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**Vermont Companies Working Together to Keep Israeli Students Safe from Sexual Abuse:**  
**J.B.M. Carmel, Vermont Chamber of Commerce & Child Lures Prevention**

**SHELBURNE, VT.** - As Governor Jim Douglas' press conference regarding Act One: (An Act Relating to Improving Vermont's Sexual Abuse Response System) still echoes in the Statehouse halls, the Vermont Chamber of Commerce has joined two Vermont businesses to help make a similar commitment to children half a world away.

When Chris Carrigan, Business Development Director of the Vermont Chamber of Commerce, got a call from Chamber member Child Lures Prevention that a sponsor was urgently needed to help with a humanitarian effort in Israel, he immediately thought of another Vermont Chamber member, J.B.M. Carmel in Bennington, which has several affiliate businesses located in Israel. This was not just any benevolent endeavor, but one to safeguard children from sexual abuse. Child Lures Prevention of Shelburne, was seeking a sponsor to underwrite the expense of providing its highly acclaimed sexual abuse prevention educational resources to Akvah School, an English-speaking community in Dimona, Israel requesting the programming.

Carrigan reached out to Sonya Keough, J.B.M.'s Company Administrator & Export Compliance Officer, who conveyed the sensitive request to company officers Jeff Thomayer, Benny Danino and Meir Shani, who unanimously supported the sponsorship. "Studies show that the effects of sexual abuse extends far beyond childhood," conveys Sonya Keough of JBM Carmel. "If we can improve awareness by answering the request from Racayah for prevention materials for the Akvah school; then we are helping to empower the children and invest positively in their future. This is a great feeling!"

J.B. M.'s Benny Danino coincidentally happened to be working just ten miles from the Akvah School in Dimona, Israel. Danino was able to personally meet with the school's librarian, Racayah Gwendolyn Penix, and hear a first-hand account regarding the dire need in her English speaking community to protect elementary children, as well as teens, from sexual abuse and exploitation.

"I was happy to hear that Benny was in the area of Dimona and able to reach out to Racayah," exclaims Jeff Thomayer, CEO of JBM Carmel, "This sort of thing hits home for me, having two young children of my own. I am glad that we had this opportunity to help the children of Akvah school. The support for this project doesn't stop here. Benny will present the materials to the The Haifa-Moriah Rotary Club of Israel. They will be taking on the privilege of delivering the materials to Racayah. I feel confident that I can speak for all of the sponsors in saying we wish that Racayah will have great success with the prevention program she is putting in place."

Thanks to J.B.M. Carmel, Child Lures Prevention was able to provide, at no cost to the school, its scientifically evaluated, turn-key *Think First & Stay Safe™* School Program for Grades PreK-6, Student Workbooks and Parent Guides for take-home reinforcement. "Sexual abuse and exploitation know no borders," explained Rosemary Webb of Child Lures Prevention, "These crimes happen all over the world, and J.B.M. Carmel's generosity allowed a tiny Vermont company to provide the gift of prevention to a far-off community in need."

Co-president, Jennifer Mitchell, adds, "Our thanks to the Vermont Chamber of Commerce for making such an excellent and benevolent connection between two caring Vermont companies. At a time when our Governor just announced that sexual abuse prevention education will be mandatory in all Vermont schools as of July of 2011, J.B.M. Carmel and Child Lures Prevention are also able to help students half a world away."

In the words of Akvah School librarian, Racayah Penix, "...you have no idea how many children you will help...Thank you."

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