics and details of the programme both generally and the Machon in particular, including how it differs from the other options your movement has available and finally some questions and discussion about your views of the world and your opinions, especially connected to aspects of being Jewish and your relationship to Israel.

We really suggest that you prepare for the interview by reading the attached Machon booklet which will help you better understand the programme in a slightly different way from the way your Bogrim may well have spoken to you about it. There will be time in the interview for you to ask any questions you may have, not just about the Machon part of the year, but if you have any questions beforehand, especially about the interview process itself, then feel free to ask your madrichim or, if you wish, to be in direct contact with me at Machon. You can e-mail me at [colinb@jafi.org](mailto:colinb@jafi.org)

Looking forward to meeting you in the near future,

B'vracha,

*Colin Bulka*

*Director Machon L'Madrichei Chutz L'Aretz - The Institute of Youth Leaders from Abroad*

**WHAT IS MACHON?**

Machon is an intensive educational and leadership development programme that takes place for the first four months of the Shnat year. It is based on a campus in a suburb of Jerusalem which houses the participants who are on the English Speaking Machon programme as well as many other madrichim from South American youth movements who study on a separate Spanish Speaking Machon. From February – June is the southern hemisphere English speaking Machon (the one you will be on) which has participants from both Australia and South Africa, drawn usually, from five youth movements; Habonim-Dror, Hashomer Hatzair, Netzer, Betar and Hineni.

The aim of the Machon part of the year is to provide participants with the knowledge, skills and understandings necessary to be madrichim in their movements on their return and to help them make sense of the experiences they will be having in second part of their year with their movements when they are out living in and experiencing different aspects of Israeli society.

The fact that Machon takes place in a pluralistic setting with representatives from youth movements with very different ideologies and beliefs, whether about Judaism and/or Israel and Zionism, allows for an exchange of ideas and the creation of a vibrant and dynamic educational atmosphere where people can learn from, challenge and be challenged by opinions other than their own and thus can develop their own views of the world. This focus on encouraging people to explore, challenge and question their own belief systems is also one of the key educational goals of the Machon.

The main content learning on Machon is organised in five main t'chumim (areas), namely Zionism/Israel, Story of the Jewish People, Judaism, Hadracha and Ivrit. As with the participants, the staff and teachers come from a wide range of different backgrounds and beliefs and they are some of the best teachers in Israel in terms of delivering material in a classroom setting and yet through an informal, youth movement approach.

As you will see from the attached example tochnit, the Machon day is both long and intense and participants are expected, as with any movement event, to be in every class. Within any given time slot there is almost always some degree of choice, whether that is in terms of preferred learning style or type of content but as prospective leaders of your movements and the Jewish world we expect people to be committed to all of the aspects of the programme.

Though here are various occasions when we will leave the campus (the weekly siyur/trip out and community involvement each week) most of the Machon learning takes place in a classroom setting. Much of the teaching involves the acquisition of knowledge through lectures though the overall style of Machon is fitted to the informal world of youth movements and encourages discussion and debate both inside and outside class. There are also plenty of opportunities to be involved in the more classically youth movement style of peulot and other informal education activities.

See the example weekly tochnit below<sup>1</sup> together with the accompanying dictionary which explains a little bit about what the title of each time slot means. As well as the

standard weekly programme there are also three overnight tiyulim of 3-5 days each and special peulot and activities for the various chagim that occur during the time of the Machon.

The structure of Machon involves organising the machzor (each particular Machon group is called a machzor) into smaller Chavurot of about 15-20 people and each Chavura has a Rosh Chavura, a full time staff person who is responsible for them and for helping them maximise their personal and communal educational journey on Machon.

The core tzevet consists of these three or four Roshei Chavura (that's the plural form), the Director of the Programme and two Rekazot, young post army Israelis who live on the same corridor as the Machonikim and help them negotiate the organisational aspects of their life at Kiryat Moriah as well as helping them experience Jerusalem and Israel more fully during their time on Machon.

Finally, there is the social and communal aspect of Machon life which is no less important than the study aspects of the programme. This will inevitably include a lot of going out at nights and on weekends and other free time to see different aspects of Jerusalem and Israel. Other than the social side however, our goal is to help the group build for themselves a real sense of community and to take initiatives above and beyond what we provide on the programme to make the life of the community as full and rich as possible in order to maximise every opportunity possible of this year. As the old Shnat saying goes, "we can always sleep next year!".

At its best Machon can be a transformational and life-changing experience in terms of one's personal growth and development and in terms of one's relationship to what being Jewish and Zionist are all about. We hope that should you be a participant this coming year that Machon will be that for you too as it has been for so many of your madrichim in previous years.

This is an example tochnit from a recent Machon programme. There may well be some changes for the programme that you will be coming on.

#### Machon - Sample Model Week

Friday/ שבת	Thursday	Wednesday	Tuesday	Monday	Sunday
07:00-07:50 Breakfast					
	8:00-9:30 Ivrit	8:00-9:30 Zionism/Israel	8:00-9:30 Electives	8:30-9:30 Israel Update	8:30-10:00 Hadracha Specialization
	Break 9:30-10:00				Break 10:00-10:15

Shabbat  (mostly free)	10:00-11:15  In-depth Choice	10:00-11:15  Zionism/Israel	10:00-11:15  Story of the  Jewish People	10:00-11:15	10:15-11:30  Ivrit
	11:15-11:45 Break				
	11:35-13:00  In-depth Choices	11:45-13:00  Ivrit	11:45-13:00  Story of the Jewish People	11:45-13:00	11:45-13:00  Chavura
	13:00 Lunch Break				
	14:00 – 14:00 15:15  Machon Time	Community Involvement	14:30-16:00  Tnua Time Electives	15:30-17:00  Core Course or Hadracha	Siyur  This week: Tour to Hebron
	15:30-16:45  Chavura Reflection			17:00-17:30  Break	
	One on Ones		16:15  Tnua time	17:15-18:30  Peer Led Hadracha	
Dinner 19:00					
Free	Erev Peulah	Tnua Time	Free	19:45  Sunday Selection  This week: Israeli History through Football	

## **MACHON DICTIONARY**

### **HADRACHA SPECIALISATIONS**

Over the course of the Machzor, there will be two mini-courses that will allow each Machonik to specialise in certain choice areas of Hadracha. These subjects are not necessarily essential for every madrich/a or leader but are things that will benefit certain people in their movements & organizations.

