

Opening Session:



Prof. Avi Weiss

President of the Taub Center for Social Policy Studies in Israel. Prof. Avi Weiss holds a PhD in economics from the University of Chicago. He has been a senior faculty member at Bar-Ilan University since 1988 and served as chair of the Economics Department between 2005 and 2008. He specializes in applied economics with a focus on industrial organization, antitrust, labor economics, law and economics, and behavioral and experimental economics. Prof. Weiss is the editor of the Israel Economic Association's journal, *The Economic Quarterly* and is an associate editor of *Economic Inquiry*.

In the public domain, Prof. Weiss served as Chief Economist and Deputy Director of the Israel Antitrust Authority between 2003 and 2005, was a member of the Anti-Dumping Commission of the Ministry of Industry and Trade between 1999 and 2003, served as a member of the Subcommittee on the Cost of Living and Competition of the Trajtenberg Commission on Social and Economic Change, and acted as a consulting member of the Bachar Intra-Agency Committee for Reform of the Financial Sector. Today, he is the academic representative on the Appeals Committee for the Regulation of Prices of Goods and Services Law and a member of the Competition Task Force of Israel's Grand Strategy Forum. Prof. Weiss has been a research fellow at the Institute of Labor Economics (IZA) in Germany since 2000. Throughout his academic career, he has published more than fifty articles in refereed journals and professional books.



Prof. Yossi Shavit

Principal Researcher, Chair of the Taub Center Initiative on Early Childhood Development and Inequality. Prof. Yossi Shavit is the Weinberg Prof. of sociology at Tel Aviv University (Prof. emeritus). He specializes in the study of stratification processes with an emphasis on education and educational policy as well as ethnic relations and immigration.

Prof. Shavit has led several international comparative studies on social inequality including a study on stability and change in inequality of educational opportunity (*Persistent Inequality*, 1993), differences in the way young people make their way from school to the labor market (*From School to Work*, 1998), and inequality in higher education (*Stratification in Higher Education*, 2007). He has also published many research papers on social inequality, ethnic relations, and education in Israel and elsewhere.

Prof. Shavit completed his doctoral studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and was awarded Alon and Spencer fellowships. He has also served as a professor at the European University Institute, and as the President of the Israeli Sociological Association.



Daniella Ben-Attar

The Israel Representative of the Bernard van Leer Foundation. The Bernard van Leer Foundation is responsible for developing and implementing a national strategy to improve opportunities for young children and families through partnerships with government, civil society, business and academia. She is also the Foundation Lead for implementing a city-wide initiative for early child development in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Ms. Ben-Attar brings 25 years of wide-ranging experience in international development and managing social and economic programs around the world. She has worked as an independent consultant for the World Bank, UN-HABITAT and UNIFEM, as well as corporations and NGOs worldwide. Her professional background has focused on designing and leading global, multi-stakeholder initiatives on children and youth in urban development and governance. As part of her current role, she is applying her global experience working at the intersection between children and urban development to implement the Foundation's Urban95 strategy in Israel and contribute to its strategic development globally.

Ms. Ben-Attar holds an MA in Political Science and International Relations from Tel-Aviv University, Israel and a BA in Government and International Relations from Clark University, USA. She also holds Executive Education Certificates from Harvard Kennedy School of Government on leading and scaling early childhood programs and from the London School of Economics' Cities' program on the governance, planning and design of global cities.

First Session: Efficiency and Accessibility of Early Childhood Frameworks in Israel



Dr. Naomi Moreno

Senior Manager in the field of education, community, and welfare. Dr. Moreno studied the behavioral sciences, public policy, and communications and has worked developing systems and programs at the municipal and state level. She worked for 20 years at the Women's International Zionist Organization (WIZO), in which she managed the early childhood department developing and coordinating social and educational initiatives.

Dr. Moreno is experienced in communal work and in national projects such as Project Renewal to rehabilitate distressed neighborhoods and managing the community work department at the Be'er-Sheva Municipality. She also initiated and currently heads the "Early Childhood Dialogue" program, a statewide venture working to advance the quality of the education in early childhood framework services.

Currently, as head of the Subcommittee for Care and Education Frameworks under the Early Childhood Council in The Ministry of Education Dr. Moreno participates in a variety of professional and public forums. She is also a board member of "Maslulim", a non-profit organization assisting the advancement of children growing up in disadvantaged communities in Israel's social and geographic periphery.



