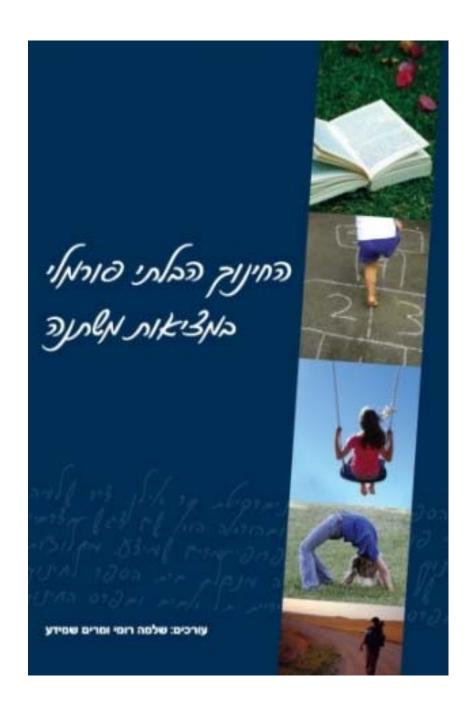# NON-FORMAL EDUCATION
# IN A CHANGING REALITY

Edited by

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החינוך הבלתי פורמלי
במציאות משתנה

עורכים: שלמה רומי ומרים שמידע

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# Preface

**Shlomo Romi and Mirjam Schmida, Editors**

## Aims and Structure of the Book

This book is designed to fill a gap in the study of non-formal education. Non-formal education is

a field of dynamic and growing activity, but one for which there is only little research and a

paucity of academic writing.

This volume discusses the theoretical and practical realms of non-formal education. It

addresses the main theoretical disciplines that are the foundation of his field, among them

educational philosophy, educational psychology, social and educational psychology, pedagogy,

and history. In addition, the book describes the main practical work of non-formal education

within the general field of education, and the main organizational settings with their activities.

Writing on non-formal education focuses on four areas: (1) non-formal education in

various educational sectors; (2) extra-curricular non-formal education in youth movements and

community and residential educational institutions; (3) in-school settings, such as social

education within school, extra-curricular activities and projects initiated by the Ministry of

Education such as the Individual Commitment Project for helping people within the local

community, youth journeys to Poland for on-location Holocaust studies, and Just Community, a

program designed to enhance moral education; (4) non-formal educational settings for

populations with special needs as a unique alternative for formal settings.

The decision to include both aspects of non-formal education – the theoretical aspect and

the practical one, was a methodological decision in line with "grounded field theory." Grounded-

field theory is central to social sciences, and calls for data collection, processing, and presentation

in accordance with qualitative research methodology. The latter relates data uncovered in the field to more global categories and basic concepts that arise during review of the theoretical and research literature. Grounded-field theory differs from methodologies based on existing theories and presupposed conceptual frameworks. It seeks new understanding and insights for social mechanisms and processes and for the power relations between them, in addition to new understanding and insights for agendas and worldviews.

The first part of this book is devoted to the theoretical aspects of non-formal education. It encompasses the main disciplines involved and presents those basic concepts that characterize non-formal education and distinguish it from other forms of education. The second part offers a broad look at a variety of non-formal educational settings and activities, as they actually happen in practice. The Epilogue ties both parts, relating the reported findings to the basic concepts described in the literature. The discussion of the relation between the two aspects of non-formal education – the theoretical and practical aspects – leads to the formulating of basic assumptions that are the foundation of non-formal education.

The book is meant for teachers and students specializing in non-formal education in universities, colleges, and teacher-education programs in these institutions. Educators involved in non-formal education will benefit from this text, as will anyone who cherishes the study and practice of education, especially non-formal education.

Following is a synopsis of the text:

## Part I. Theoretical Aspects

*This part presents theoretical aspects of non-formal education, focuses non-formal education within the disciplines which form its foundation.*

**Chapter 1. Non-formal education: Definitions and theoretical approaches.** This chapter attempts to formulate a theoretical perception of non-formal education, based on its sustaining theoretical and philosophical elements. The authors note the gap between the vast and developed activities of non-formal education within the field of education and the paucity of thought and conceptualization devoted to it, perceiving this as a result of the complexity of this educational realm. The proposed perception is related to the many and varied activities in the field of non-formal education and to the criteria distinguishing them from other areas of education.

