

# ELEM-Entry's Fourth Annual Community Dinner Raises over 16K to Help Israeli Youth Working as Prostitutes in Israel

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*All Money Raised goes Directly to ELEM's Awake at*

## *Night Program*

**New York — (Feb. 7, 2012)**— Over 100 guests gathered in 7 upscale residences across the NY metro area to raise money for ELEM's Awake at Night program to help troubled Israeli youth who are working as prostitutes. Locations included: Soho, the East Village, the Upper West Side and North Bergen, N.J. Over \$16,000 was raised, making it the most successful Community Dinner.

**ELEM-Entry** activists, a group of NYC-based American and Israeli young professionals arranged the dinner. Activists secured residences and worked with the homeowners to prepare delicious Moroccan, Georgian and other feasts. Each home was filled with attendees interested in learning how they can help distressed Israeli youth. After watching a riveting DVD highlighting the youth prostitution problem in Israel, guests were willing to open their hearts and wallets.

"Helping young Israeli children find relief from working in prostitution is a cause all ELEM-Entry activists strongly believe in," stated Yuval Sheer, co-president, ELEM-Entry. "The money raised is a testament to the efforts of ELEM-Entry's dedicated volunteers. While this was our best Community Dinner, none of us are willing to stop our work on behalf of our most vulnerable children."

The target population is boys, girls and transgender between the ages of 13 to 21 who are involved in prostitution. Awake at Night provides unique response to youth with minority gender identities or cultural backgrounds.

Thousands of youth in Israel become involved in prostitution as a result of severe distress; a physically or emotionally abusive environment; have a scarring experience of rejection. Demographics of child prostitutes include native Israeli, Ethiopian and from the former Soviet Union.

## **About Elem**

ELEM was founded in 1982 by a group of American and Israeli professionals and lay volunteers to help Israel's population of at-risk youth become productive citizens. Today ELEM is Israel's leading non-profit organization dedicated to the treatment and rehabilitation of abused, neglected, and adjudicated Jewish and Arab Israeli youth. The youth ELEM serves face tremendous hurdles; many live below the poverty line or struggle to assimilate as new immigrants. With a network of 250

professionals and almost 2,000 volunteers, ELEM is able to reach tens of thousands of youth each year. ELEM provides a unique brand of non-judgmental, innovative aid including group and individual therapy, mentoring, occupational and educational placement, and vocational training. ELEM also operates a wide network of counseling and support centers, as well as a fleet of outreach vans that take to the streets to reach the hidden “children of the night”.