

THE SHALVA SHARABI FAMILY CENTER

Ashkelon Region

In Memory of Lianne, Noiya and Yahel Sharabi





"I cannot change what
was taken from me, but
I can choose what I build."

THE SHARABI FAMILY

On October 7, the lives of the Sharabi family were forever changed. Lianne Sharabi and her daughters, Noiya and Yahel, were murdered in the Hamas attack. Eli Sharabi was taken hostage and held in Gaza for 491 days.

When Eli returned home after 491 days in captivity, he faced unimaginable loss. Yet amid profound grief emerged a powerful question:

How can the values that guided Lianne, Noiya, and Yahel continue to impact others?

The answer led him to Shalva.

For years, the Sharabi family felt a deep connection to Shalva's mission. They believed in compassion, inclusion, and the dignity of every person.

Eli chose to honor their memory not only by remembering who they were, but by creating opportunities for others.

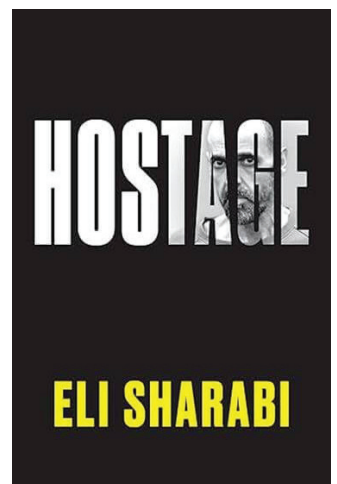
THE SHALVA SHARABI CENTER A LEGACY OF HOPE

The Shalva Sharabi Center is a living tribute to the values that defined Lianne, Noiya, and Yahel: compassion, dignity, resilience, and an unwavering belief in the potential of every human being.

Together with Eli Sharabi, Shalva is transforming those values into something lasting—a place where lives can be rebuilt, families can find strength, and communities can heal.

In a region profoundly shaped by both disability and trauma, the Center will stand as a beacon of hope, bringing world-class care, opportunity, and healing to southern Israel.

Through every child who reaches a milestone, every family that finds support, and every individual who begins the journey toward recovery, their legacy will live on.



Eli Sharabi's Hostage
is a New York Times bestseller
translated into five languages.



ABOUT SHALVA

Shalva, The Israel Association for Care and Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities provides an all-encompassing range of services for thousands of individuals from infancy through adulthood and their families. The organization's constellation of programs include early intervention therapies, inclusive educational frameworks, social and recreational activities, employment training and independent living, as well as respite and family support. Shalva gives equal access and opportunity to all participants regardless of religion, ethnic background, or financial capability. Shalva empowers and enables families to raise their children with disabilities within the family framework; and partners with communities worldwide as well as government, academic, and cultural institutions to create a more inclusive society.

The Shalva National Center, which is home to most of Shalva's programs, is one of the largest and most advanced centers for disability care and inclusion in the world. The Shalva Institute delivers education and training programs and collaborates with organizations worldwide in sharing of knowledge and research. Shalva's global disability awareness projects and inclusive initiatives continue to expand Shalva's reach and impact beyond all borders.

STANDARDS OF MANAGEMENT

Shalva's programs are authorized by Israeli government ministries and are certified to provide professional care for every category of disability. Shalva partners with government bodies, municipalities and cultural establishments to provide optimal care and unique opportunities for its beneficiaries. Shalva's excellence in operations, program development, financial accountability and transparency receive esteemed recognition. In 2018, Shalva was awarded consultative status to the United Nations.



SHALVA'S VISION FOR THE SOUTH

Southern Israel is facing two of the most significant social challenges in the country today. For decades, families of individuals with disabilities have struggled to access comprehensive diagnostic, therapeutic, and rehabilitation services close to home. At the same time, the events of October 7th and the ongoing impact of war have created an unprecedented mental health crisis, leaving thousands of children, adults, and families in need of long-term trauma and resilience support.

Drawing on more than 35 years of leadership in disability services, Shalva is responding to these urgent needs through the Shalva Sharabi Center in Ashkelon, a unique regional hub built around two centers of excellence: the Family Pavilion, serving children and adults with disabilities and their families, and the Horizons Pavilion, supporting individuals and communities recovering from trauma.

