



YOKNE'AM, ISRAEL

BTE Success Stories

BRIDGE TO EMPLOYMENT

Launched in 1992, Bridge to Employment (BTE) is a Johnson & Johnson initiative that prepares youth for brighter futures. For more information about BTE, visit www.bridge2employment.org

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Why BTE?

The Bridge to Employment (BTE) Program in Yokne'am, Israel was a partnership between the Ort Alon Yoqneam School, ORT Israel, Biosense Webster, The Friends of Israel Sci-Tech Schools, and the Technion. Ort Alon Yokne'am is part of the ORT Israel network, a group of vocational schools specializing in high-tech and science. The ORT Israel network operates throughout Israel, especially in the peripheral regions of the country, and offers studies in the cutting-edge fields of science and technology education. Students are primarily from low or medium socio-economic backgrounds, and many are first-generation students. One program partner explained, "We were targeting the kids who have higher potential than they are showing in middle school...We wanted to provide a stronger support system for them."

The goals of the BTE Yokne'am program were to enhance students' educational experiences, raise their academic and behavioral performance, prepare them to enroll in tertiary education and to pursue careers in the fields of health and science.

BTE is designed specifically to provide college and career readiness exposure to students. Working together, Johnson & Johnson, secondary and postsecondary schools, and community organizations develop programs that feature academic enrichment, career readiness and exploration activities, and higher education preparation. They aim to increase the number of students enrolling in higher education and pursuing careers in STEM²D (science, technology, engineering, math, manufacturing, and design) or health care.

BTE: A Catalyst for College & Careers

The BTE Yokne'am program began in 2017 with 40 students. Students who met the socio-economic criteria, as well as academic (having three or four points in English and three or four points in math) were invited to apply. Teachers assisted with recruitment, and there was a committee who helped determine the final group.

The program included:

- ✓ Tutoring Program
- ✓ Academic Enrichment (counseling and mentoring by teachers and by the Biosense Webster volunteers),
- ✓ Academic Exposure and Readiness
- ✓ Career Awareness (especially in medical fields)
- ✓ Community Engagement (volunteering)
- ✓ Workshops/Lectures (guest lecturers, team building)
- ✓ Visits (company, and medical institution tours)

SITE PROFILE

Location

Yokneam, Israel

Grant Period

2017 - 2020

Sponsor

Biosense Webster

Coordinator: ORT Israel

Community Partner:

Ort Alon Yoqneam School,
Friends of Israel Sci-Tech
Schools

Volunteers: 14

Students Directly

Served: 40

Completion Rate: 93%

- ✓ Events (a “kick-off” event, meetings with parents, a recognition ceremony)

Impact of BTE

In 2020, 37 of the 40 students (93%) completed the three-year BTE program. All but one BTE student graduated with a full Bagrut certificate (97%).

At the end of the BTE program, all 100% of the students reported being aware of their possibilities in higher education and confident in their abilities to take steps to develop a career. Forty-three percent were planning a career in medicine or science.

Because young people in Israel are required to join the Israeli Army (IDF) after high school, the BTE Yokne’am partners created a goal that 15% of BTE graduates would choose to serve in the medical-related units of the IDF. At the end of Year 3, 22% chose to serve in medical-related units such as the dental program and medical studies.

In terms of academics, BTE students saw numerous improvements. BTE students increased their math grades—from 72 at Baseline to 90 in Year 3. The average math grade for BTE students was significantly higher than the Comparison group. By the end of the last year of the program, 97% of the BTE students were in 4-5 units in English compared to 80% in the Comparison group. The average English grade was also significantly higher—increasing from 76 to 90 during the years of the program.

In focus groups, students reported feeling a sense of belonging as well as individual pride from participating in the program. They emphasized the importance of the connections they made to staff—including the educational staff (the class teacher and coordinator), business employees (as part of the individual reinforcements), and the soldier teacher. BTE students also expressed gratitude for the tools and activities that helped their development. All of the BTE students (100%) reported that they are planning to pursue higher education.

One program partner commented on the impact ABTS had on all who attended. She said, “ABTS was very essential. A big opportunity. It’s an amazing experience for life...if only more kids could go. [The BTE students] meet kids from all over the world. [It’s] life changing; not only for them but for us. Hearing about programs from all over the world. You get ideas and bring the knowledge back home. Very helpful for us.”

When asked to describe the impact the BTE program had on students, one partner described how much the students had matured. She said, “I think that the students learned how to continue and keep working, no matter what happens around them. I think they also learned to set goals and work towards them.”

STUDENT OUTCOMES

97% of BTE students received a full Bagrut certificate.

22% of BTE students chose to serve in medical-related units of the IDF

BTE students’ average math and English **grades increased** from Baseline to Year 3

100% of BTE students are planning to pursue higher education

43% of BTE students plan to pursue a career in health or science

Sustainability

To continue the momentum that was created by the BTE program, the BTE Yokne'am partners had already begun talks about their future plans. There were a number of activities they were hoping to continue, including job shadowing, company tours, mentoring, and robotics. They emphasized the need to expose students to companies, schools and hospitals. The school also wants to provide tutors as part of a strong focus on supporting students academically.