



# PaLs

The Newsletter for Friends of Phone and Learn

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PaL is dedicated in lasting memory of  
Sammy Homburger ב"ת



## Essex Sushi Evening

Before Pesach, PaL were invited to the beautiful home of Gittel Brukirer who runs the fantastic Aish Essex centre. She invited her friends and fellow young mothers to hear about the learning opportunities offered at PaL – Phone and Learn.

Over trays of sushi, rogolech and fruit, we met some wonderful ladies from Essex. PaL Follow-up Coordinator, Sarah Silkin spoke about how in women's hectic lives, it is so hard to take the

time for some meaningful learning. "We juggle our many roles to deal with other pressing issues, so our Jewish learning can unfortunately get neglected," she said. Sarah explained how the flexible learning opportunities PaL offers, enables each person to add something meaningful to their busy lives.

Essex based Carly Sandford, who has been learning with her PaL tutor Karen for over 8 years, spoke about her experience learning with PaL. Carly

explained how initially she was grateful to speak on the phone rather than meeting up face-to-face as it gave her a level of anonymity while she built up her confidence. In her 8 years of learning with Karen, they have met up on a number of occasions. Together they have covered many topics, including laws of Shabbos, blessings and prayer.

The evening was a resounding success with many new ladies signing up to learn. Gittel commented, "It was amazing to be part of an evening which inspired women who don't have learning opportunities to sign up to weekly learning partners"

We welcome all the new PaL partners to the PaL family and hope they are enjoying their learning sessions. 🍣



## PaL @ Moriah Jewish Day School



Last week, Rabbi Mark Silkoff, Head of Jewish Studies at Moriah Jewish Day School invited **PaL** to attend the parents evening, in order to tell the parents about the flexible learning opportunities **PaL** can offer them.

During the evening, the **PaL** team spoke to many of the parents, explaining how **PaL** can help them polish their Hebrew reading skills and support their children with their Jewish Studies homework. Whilst it is wonderful that so many Jewish children nowadays attend a Jewish Day School, many parents did not have that privilege, and feel their Hebrew reading skills are rusty since their school or cheder days.

The parents at Moriah were told about the weekly **PaL** learning session, where they will be able to brush up on these skills and gain ideas how to reinforce their children's Jewish education. Best of all, the learning sessions take place on the phone, no need to leave home!

Many parents signed up to learn, some wanting to improve their Hebrew reading skills, others to learn about the Amida, or about the weekly Parsha.

Rabbi Silkoff commented, "The learning opportunities **PaL** offer will help our parents connect to Jewish education and support their children in the Jewish journey they have embarked upon. I'm sure the parents will benefit tremendously from their learning sessions." 🌟



## PaL Partner of the Year – The Winner

In the last edition of 'PaLs' we announced our quest to find 'Partner of the Year'; the **PaL** who had provided his or her tutor with a growing sense of admiration, inspiration and awe thanks to the strides they had made in their Jewish journey. We introduced you to some of our nominees; the depth of feeling that they have for both their learning partners and for **PaL** was more than evident in their warm words.

Ultimately there could only be one winner: **PaL** partner Michelle Belnikoff, a mother of three from Borehamwood. Shortly after Pesach, Eva Chapper, Community Rebbetzen in Borehamwood and Elstree United Synagogue, presented Michelle with the award. Michelle's tutor Ruchi Cohen from Stamford Hill told us; "I feel privileged to be part of **PaL** and feel I gain so much from our weekly learning sessions. Michelle is so inspiring; she is a wonderful combination of finesse and ambition and is constantly striving for more."

Of course Ruchi, who was matched with Michelle back in 2009, comes in for her fair share of compliments too.

"When I started learning with Ruchi, it was hard to get out to any shiurim with a young baby. **PaL** was ideal, allowing me to learn regularly without leaving the house," Michelle said.

"Ruchi has always been flexible and over the last nine years we have covered many topics including Shabbat cooking, the book of Ruth, Parsha, Festivals, Parenting and Mussar."

"Ruchi is an inspirational lady. She has an incredibly busy schedule yet always makes the time to learn with me, encourage me and help me grow," concluded Michelle.

Michelle recently moved from Chigwell to Borehamwood. Eva Chapper who also used to live in Ilford remarked, "Michelle's dedication and devotion to learning for the past 9 years is appropriately recognised at a time when we are counting up to receiving the Torah. It was an honour to present Michelle with the award. May she go from strength to strength in her learning." 🌟



## Facts and Stats

OVER  
**250**  
ONE-TO-ONE  
PAL STUDY  
SESSIONS  
EACH WEEK

SINCE PAL  
STARTED IN  
2005, OVER

**2,600**

PEOPLE HAVE  
LEARNT  
TOGETHER.

LONGEST  
LEARNING  
PARTNERSHIP IS

**12**  
YEARS  
AND STILL  
ONGOING!

**20%**

OF OUR  
LEARNING  
PARTNERSHIPS  
HAVE BEEN  
LEARNING FOR

**5**  
OR MORE  
YEARS.

OF OUR  
LEARNING  
PARTNERSHIPS

**30%**  
MALE

**70%**  
FEMALE



Phone and Learn (PaL) is a division of Partners in Torah®, USA

[www.partnersintorah.org](http://www.partnersintorah.org), a unique Jewish identity-building initiative committed to fostering unity among Jews of all backgrounds. **PaL** matches Jews who want to know more about their heritage with a friendly, knowledgeable tutor for up to an hour a week of Jewish study and discussion, over the phone.

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