Noam Zontag

Researcher at the Taub Center. Mr. Zontag holds a BA in Economics and International Relations and an MSc in Environmental Economics and Management, both from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. His thesis utilizes game theory to examine the way individuals choose for others between probabilistic alternatives that involve risk.

Prior to joining the Taub Center, Noam was a researcher at the Geocartography Knowledge Group (Economics Department), and at the Shoshan Institution for Socioeconomic Research, and as an economist in the Council for Higher Education's budget department.



Shavit Madhala

Researcher at the Taub Center. Ms. Madhala holds a BA (with honors) and an MA in the research track of the Environmental Economics and Management Department in the Faculty of Agriculture at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. She graduated from the Amirim Program – a research program for honor students. Her research at the Taub Center focuses on welfare and the Israeli labor market.

In 2015, Shavit published an original work on the future of the Israeli labor market, and following that, she has lectured and presented to numerous organizations and government agencies on the subject. She is a member of various committees dealing with welfare and work including at the Israel Democracy Institute and the Central Bureau of Statistics. In the past, Shavit worked as a teaching and research assistant in the Economics Department of the Faculty of Agriculture at the Hebrew University, and worked as an economist in Zenovar, a company offering economic, financial, and strategic consulting services.



Elad Demalach

Economist in the macro-economics and policy department of the Research Division at the Bank of Israel. Mr. Demalach's research focuses on the Arab sector as well as on the High-tech industry in the Israeli economy. Mr. Demalach graduated with his BA from the Philosophy, Economics, & Political Science program (PEP) at the Hebrew University and has an MA in Economics (research track) from a joint program of the Hebrew University and Tel Aviv University. His thesis examines how vocational study courses in Arab high schools influenced

students during their adult life. In addition to his work at the Bank of Israel, Mr. Demalach is a PhD candidate in Economics at Tel Aviv University, where he studies long term economic influences of educational reforms, such as the implementation of the Compulsory Education Law for ages 3-4, the Long School Day policy, and expanding the geographic availability of high schools.



Dr. Tali Yariv Mashal

General Director at Beracha Foundation, since 2010. Dr. Yariv Mashal studied law and education and the focus of her work has been on education for democracy. She worked at the Ministry of Education's Social and Youth Administration division and in non-profit organizations that worked on schooling for students and vocational training for teachers and educators in the fields of rule of law, and civic and democratic education.

After completing her PhD at Columbia University in comparative analysis of educational reforms, Dr. Yariv Mashal joined the The Gilo Center for Citizenship, Democracy and Civic Education at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, where she worked as a research fellow and taught democracy and citizenship studies for the MA program.

Simultaneously, Dr. Yariv Mashal managed the excellence program in multicultural teaching at the Beit Berl College – an integrated program for Jewish and Arab students from three schools within Beit Berl: the school for Arab teachers, the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Arts. In addition, she taught at the Beit Berl College and at the Kibbutzim College of Education in a variety of programs for teacher training. Throughout the years Dr. Yariv Mashal has worked on consulting and developing programs for educational NGO's including Israel Venture Network, the Association for the Advancement of the Rule of Law and Democracy, the Israel Association of Community Centers, and the Center for Technological Education.

Second Session: The Daycare Supervision Law



Dr. Yousef Jabareen

Chairman of the the Special Committee for the Rights of the Child in the 23'd Knesset, senior lecturer at the Tel-Hai Academic College. Dr. Jabareen has a PHD in Law from the University of Georgetown, Washington DC and is the founder of "Dirasat" - The Arab Center for Law and Policy in Nazareth. In the past Dr. Jabareen was the head of the Arab Student Union at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and the judicial councilor to the north and Haifa Branch of the Association for Civil Rights in Israel.



Achinoam Hananya

Owner of The Democratic Children of Nature Preschool in Tel Aviv for the past 12 years. Social and Educational entrepreneur in the field of early childhood, Ms. Hananya led the private preschools campaign “*no preschools – no routine*”, which protected hundreds of private preschools from closing during the corona-virus lockdown and achieved wide recognition. Ms. Hananya is active in the private preschools’ forum of the Tel Aviv-Yafo municipality, which strives to improve the quality of preschools in the city. In addition, she is a consultant for educational organization process management, believing that quality management is key to creating change in the education field.

Ms. Hananya has a BA in education and social entrepreneurship and is studying towards her MA in organizational consulting at The College of Management Academic Studies. She is an adamant supporter of the idea that the major changes in the field of education must focus on early childhood.