Together, these two pavilions will bring life-changing care, hope, and opportunity to individuals, families, and communities across southern Israel.



THE SHALVA SHARABI FAMILY CENTER ASHKELON REGION

The Shalva Sharabi Center represents a new vision for care in southern Israel. Two dedicated pavilions - one focused on disability services and one on resilience and trauma recovery - will work side by side to strengthen individuals, families, and communities for generations to come.

Horizons
Pavilion

Family
Pavilion



>>> THE NEED FOR A COMPREHENSIVE DISABILITY CENTER FOR SOUTHERN ISRAEL

Israel is home to more than two million people living with disabilities, yet families in southern Israel face significant barriers to accessing the diagnostic, therapeutic, and rehabilitative services they need. Residents of Ashkelon, Sderot, Netivot, Ofakim, the Gaza Envelope, and surrounding communities often travel long distances for specialist assessments, endure lengthy waiting lists, and navigate fragmented systems that delay early intervention and ongoing care.

Government reports have identified a severe shortage of accessible, multidisciplinary disability support services in southern Israel, leaving thousands of children and adults without the continuity of care needed to reach their full potential.

FAMILY PAVILION

Building on Shalva's internationally recognized model, the Family Pavilion within the Shalva Sharabi Center will provide a complete continuum of care under one roof- from assessment and diagnosis, through therapy and family support - allowing individuals with disabilities to develop, thrive, and remain close to their families and communities throughout every stage of life.

Target Population Family Pavilion:

- Infants, children, and adults with disabilities and developmental delays
- Families of children with disabilities throughout Ashkelon and southern Israel
- Undiagnosed individuals with suspected disabilities, seeking assessment services

1. Therapy and Treatment

Beyond assessment, the Center offers a continuum of therapeutic and rehabilitative services to promote development and wellbeing. Therapy services include occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech therapy, Snoezelen multisensory environment therapy, and social work support to individuals of all ages.

The Center will fill a critical need for early intervention therapy services in the region, providing Shalva's acclaimed Me and My Mommy program to infants in one-on-one therapies, as well as developmental guidance during the most critical months of growth. This nurturing environment helps infants achieve milestones while supporting mothers with hands-on strategies and emotional support - empowering them to raise their child with disabilities with confidence.

Through these integrated services, the Ashkelon Center ensures that intervention begins immediately following assessment, reducing delays and maximizing developmental outcomes.

2. Assessment, Evaluation, and Diagnosis

At the core of the Center is a multidisciplinary assessment process that places families at the heart of care. Each evaluation is conducted by a coordinated team of professionals - developmental pediatricians, psychologists, occupational and speech therapists, physiotherapists, and social workers - who collaborate to understand each individual medically, developmentally, psychologically, and emotionally.

Assessments include:

- » Social intake evaluating family history and community integration.
- » Adaptive functional assessment using the ICF (International Classification of Functioning) model.
- » Psychological assessments, including autism diagnostics and behavioral evaluations.
- » Medical examinations, including neurological, psychiatric, and psychogeriatric evaluations.
- » Vocational assessments to support future inclusion and independence.
- » Family consultation sessions to review findings, recommendations, and next steps.

This integrated approach enables accurate diagnosis, individualized treatment planning, and seamless access to services, benefits, and community resources.

As a recognized diagnostic center operating under the Ministry of Welfare framework, the Center will serve as a critical gateway to timely intervention for children, adults, and families throughout Ashkelon and the surrounding region, reducing wait times and ensuring that support begins when it is needed most.

3. Family Support

Recognizing that disability affects the entire family, the Center will expand Shalva's comprehensive family support programming to serve families in Ashkelon and surrounding communities. Guided by Shalva's successful model, services will integrate education, individualized guidance, and building a community of peer and professional support to ensure that each member of the family receives the care they need.