**Chapter 2. Non-formal youth education in the *yishuv* and the State of Israel**. This is a presentation and analysis of the development of non-formal education before Israeli statehood. The chapter espoused a historical view, and follows the structural, organizational and pedagogical changes that took place in 1919-1991. The discussion addresses six periods, from 1919-1934, the years before the area of non-formal education was established, and includes youth movements activities, playgrounds, clubs, summer camps, student bodies, and the beginning of pre-military education. In the following periods the Youth and Society Administration in the Ministry of Education was established, upgrading old areas of activity and institutionalizing new ones such as Youth and Community, and the Heritage of Eastern and Sephardic Judaism. The chapter ends with the central dilemmas of non-formal education and suggests ways of addressing them.

**Chapter 3. Education for co-existence and peace.** This chapter examines the unique contribution of non-formal education to the enhancement of co-existence and peace among the various sectors of Israeli society, using the special potential of non-formal education. The chapter concludes that the appropriate environment for peace education is not the formal classroom setting, but rather non-formal settings which enable dialogue, an exploration of conflicts, struggling with the issues, and, at the same time, a change of perspective. It is the author's

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opinion that workshops and encounters, as well as camps and shared projects, have a great advantage over any formalized study of these issues in the classroom.

**Chapter 4. Leisure education and socialization.** The chapter examines the process of socialization for leisure from the theoretical and practical aspects. It presents a conceptual and practical framework for understanding education for leisure and its role in the community and in educational settings. The unique attributes of non-formal educational settings provide an enjoyable context in which essential skills are developed, and positive attitudes toward leisure fostered. The chapter examines the application of education for leisure in international and Israeli settings, and presents it in a discussion of the development of leisure-education curricula within educational settings.

**Chapter 5. The pedagogy of non-formal education.** This chapter is an examination of the special characteristics of the pedagogy of non-formal education and the differences between non-formal education and pedagogy in other educational spheres. The chapter analyzes several practices that characterize the pedagogy of non-formal education, and focuses on the main pedagogical criteria as they relate to subject matter, methods, location, and time.

**Chapter 6. Non-formal education and computer literacy.** New educational technologies and their implementation in non-formal education are introduced here. The chapter describes non-formal educational activities from a variety of countries, including Israel, for integrating computer use, internet, and community television for children and adults. Finally, the chapter examines the social and economic meaning of implementing these new technologies.

**Chapter 7. Youngsters choose youth movements: social aspects.** This chapter examines the communal-social aspects and class-stratification aspects related to the results of adolescents'

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processes of choosing to join a youth movement. The findings reveal that the results of the initial and ongoing choice of a youth movement are related to various personal resources of each individual, and to the various community settings and social circles to which this individual belongs, as well as the ideological credo of his or her educational organization of choice.

**Chapter 8.  Methodological approaches to researching non-formal education.** The main attributes of research on non-formal education and its methodology are the subject of this chapter. The chapter also discusses the methodological difficulties of such research. The author points out that the difficulties in determining whether a non-formal educational program's goals have been met arise from fact that often, such programs do not have a set curriculum or that there is no written material or theoretical foundation for the curriculum. The chapter discusses several ways of expanding the methodological approach and for applying well-tested tools. The integration of qualitative and quantitative methodologies enables the development of theory and tests.

**Chapter 9.  Non-formal educational research in Israel.** This chapter adds the Israeli dimension to the previous chapter, and reports on research conducted on non-formal education within the Israeli educational system. An analysis of the studies reveals consistency with results obtained in other countries. The studies barely touch upon the essential questions of non-formal education and those attributes which distinguish it from formal education. The studies focus on organization issues, on budget, and on follow-up in non-formal educational settings, and devote less attention to educational-philosophical problems. For the most part, research methods and tools are more qualitative and less quantitative, reflecting the worldwide research approach in this area.

**Chapter 10.  Professional educators in non-formal education.** The final chapter of Part I outlines the professional identity of non-formal education workers, their specific roles, and their training. The chapter examines the requirements, expectations, and difficulties faced by the

various training and employment systems in turning workers' training in non-formal education to a professional, accredited training.

