

CAMP KEFIADA

Frequently Asked Questions

Guidelines for Application and Participation



KEFIADA VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

Kefiada serves as a bridge over the summer for Israeli students, in 4th-6th grade, to retain the English that they have learned during the school year and expand on it. Kefiada is a great way for college students to get back to Israel, really become a part of Israeli life and help Israelis in a meaningful way. There is no program cost, free room and board, \$1200 flight stipends for all counselors and \$300 in spending money. The dates for next summer are June 22 - July 22, 2026.

Kefiada volunteers participate in a rewarding and challenging experience both working and playing in Israel. The experience includes teaching English to Israeli children, living with Israelis, learning about Israel, the people and the culture, through people-to-people relationships, connections, and friendships.

Kefiada provides Jewish college students who either are from Chicago, or go to school in Illinois, the opportunity to have a real impact on Israeli society through their daily interaction with the campers and their families while exploring the beauty, complexity and vitality of JUF's Partnership Together (also known as P2G) region and Israel.

Please take the time to read and familiarize yourself with the enclosed information. If you have any questions, please contact **Brooke Mandrea**, your JUF representative, at **312-357-4737** or email Kefiada@juf.org.

**Participation in Kefiada is based upon acceptance
of the applicant by the Jewish United Fund.**



What is Kefiada?

Kefiada is an English-speaking day camp in Kiryat Gat-Lachish-Shafir (also referred to as “the Region”). Kefiada takes place in Kiryat Gat. The campers are 4th-6th graders from the Region; the American counselors are college students who are either from Chicago or go to school in Illinois and the Israeli Counselors are high school students who live in the Region.

Kefiada assists Israeli children to master basic English language skills in a camp setting while enjoying creative and fun camp activities. Very similar to the kinds of camp experiences in which you participated in the USA, but this time the campers’ native language is Hebrew.

English and the skills you can help teach will be essential to these children as they begin to compete and interact in today’s world. In addition, Kefiada is one of the best People-to-People programs, strengthening the “living bridge” between you and Israel.

What is Partnership Together (P2G)?

The Jewish Agency’s Israel Department together with the United Jewish Communities and Keren Hayesod launched Partnership 2000 in 1995. This innovative program links Jews in Israel and the Diaspora in an effort to promote Jewish continuity and develop Israel’s priority areas — the Negev, Galilee and Central Israel.

Re-branded Partnership Together in 2011 the program offers Diaspora communities an opportunity for direct involvement in developing Israel’s peripheries. The Negev and Galilee hold more than two-thirds of Israel’s land reserves, yet only house 17% of the population.

To date, there are 46 partnerships regions connecting 350,000 people. Nearly every region combines urban centers with neighboring rural areas. The principle categories for intervention are immigrant absorption, population growth, job creation, and human needs. People-to-People involvement is the heart of Partnership Together.

How many counselors will be volunteering in the Region in Israel this summer?

Up to 10 volunteers from Chicago are sent to be Kefiada counselors each summer. Additionally, high school students from JUF's Partnership Region in Israel are also Kefiada counselors each summer.

How old are the Israeli campers?

The campers are in the 4th-6th grade.

Am I the only counselor in the group?

No. In addition to your co-counselors from Chicago, counselors will be paired with a younger Israeli counselor who has been trained to work with you at Kefiada. You will all work together to create an amazing experience for campers.

Am I in charge of the camp?

No. Kefiada volunteers are group counselors who are responsible for the well-being and activities of a group of Israeli campers. The camp itself is directed by the local Kefiada Camp Director who is assisted by JUF and JAFI (Jewish Agency for Israel) local staff.

In addition, JUF provides a coordinator who is responsible for the well-being and extra-curricular activities of the Chicago volunteers in the region.

What does a typical day at Kefiada look like?

7:30 a.m. Counselors Arrive

Counselors meet at camp to prepare for camper arrival.

8:00 a.m. Campers Arrive

Camp schedules are based on theme days such as food day, water day, American day, animal day, etc. During the day the activities that you develop are related to the theme including vocabulary words, songs, games, snacks, art and crafts projects, trips, drama, storytelling, etc.

1:00 p.m. Camp Day Ends for Campers

Campers leave for the day. Counselors take a lunch followed by a summary meeting to review the next day's theme and activities. The summary meeting ends at 3:00 p.m.

3:00 p.m. Free Evening

During some afternoons and evenings during the summer, the P2G coordinator will plan trips, hikes and site seeing, and interesting experiences. Participation in these activities is required of all Kefiada volunteers.

Where do I live during Kefiada?

Kefiada counselors will live with an Israeli host family in the Region. These kinds of housing opportunities afford volunteers the unique experiences of living in Israel in an authentic environment, getting to know the people and contributing first-hand to strengthening the ties that bind Kiryat Gat-Lachish-Shafir and Chicago.

What kind of qualifications do I need?

First, Kefiada volunteers are college students between the ages of 18-23 who have graduated from high school, participated in a gap year, or are current college students. In summary, applicants are eligible summer before freshman year of college through summer after senior year of college. Volunteers are from Chicago or go to school in Illinois. To fully enjoy the Kefiada experience this should not be the counselor's first visit to Israel.

It is also helpful if Kefiada volunteers are qualified, trained counselors who have experience working with children in camp settings and/or youth movements and, in addition, have exhibited leadership skills, creativity, and flexibility.

Am I still eligible to participate in Birthright post Kefiada?

While Kefiada should not be a counselor's first visit to Israel, participants are still able to go on Birthright. Being a former Kefiada counselor does not disqualify you from going on a Birthright trip.

What training is provided?

All Kefiada volunteers participate in an orientation in Chicago and seminars once they get to Israel. This is **MANDATORY** for all Kefiada volunteers.

What are the dates of camp?

Kefiada dates for summer 2026 are June 22nd - July 22nd.

How do I apply?

There are two parts of the Kefiada application: the written application and an interview.

There is a rolling admissions process. The application deadline, for all parts of the application to be submitted, is April 13, 2026.

FOR YOUR INTERVIEW:

Contact Brooke Mandrea to arrange your mandatory interview:

30 S. Wells Street, Chicago, IL 60606

Phone: 312-357-4737

Email: Kefiada@juf.org

FOR YOUR WRITTEN APPLICATION (which can be found at [JUF.ORG/KEFIADA](https://juf.org/kefiada)):

- Application form fully completed
- Photograph of applicant
- Photocopy of the passport personal details page (valid through at least February 2027)
- Medical Form, including additional letters from doctors/specialists if required
- Two recommendation letters written by non-family members

REGISTRATION

All correspondence regarding registration should be directed to your Jewish United Fund Kefiada coordinator.

- All forms must be filled in accurately with the maximum of information provided. If you do not have all the information, please note what is missing and send it as the information is received.
- Please note that completion of the registration and medical forms does not necessarily mean acceptance to Kefiada.
- Applicants are obliged to attend all interviews and orientation meetings both in the USA and Israel.
- Orientation dates will be given to you at a later date by JUF.
- The JUF staff or JAFI staff in Israel has the right to send you home at any stage during the program if your behavior is deemed unacceptable.
- We reserve the right without prior notice to decline any application or cancel any booking.

312-357-4737 • kefiada@juf.org • juf.org/Kefiada

**JUF amplifies our collective strength
to make the world a better place — for everyone.**

Community powered, we consider the totality of local
and global Jewish needs and how to address them.
From generation to generation, we help people connect
to Jewish life and values, fueling a dynamic, enduring
community that comes together for good.



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