



Shadmot Mechola

HELPING TEENS DIG INTO THE SOIL

Shadmot Mechola is a lovely agricultural moshav located in the northern Jordan Valley. Just north of the community is Bet Shean, with its impressive archaeological excavations that have uncovered layers of the Biblical, Roman and post-Biblical city. And like its northern neighbor, Shadmot Mechola was also settled during the Biblical period, despite its far more arid surroundings. We first meet Elisha the prophet, ploughing his fields in Abel Mechola, the source of Shadmot Mechola's name. (I Kings 19)

But when the original pioneers came to Shadmot Mechola in 1984, there were no fields to plough. Indeed, with the exception of a few neighboring communities that had already begun reclaiming the desert land, there was nothing fertile for miles. But hard work and perseverance, coupled with Israeli innovation in irrigation methods and God's blessing, enabled the moshav to grow and thrive. Today, it is home to some 150 religious families, including hundreds of children.

Whereas many parts of Israel are cold and rainy during the winter, the Jordan Valley is dry and pleasant, and spring and fall months are a delight during evening hours. Which means that outdoor activities can continue uninterrupted for the entire school year. Indeed, the youngsters of the area practically live outdoors during those months. The challenge, of course, is occupying them with constructive projects.

Shadmot Mechola has come up with just such a project and they are turning to you to help them build it. The community would like to clear a path around the community, complete with shaded picnic areas and gardens. This will add to the aesthetic beauty of the community but far more importantly, will provide a gathering place for teenagers that is supervised and safe. Many teenagers today like to wander off to remote areas to light a campfire and just "hang out." Given the precarious security situation in the hills surrounding Shadmot Mechola, there is an urgent need to provide the youth with safe places to congregate and enjoy cool evenings. The planned park area will include a campfire site, benches and shaded areas that are attractive to the teen-agers.

But the best part is that the teens will be doing all the work! They will clear the weeds and plant the trees. They will lay the irrigation pipes, dig the campfire pit, build the benches and awnings. And when the project is completed, they will feel pride in their accomplishments and will eagerly "hang out" in what is clearly their own space.

Shadmot Mechola has come up with an idea that will beautify their community while connecting their youngsters to the Land of Israel. But they need your help. These teens who often act out and drop out, will be able to get their hands dirty in the soil of Israel, developing a space that is theirs. They will discover the joy of creating and develop responsibility. You can give them the gift of connection — to the Land of Israel!

COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT

- ☆ **Founded:** 1984
- ☆ **Location:** Northern Jordan Valley, just over 20 km (14 miles) south of Bet Shean
- ☆ **Biblical Significance:** Abel Mechola, home of Elisha the Prophet, where Elijah summoned him as he ploughed his fields
- ☆ **Population:** 150 families



The youth of Shadmot Mechola are digging into the soil, with your help, they will create a space all their own to hang out



Your help, faith, and the teens hard work can make the desert bloom in Shadmot Mechola

Shadmot Mechola Youth Park Initiative

PROJECT BUDGET

Concrete structures, lighting and building materials	\$17,400
Irrigation and water faucets	9,500
Land preparation and trees	3,500
TOTAL FUNDS REQUIRED	\$30,400

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