## Part II: Activities and Methods

*Part II introduces the realms of activity of non-formal education in the field, and classifies them according to criteria of educational sectors, settings, content, methods of activity and the population served. This part is divided into four sections: The first introduces non-formal educational activities in their various educational settings. The assumption underlying this classification is that the sector within which non-formal education functions imprints – ideologically, ethically, or religiously – upon the very essence of this education, determines its goals, and shapes its symbolic and practical means of expression.*

**Chapter 11. Developmental and sociological aspects of the Government non-formal education.** The chapter presents the unique factors that shaped non-formal education within the public education system and affected it as a singular phenomenon. The relationship between non-formal education in this sector and social, economic, political, and cultural circumstances of society in Israel and the educational system in particular are examined.

**Chapter 12. Leisure and non-formal activities in the public religious educational system.** This chapter examines the complex position held by the public-religious educational system whose students come from national-religious families. It addresses general attitudes toward leisure, and particularly toward non-formal educational settings that include leisure activities such as youth movements, organizations for social voluntarism, and social educational-religious families) toward l activities in school.

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**Chapter 13. Leisure activities of young ultra-orthodox girls.** The attitudes of ultra-orthodox society, especially of women, to non-formal education and leisure, are examined in this chapter. The text highlights the paradoxical relationships between women's actually leisure activities and the values of their society.

**Chapter 14. Non-formal education in Palestinian society in Israel.** The chapter describes non-formal education in the Arab sector in Israel, and compares it to the various aspects of Jewish non-formal education. The chapter notes that in the Arab sector, non-formal education has not succeeded in differentiating itself from formal education, and is active on the sidelines of formal education. It does so without having determined a clear agenda and while maneuvering between the traditionalism of Palestinian society and Israeli society which is individualistic and competitive. Non-formal education in the Arab sector suffers from a high degree of supervision and centralist organization and acts without an independent policy, employing a short-term perception of answering needs.

*In the next areas addressed in Part II, non-formal educational activities are classified according to the organizational settings – out-of-school activities and in-school activities. This division in not merely technical – the distinction between independent activities, unaffiliated with an organization, and those that are carried out under the auspices of one authority or another also bears on their very essence, goals, and procedures. The assumption is that the force of behavioral codes that characterize non-formal education would be more dominant in the autonomous settings, less so within the school.*
*The second area presents non-formal out-of-school settings and focuses on those activates characterized by the autonomous nature of non-formal education. This category includes:*

**Chapter 15.  Community education and community centers.**  The chapter describes the development of community education, the main settings within which it works, and the reciprocal relationships of these settings with the various authorities. The chapter indicates that in the future, the community center will have to prepare itself for becoming the main social-cultural setting around which the social activity of children and their parents who spend most of their days at home, will center.

**Chapter 16.  Residential education and care in Israel:  The Scope of educational and social programs and their dimensions.** This chapter describes the unique features of residential schools in the Israeli school system, and compares them to similar systems in other countries. The chapter indicates that despite the fact that the Western world perceives residential schools as an educational-therapeutic setting that is diminishing in scope, it seems that the unique patterns of youth villages and Israeli educational residential schools are continuing to thrive, and show a high degree of flexibility and adaptation to social change.

**Chapter 17.  Youth leadership.** The chapter describes youth leadership in relationship to the study of leadership, and describes an enterprise to develop leadership skills in young people. The chapter argues that leadership and education for leadership – like education for democracy – is unlike instruction of regular academic curricular material in an instructional setting. The chapter recommends identifying young people endowed with leadership abilities and constructing educational programs for them to help them shape and strengthen these skills for the benefit of society.

*The third area introduces non-formal educational in-school settings, and the various chapters describe in-school enterprises which operate under the auspices and direction of the Ministry of Education.*

**Chapter 18. Social education in schools: Stability vs. change.** The chapter describes social education in school and those unique attributes that distinguish it from the formal education within whose setting it operates. The chapter surveys the development of social education in the Israeli school system, a development which indicates trends of both stability and change.

**Chapter 19. "Individual commitment" as a non-formal educational program.** The chapter describes the project initiated by the Ministry of Education and analyzes the various ways of executing it in the schools. The chapter notes that the enterprise relates to the students within the social complex in which they live, and demands that the educating institution train them for integrating into adult society, not only intellectually but socially as well.

