

Report of Enlistment Rates for the IDF and National Service (*Sherut Leumi*)

Graduates of "Start" - Tafnit for Matriculation and Dropout Prevention Program in comprehensive high schools – 2006-2007

A joint program of
the Rashi Foundation and partners, the Ministry of Education in its districts, the Shaha"r
Division and the Education Departments in participating localities

Brief of the Report

Interim Report

Data collection – the Aharai NGO

Data processing – the Tafnit Program – the Rashi Foundation

July 2008

Background

At the end of the 2006-2007 school year, the first graduates of the Start - Tafnit for Matriculation and Dropout Prevention program completed the 12th grade in the two comprehensive schools in which the program began to operate.

The Start program is designed for at-risk students who have the status of "hidden" dropouts and are on the verge of becoming "overt" dropouts at the comprehensive high schools. Most of them have at least 7 failing scores in their report card in 9th grade and average scores of less than 60. The program seeks to prevent them from dropping out and to help them achieve a matriculation certification by the end of 12th grade.

The program operates in high schools in the periphery, starting from 10th grade (after a preparatory program in 9th), in accelerated classes run by the school staff, employing the accelerated method and principles of narrowing gaps of the Rashi Foundation's Tafnit Program, which was developed by Nissim (Max) Cohen, an educational sociologist (Cohen, N., 1994,1998,1998, 2005, ג. כהן).

The program is a joint project of the Rashi Foundation, the Ministry of Education, the Shaha"r Division and the local authorities. It began operating in comprehensive high schools during the 2003-2004 school year. The program is run by the school staff, which receives training and pedagogical guidance from the program's team of advisors. It operates today in comprehensive high schools in the periphery.

The goal of the report

A matriculation certificate is still one of the most important certificates for entry into academia and for integration into society and the workplace of the future. The Start – Tafnit program believes and assumes that the change the students in the program experience, their success on matriculation exams and their attainment of a matriculation certificate will encourage conformity and the desire for social integration in normative frameworks such as compulsory enlistment into the IDF and Sherut Leumi [a program of national service, primarily for religious women].

Characteristics of students in the Start – Tafnit program in 9th grade, before joining the program

The characteristics of the students from the two comprehensive high schools prior to joining the program (when they were in 9th grade) are described in the assessment report compiled by Ben-Gurion University (Bar On, N., at all, 2008, והשאר, ג. בר און, נ. ורשא, 2008) and recently published.

The characteristics in 9th grade included:

- **An average of 8.2 failing scores per student**
- **An average score of 44**
- **74% of the students had at least 7 failing scores at the end of 9th grade**

The completion of 12th grade (at the end of the 2006-2007 school year) by the initial class of students in the first two comprehensive schools to implement the program allows us to examine, for the first time, the assumption regarding the rate of enlistment into the IDF and Sherut Leumi among the initial graduates of the program.

In order to check the rates of enlistment into the IDF and Sherut Leumi, data on the students and their enlistment was collected and verified by a team from the Aharai L'Psagot program run by the Aharai NGO and partners, which provides assistance during the IDF enlistment process and also conducts follow-up among the graduates of the Start – Tafnit program.

About 90% of the graduates of the Start – Tafnit program in the comprehensive high schools, as we will show below, completed the process of enlisting into the IDF and Sherut Leumi, and we know their enlistment status. The others – 10 graduates who are in the midst of the enlistment process – are slated to begin serving in the IDF and Sherut Leumi in August 2008. Since these 10 graduates are beginning to serve next month, we relate to them in this report as enlistees. However, in order to present an up-to-date and precise picture, we treat this report as an **interim report**. In September/October 2008, after this enlistment process is completed, a **final report** will be released.

The analysis of the data will also present rates of IDF enlistment among all of those required to serve in Israel, and compare these rates to the program's graduates – despite the fact that these graduates are at risk of dropout according to their initial characteristics in 9th grade, as outlined above. (That is, it sets a tough standard of comparison for the Tafnit graduates.)