Through coordinated family consultations, parent education, and ongoing guidance, the Center equips parents with practical tools, knowledge, and confidence to raise a family with special needs. Support is tailored to each household's unique circumstances, addressing developmental, emotional, and practical challenges while strengthening parental capacity, resilience and family stability.

By fostering peer connection and community engagement, the Center also reduces isolation and builds lasting support networks. This holistic approach enables families not only to meet daily challenges but to grow stronger together, creating a stable and supportive environment in which children with disabilities and their families can thrive.

>>> THE NEED FOR A REGIONAL CENTER FOR RESILIENCE AND TRAUMA RECOVERY

Since October 7th, Israel has faced an unprecedented and ongoing trauma crisis, acutely affecting soldiers, civilians, first responders, victims of terror, and their families. Many individuals continue to cope with the emotional, psychological, physical, and functional consequences of war, loss, injury, and prolonged exposure to trauma. Across southern Israel in particular, the need for accessible, long-term trauma recovery and resilience services exceeds available resources.

Research has found that children in southern communities are experiencing trauma-related symptoms at rates significantly higher than the national average, while government agencies have identified an urgent need to expand regional resilience and trauma-response services.

During the war, Shalva transformed its National Center into a National Crisis Response Center, providing trauma therapy, therapeutic care, respite, and emotional support to hundreds of evacuees, with a particular focus on individuals with disabilities and their families. This experience highlighted both the scale of the need and the value of an integrated, multidisciplinary approach to recovery. In recognition of this expertise, the Ministry of Welfare and Social Security approached Shalva to establish a permanent regional resilience center in southern Israel.

HORIZONS PAVILION

The Shalva Sharabi Horizon Pavilion is being established to meet this critical need by providing comprehensive, multidisciplinary trauma recovery services that help individuals, families, and communities heal, rebuild resilience, and move forward.

Target Population Horizon Pavilion:

- Children and adults affected by trauma
- Victims of October 7 and the ongoing war
- Soldiers, first responders, and civilians
- Caregivers and families experiencing anxiety, grief, and post-traumatic stress

Resilience and Trauma Response

In the wake of October 7th and the ongoing impact of war on communities throughout the South, the Center will serve as a regional hub for resilience-building, trauma recovery, and emotional healing. Designed to support children, adults, soldiers, civilians, caregivers, and families affected by trauma, anxiety, loss, and displacement, the program provides integrated therapeutic and rehabilitative services that address both emotional and functional recovery.

The program will be built on four core elements:

- » **Therapeutic Space** – Creating a safe, welcoming, and compassionate environment where individuals and families can access multidisciplinary care, emotional support, and respite.
- » **Healing** – Guiding individuals and families from survival toward recovery through individualized and group therapies that address both emotional and physical wellbeing.
- » **Resilience** – Strengthening personal and family coping skills through body-mind therapies, resilience workshops, and innovative interventions that build confidence and restore hope.
- » **Empowerment** – Fostering independence, community participation, and a renewed sense of purpose, enabling individuals to move beyond trauma and lead meaningful, fulfilling lives.

Uniquely situated adjacent to the Ashkelon Marina and Mediterranean coastline, the Center will harness the healing power of nature and water through innovative sea-based therapeutic programs, adaptive aquatic activities, therapeutic outdoor experiences, mindfulness practices, and resilience-building interventions. Combined with specialized facilities including sensory rooms, physical therapy and fitness spaces, salt therapy, and advanced rehabilitation technologies, the Center offers a one-of-a-kind environment where healing, growth, and recovery can flourish.