**Chapter 20. The "Just Community" approach to moral education in school.**
The chapter describes the "Just Community" enterprise, carried out in the footsteps of Kohlberg et al., and aimed at developing students' moral thinking in a manner that is consistent with their moral-social behavior. The chapter describes the changes made in the original enterprise to adapt it to the reality of the Israeli school system and its unique needs.

**Chapter 21. Israel youth journeys to Poland: A march to holocaust memories.** The chapter describes youth journeys to Poland, the development of this unique enterprise, and its contribution to Holocaust remembrance among adolescents. The adolescents' personal journeys offer them an encounter with a history of their family and of the Jewish people. Psychologically, on the one hand, the journey provides an answer for the need to develop autonomy and individuality, and on the other hand, if provides an answer for the need to identify with society's values and heritage. The journey curriculum, which is not compulsory, allows Israeli adolescents a learning, experiential experience that has cognitive, emotional, social and behavioral aspects.

*The fourth area addresses a different criterion – the populations served by non-formal education, especially populations with special needs. This area presents an issue where the formal system has an advantage, both in research and in the specialized training of educators to cope with children and adolescents with special needs. At the same time, formal education cannot provide long-term answers for the variety of needs and areas in which alternative professional intervention in required. Therefore, we are now witnessing the development of care in these populations in non-formal education as a unique and alternative response, especially for populations for which formal education has failed and from which they drop out.*

**Chapter 22. Child and youth care: Development and central issues.** The chapter describes the development of child and youth care in the Israeli educational system. It discusses prevalent models for training workers in residential institutions and in the community, the academic background of workers, and the laws applicable to their occupation. The wide range of roles in child and youth care is presented, as well as the main dilemmas involved in the professional recognition of workers. In addition, the chapter describes the national settings that employ these workers and the main voluntary organizations.

**Chapter 23. Wilderness programs as an educational-therapeutic tool in the treatment of youth at risk.** The chapter describes wilderness programs for dropout youth in Israel and in other countries, with reference to the theoretical and empirical basis of this unique form of intervention. This method enables the youth worker, therapist, or educational counselor to use a powerful educational tool where traditional therapeutic interventions with a variety of populations with special needs had failed. These included children and adolescents with learning disabilities and/or with physical disabilities (e.g., cerebral palsy, Down's syndrome, autism, communication

disorders), and male and female adolescent dropouts or at risk for dropping out and face difficulties with the everyday ways of coping within the educational system.

**Chapter 24. Non-formal adult education.** The chapter describes the stages of development of adult education in the Israeli educational system – specifically its contribution to immigrant absorption – and compares adult education in Israel to similar educational systems in other countries. Adult education is a learning activity that is voluntary, planned, and organized. Many adults participate in formal studies to obtain official diplomas, titles, or professional certification. However, the vast majority of adult studies take place in non-formal educational settings.

**Chapter 25. The Israel Experience: A case study of youth culture.** The chapter describes the "Israel Experience," a program for adolescents who visit Israel. The enterprise is presented as a case study of youth culture. From a theoretical perspective, the Israel Experience touches upon several areas – growing up, tourism, education (especially non-formal education), ethnicity, and religious studies. The chapter analyzes the program and evaluates it using a rich database that includes demographic information on the participants.

**Chapter 26. Inclusion of individuals with handicaps in the community.** The chapter describes the process of including people with handicaps in a community's social activities, while relating to their special needs. The chapter follows the growth of community centers and administration in Israel and emphasizes the institutional and educational efforts to find new routes to foster positive social process in developing communities and within weak populations.

**Chapter 27. Third-sector organizations: Current directions.** The chapter describes the directions and trends of not-for-profit organization which are part of third-sector organizations in addition to public and private organizations. Third-sector organizations are fertile ground for non-

formal activity among whose characteristics are, for example, the volunteerism of participants who freely choose to join, to participate in activates, or to leave. These attributes could reach their optimal development in third-sector organizations because of their characteristics – voluntary affiliation, organizational flexibility, horizontal interpersonal communication, flat hierarchical structure, participation and involvement, particularism, and creating social capital.

**Epilogue**

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