### **IVRIT**

3 times a week there will be classes in Hebrew, aiming to improve the Machonik's language ability. In these lessons a stress will be mainly placed on speaking skills and understanding the language, with some degree of grammar and vocabulary relevant to spending a year in Israel. Classes are taught according to different ability levels.

### **CHAVURA**

Every Machzor is divided up into smaller groups called Chavurot. Each Chavura is a mini-community with its own leader (known as a 'Rosh Chavura'). Together, they have fun, support each other, learn and grow whilst also taking responsibility for preparing certain elements of the programme for the entire Machzor (Tiyul, Erev Peula). This time slot also offers everyone a chance to be orientated in the week's events and timetable.

### **SIYUR (*TRIP OUT*)**

Each week a substantial amount of time is dedicated to leaving the campus and learning about Israel. There will be four themes looked at over the Machzor – Jerusalem, Israeli Society, Social Justice and Culture. Each Siyur is different, and will offer a combination of Tour Guiding, museums, and activities.

### **SUNDAY SELECTION**

Sunday evening offers an exciting choice of optional one-off activities and speakers to inform, inspire or simply entertain.

### **ISRAEL UPDATE**

So much can happen in a given week in Israel that it is hard to keep up with the news. In addition to being provided with daily newspapers, Machon also offers a regular class to look at the week's headlines. There are two learning options – an overview of the week's stories or an in-depth analysis of a significant event.

### **JUDAISM**

Two classes a week give each Machonik a window into the variety and relevance of the Jewish tradition. There will be a series of interesting options taught by four teachers who themselves represent different approaches and denominations of Judaism.

## **CORE COURSE HADRACHA**

This core course will help prepare each Machonik for a wide range of leadership roles in their youth movements, organisations and in their communities. There will be three groups that will combine a focus on Hadracha skills, knowledge and values.

## **PEER-LED HADRACHA**

Moving from theory to practice each week two members of the hadracha class will be asked to plan, prepare and run a 40 minute Peula for their peers. Afterwards, the 'Madrachim' receive feedback from their friends and teachers in order to reflect on their Hadracha abilities.

## **ELECTIVES**

In one or two time slots during the week there is a choice of a range of different interesting mini courses that are not linked by any theme other than that we think they are of interest to Machonikim. Some examples of the kind of courses offered in recent years are: The Philosophy of Leibovitz, Israeli society through Film, Introduction to Arabic language and culture and Israel Advocacy to name just a few.

## **STORY OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE**

This core course will bring to life the history and significance of Jewish history. The course will provide key knowledge and a chronological overview whilst also giving an understanding of history's importance to the Jewish people today. There will be a choice of classes according to different learning styles and levels of prior knowledge. .

## **TNUA TIME (*MOVEMENT TIME*)**

As Machon is a programme that works in conjunction with all the Youth Movements and sees one of its goals to prepare Machonikim to return to their Movements; once a week a space is given to each Movement to run its own activities with their members

## **ISRAEL/ZIONISM**

These classes offer a foundational course that covers the development of the State of Israel. This core course will be taught using key themes whilst touching on three central aspects: Zionist philosophy, Israeli society & culture and Arab-Israeli relations. There will be a choice of classes according to different learning styles and levels of prior knowledge. .

## **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

Once a week each Machonik is encouraged to get involved in the community around the campus. Different options are given at the beginning of the Machzor and each person chooses what they wish to invest themselves in. Some of the choices are: teaching English, running Peulot, meeting Israelis in a Mifgash, a Social Activism option or discovering Jerusalem

## **EREV PEULA**

Some Wednesday evenings offer a chance for fun and entertainment. Each Chavura will prepare and run an evening activity for the whole group during the Machzor and there will be also be opportunities for the Tzevet and Chavura leaders to do likewise as well as a chance on some weeks to meet the South American Machonikim who are also at Kiryat Moriah.

## **IN-DEPTH CHOICE**

Whilst there is an importance to having core courses that are obligatory for all Machonikim, each individual also has the opportunity to pursue further study in an area that interests them more. This course will allow Machonikim to literally go in-depth into one of the five core course subjects

## **MACHON TIME**

However large the Machzor, there is always a need to bring the entire group together each week for a variety of purposes. Whether to hear key announcements, speak directly with the Machon Director or to do some joint activity. This space also belongs in part to the Moetza – an elected group of Machonikim who take responsibility for organising additional programmes and sorting out group issues or problems

## **CHAVURA REFLECTION**

Once a week, to see the week out, the Chavura comes together to think about the week that has been. Using a variety of activities and group facilitation, this space offers a chance to connect with all the different sort of learning and experiences that take place at Machon inside and outside the classroom

## **ONE ON ONES**

Every 2-3 weeks each Machonik gets to have some private time with their Rosh Chavura. This space offers an opportunity for the Machonik to grow and develop and bring up any matters of personal concern. It also allows both parties to deepen their connection and relationship