



TRY – Tichon Ramah Yerushalayim



December 1, 2020

Kislev 15, 5781



Dear TRY Students and Families,

Over the course of the next several weeks, we will be sending out important details regarding the upcoming TRY semester, hopefully answering many of your pressing questions along the way. As the departure date for this **amazing** adventure is quickly approaching, we ask that you read these emails thoroughly and contact our team with any questions that may arise.

I wanted to start off by saying *תודה* (in the spirit of the Thanksgiving holidays - both in Canada and the US)! Thank you for choosing TRY. Thank you for putting your faith in us during this challenging year. And thank you for your continued cooperation throughout the registration process. We are thrilled to let you know that over 50 families are planning on sending their teens on TRY 2021, and we continue to process new applicants every week!

Up until now, most of your communication has been with [Elinor Kaufman](#), our registrar. Please continue to be in touch with Elinor with all of your questions as you have until now. Elinor works closely with our team in Israel and New York.

Before introducing you to the TRY staff, please note a few important updates that are relevant to all of our families.

Visas

We know many of you are anxious to begin the visa application process, as are we. My colleagues and I here in Israel have been working closely with the appropriate authorities in order to streamline the process. We will have more information for you shortly.

In the meantime...

Passports

If you have yet to do so, please update your passport information in the [registration system](#) ASAP. If you do not have a valid passport that expires after December 1, 2021, please:

- A) Apply NOW for an updated passport and,
- B) Keep Elinor updated as to your progress so that we can prepare accordingly (this may affect the visa application, for example).

USY High

This year we are re-introducing the USY High track, an option for students with strong USY roots to develop valuable leadership skills and maintain their connection with USY during their semester (or quarter) abroad. USY High students will be fully integrated into the TRY program, in addition to participating on a semester long seminar that includes sessions with speakers, educators, and a USY High mentor who will help our students process the experience. In order to sign up for USY High, please indicate so on the 'Personal Information' page of your registration (a USY High question has been added).

Introducing the TRY 2021 Team

Jonathan Madoff, MSW, Director and Head of School

Together with my colleagues, I am working hard in anticipation and preparation for our teens' arrival and start of the program. Throughout the semester parents will hear from me via our weekly newsletter updates and I am always just a phone call or email away. This will be my 9th semester working with inspiring TRY students, and I cannot wait to see their faces here in Israel!

Aliza Zeff, MA, Director of Teaching and Learning

Aliza is responsible for coordinating the academic component of the program. Aliza will ensure that our school is running smoothly and our students are receiving the appropriate academic support. She will be in touch with parents and home schools throughout the semester. Aliza also directly supervises the teaching faculty on the ground in Israel.

Hillary Menkowitz, Student Life and Hadracha Coordinator

Hillary is responsible for the well being of our students and *madrachim* (counselors) throughout the semester, providing support and guidance along the way. She also will coordinate the informal programming and logistics of daily life on TRY. Finally, Hillary will coordinate all medical needs on the program.

Miriam Tekuzener, Director of Israel Studies

In addition to being an Israel Core Course (ICC) teacher, Miriam coordinates the logistics and educational components of ICC. One of the main themes of TRY is that we use Israel as our classroom, which, following the expected quarantine period, we will be doing regularly through many exciting and interesting *tiyulim* (field trips) and classes.

Betsalel Steinhart, ICC Teacher

Betsalel is a master educator who taught and directed the Israel Core Course (ICC) on TRY for many years. Since 2017, Betsalel has been directing the [Ramah Israel Institute \(RII\)](#), providing short-term customized programs in Israel for schools, synagogues and community organizations. We are incredibly lucky to benefit from Betsalel's expertise and experience this year, as he will be joining us for the semester until tourism travel picks up again. I'm personally thrilled to have Betsalel back on the team for one more semester!

Elinor Kaufman, Registrar

As I indicated above, Elinor works with our families throughout the entire registration process, including coordinating flights, financial aid applications, and any other registration related queries.

Meir Hoyzman, Director of Ramah Israel

Meir oversees all Ramah Israel programs, including [Ramah Israel Seminar](#), [Ramah Israel Institute \(RII\)](#), [the Ramah Jerusalem Day Camp](#), and of course, [Tichon Ramah Yerushalayim](#). Meir looks forward to welcoming the TRY students to Israel.

Yael Yamin, Associate Director

As part of her role, Yael is responsible for the health, safety and security of all Ramah Israel participants, including the students on TRY.

In addition, we are very lucky to have a strong support staff in the Ramah Israel office including **Maya Freedman**, Office Manager, **Avi Mizrachi**, Physical Plant Facilitator and Goldstein Campus Liaison, and **Orna Yeshayahu**, Bookkeeper.

Finally, we would like to thank our colleagues at the National Ramah Commission (NRC) in New York for their efforts and support in bringing dozens of teens on TRY every year: **Jeff Goodman**, National Business Manager, **Michael Vayda**, Senior Accountant, **Nancy Scheff**, Director of Communications, **Becca Stern-Shock**, Office Manager, **Amy Scopp Cooper**, National Associate Director, and **Rabbi Mitch Cohen**, National Ramah Director.

You will hear more from our staff in the coming weeks. We look forward to a wonderful semester together in Israel!

With warm regards from Jerusalem,

Jonathan Madoff, MSW

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educational and religious supervision of [The Jewish Theological Seminary](#). Since 1962, Ramah Israel has provided substantive experiential education and meaningful Conservative Jewish living for North Americans in Israel in the spirit of the Ramah Camping Movement.

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