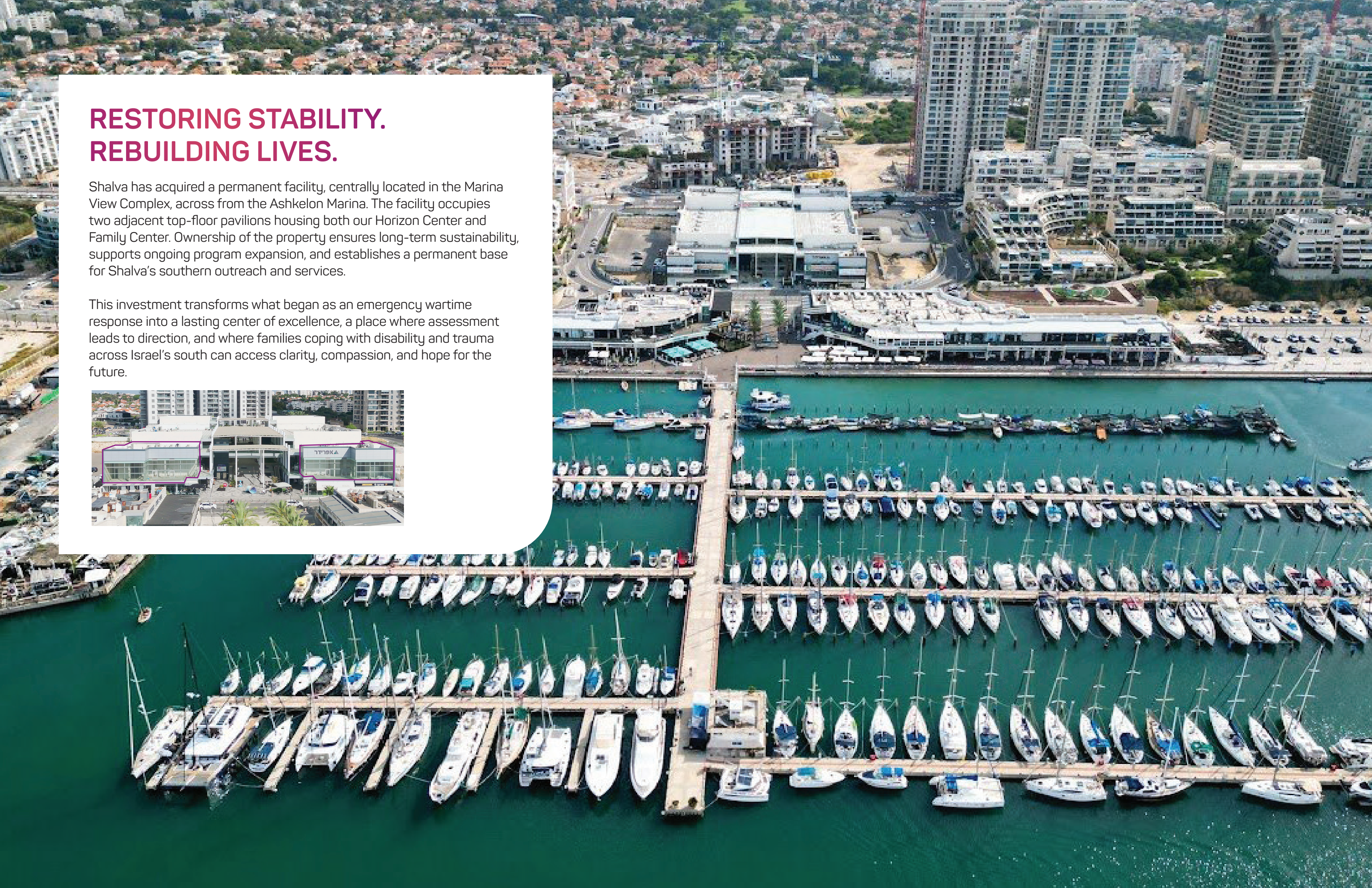
More than a response to trauma, this pillar reflects Shalva's belief that healing is not only about overcoming hardship but also about rebuilding confidence, restoring connection, and creating pathways toward a stronger future for individuals, families, and the wider community.



RESTORING STABILITY. REBUILDING LIVES.

Shalva has acquired a permanent facility, centrally located in the Marina View Complex, across from the Ashkelon Marina. The facility occupies two adjacent top-floor pavilions housing both our Horizon Center and Family Center. Ownership of the property ensures long-term sustainability, supports ongoing program expansion, and establishes a permanent base for Shalva's southern outreach and services.

This investment transforms what began as an emergency wartime response into a lasting center of excellence, a place where assessment leads to direction, and where families coping with disability and trauma across Israel's south can access clarity, compassion, and hope for the future.



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