Sima Hadad

Deputy Chair of the Early Childhood Council at the Ministry of Education. The council works to promote the physical and cognitive development of children during early childhood, ensure their mental and physical health; fulfil their educational, social and emotional needs, and provide the suitable atmosphere to enable equality of opportunity during their adult life.

Up To 2018 Sima Hadad was the manager of the Department for Preprimary Education at the Ministry of Education, which determines and implements the educational policy for preschools of ages 3-6. The department oversees approximately 135 supervisors and 300 instructors and other staff members within the various educational sectors.



Varda Malka

Director of Knowledge and Tools Development at the Ministry's Daycare Department the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, and Social Services. Ms. Malka joined the daycare department 17 years ago after completing her MA in Early Childhood Studies at the Schwartz Program at the Hebrew University and has held a variety of positions. Ms. Malka works to advance the quality of the education and treatment in the preschool frameworks in collaboration with government and academic organizations. In her personal life Ms. Malka is married and has six sons.

Third Session: Coping with the Coronavirus – Strategies for the Day After



Suzanne Patt Benvenisti

Suzanne Patt Benvenisti is Director General of the Taub Center for Social Policy Studies in Israel. Her previous work experience includes serving as Director of Public Policy at Aetna, a US-based Fortune 100 health insurance company, where she advised senior management on issues relating to health care reform.

Ms. Patt Benvenisti has also worked for several non-profit organizations in the areas of programming and resource development and has provided management, strategy, and operations consulting to a range of clients in the US, Israel, and Rwanda, including MIT's Middle East Education through Technology (MEET), the Agahozo-Shalom Youth Village in Rwanda, Maine's Community Partnership for Protecting Children, and the Judge Baker Children's Center at Harvard Medical School. In 2010, along with her husband, she volunteered with the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee's Jewish Service Corps at the Agahozo-Shalom Youth Village in Rwanda, where she developed business plans for revenue generation, taught piano and singing, and mentored teenage orphans of the 1994 Rwandan genocide.

Ms. Patt Benvenisti holds an MA in Public Policy (MPP) from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government and graduated summa cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa from Barnard College, Columbia University with a BA in political science. Ms. Patt Benvenisti lives in Jerusalem with her husband and three children.



Prof. Yair Ziv

Yair Ziv is the Chair of the Department of Counseling and Human Development, Faculty of Education, University of Haifa. His research focuses on preschool children's social and emotional development. Specifically, he is interested in young children's social relationships and the ways by which these inform their social cognition. In addition, a major part of his research focuses on the types of relationships that develop between children and their caregivers, both at home, and in early educational settings.

Prof. Ziv is a recipient of multiple research grants from competitive grant foundations including The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the European Union (Marie Curie), the Israel Science Foundation (ISF), and the Israeli Ministry of Education. He authored dozens of peer-reviewed articles and book chapters and co-edited a successful volume on attachment-based early intervention programs. He recently chaired the Early Childhood Education Committee in the Ministry of Education.



Dr. Merav Turgeman

Director of Pedagogical Administration at the Department of Preschool Education, Ministry of Education. Dr. Turgeman was preschool manager for 17 years and held various consulting positions in preschools. In addition, Dr. Turgeman worked as a Pedagogical consultant and lecturer at the Achva Academic College. As of 2011 Dr. Turgeman has been working at the Department of Preschool Education – at first as a national consultant for language and literacy, and now as the Director of the Pedagogical Administration focusing on development and implementation of teaching

materials in the core subjects for all preschool teachers as well as the development of “The Future Preschool” as an educational concept appropriate for the 21st century. Dr. Turgeman received her PhD from the Bar Ilan University.



Dr. Carmel Blank

Dr. Blank is a faculty member in the Behavioral Sciences Department at the Ruppin Academic Center and a senior researcher in the Taub Center Initiative on Early Childhood Development and Inequality. She has a BA in sociology and communication (with high honors), an MA in sociology (with honors), and a doctorate in sociology from Tel Aviv University. She did her post-doctoral work at the University of Durham in England.

Her central area of research is in educational inequality and her doctorate dealt with the link between disciplinary infractions in class and student achievement. Among other things, she looked at how different classroom disciplinary climates contribute to achievement gaps between students. Today, in addition to her work on inequalities in early childhood, she investigates gender gaps in learning the STEM subjects at the bagrut level and the way in which strong students can use the “second chances” tracks (like pre-university preparatory programs) to their advantage in gaining higher education.