

Apartment Living Fosters Independence

We would like to see our older students move into apartments and function whether they study or are members of the work force, explains Rachel Skrobish, the Director of the Institute's Department of Education and Rehabilitation.

A new development at the Institute is an observational flat that has been refurbished in Kiryat Moshe and will enable groups of students to live with a counselor and get used to independent living. In addition to waking up and getting to the Institute on their own (a short walk from the apartment), the students will have to manage a budget for breakfast and dinner, shop and prepare food. While learning all of the basic skills of independent living in this apartment, students will also have to learn to find the fuse box, deal with neighbors and noisy dogs, as well as maintain the cleanliness of the apartment.

We think this exercise in independent living is one of the most valuable tools we can give our students, explains Skrobish. Both apartment living inside a sheltered flat in our dormitory as well as the apartment in a nearby neighborhood will provide our older students with a real taste of independence while giving the Institute staff an idea what is important to emphasize and develop in their continuing education.

Although it is the Institute's job to prepare students to become self sufficient, these apartments serve as a challenge to students as well as staff personnel. Step-by-step, and in a very methodological way, these young people are learning some of the most important tools of independent living.



Preparing food in the kitchen

One of the Institute's Most Outstanding Employees

Peter Vardy moved to Israel as an idealistic young physician in 1953. He started practicing medicine in the fledgling country in Tel Hashomer Hospital and in 1961, he and his family moved to Ashkelon where he headed the Department of Pediatrics at Barzilai Hospital. From 1981-1985 Prof. Vardy served as Director of Barzilai Hospital.

In 1985, the Vardys moved to Jerusalem where Prof. Vardy joined the Ministry of Health and headed the Department of Medical Professions. In those years it was imperative to institute legislation to provide for licensing of foreign qualified physicians. This was instituted just before



Professor Peter Vardy

the influx of the massive Russian immigration. Retraining courses for the medical professions were also offered throughout the country.

During all of his busy years, Prof. Vardy has always given of himself un-

stintingly, and for almost a decade he has represented the Ministry of Health on the Institute's Board of Directors. At present, he is retired from his professional duties, but he still has time for his communal affairs.

Since his arrival in Israel over 45 years ago, blindness in infants has sharply decreased. Work remains to be done for Israel's blind and partially sighted population, however, and in spite of his retirement, Prof. Vardy is still working faithfully. As he explains: "In a very unselfish and intensive way, the Jewish Institute for the Blind cares for the blind and partially-sighted community, and they are doing an excellent job."