Data

- A. In order to monitor the enlistment of students into the IDF and Sherut Leumi, the Aharai NGO (in the framework of the Aharai L'Psagot program) maintains contact with the graduates of the program through ongoing telephone follow-up by professional staff of Aharai NGO. This contact began when the graduates of the program completed 12th grade, in August 2007, and follow-up is conducted at an average frequency of approximately every two months. This is part of an array of guidance aimed at identifying difficulties in enlistment into the IDF among the program's graduates and providing whatever assistance we can to those who need it. As part of this follow-up, we have accumulated data about enlistment into the IDF.
- B. The data in this report on enlistment into the IDF and Sherut Leumi is based on monitoring reports of the Aharai NGO, which were collected and updated to June 2008.
- C. Data on enlistment into the IDF refers to July 2007 and is based on a publication issued by the Israel Knesset's Research and Information Center (Barda, M., 2007, מ., ברדה).
- D. According to our information, 104 students began the Start – Tafnit program (Bar On, N., at all, 2008, והשאר, נ., בר און, נ.) in 10th grade during the 2004-2005 school year, and 98 students completed the 12th grade at the end of the 2006-2007 school year (as shown in Table 1).

**Table 1 –
Distribution of Start – Tafnit graduates in 2007, by gender**

	Boys	Girls	Total
School 1	31	18	49
School 2	38	11	49
Total	69	29	98

- E. Of the 98 graduates, we have complete information on enlistment into the IDF and Sherut Leumi for 92.8% of them (91 graduates), as displayed in Table 2.

- F. For 7 of the students (5 boys and 2 girls), who comprise 7.1% of the pool of 98 graduates, we have no data due to communication problems or because they were not interested in providing information.
- G. Analysis of the data in this report will be based on 91 graduates of the program, who represent 92.8% of the graduates.

**Table 2 –
Distribution of program graduates for whom we have or lack information on enlistment into the IDF and Sherut Leumi**

	Graduates for whom there is data on enlistment into the IDF and Sherut Leumi				Graduates for whom there is no data or who do not wish to provide information				Total			
	Boys	Girls	Total	%	Boys	Girls	Total	%	Boys	Girls	Total	%
School 1	27	17	44	89.8%	4	1	5	10.2%	31	18	49	100%
School 2	37	10	47	95.9%	1	1	2	4.1%	38	11	49	100%
Total	64	27	91	92.8%	5	2	7	7.2%	69	29	98	100%

- H. All of the data in the current report is encoded and does not include identifying details.

Key findings

A. General

- 93.4% of the students who completed 12th grade in 2007 in the framework of the Start – Tafnit program enlisted into the IDF or Sherut Leumi and/or will complete their enlistment by August 2008
- 6.6% of the program's graduates did not enlist into the IDF or Sherut Leumi

B. Boys – graduates of the program

- 95% of all of the boys (only) who graduated from the program have enlisted and/or will enlist in August 2008, compared to 74% of all of the boys in Israel who are subject to compulsory military service and enlist into the IDF.
- 55.4% of the boys who enlisted are serving in combat units (combat soldiers)
- another 3.6% of the boys who enlisted are serving in combat-support units

C. Girls – graduates of the program

- 67% of all of the girls who graduated from the program have enlisted and/or will enlist in August 2008, compared to 60% of all of the girls in Israel who are subject to compulsory military service and enlist into the IDF
- another 11.1% of the girls who graduated from the program serve in Sherut Leumi
- A total of 78.1% of all girls who completed the program, enlisted into the IDF or Sherut Leumi and/or will complete their enlistment process and begin serving by August 2008
- 18.8% of the girls who have enlisted into the IDF so far are serving in combat units, as combat soldiers

The comparison of the enlistment rates of all those subject to enlistment in Israel with the graduates of the Start – Tafnit program – whose students are at-risk youth – is a tough standard of comparison for the Tafnit graduates (see the starting characteristics of these students in 9th grade)

Characteristics of Start – Tafnit students in 9th grade, before joining the program

The characteristics of the students from the two comprehensive high schools in 9th grade, prior to their joining the program, was described in the recently published assessment report conducted by Ben-Gurion University (Bar On, N., at all, 2008, בר און, ג.י., והשאר, ג.י.)

Here are some of the characteristics in 9th grade:

- **An average score of 44**
- **An average of 8.2 failing scores per student**
- **74% of the students had at least 7 failing scores at the end of 9th grade**