

600 U.S. TV Spots Focus on Peace in Middle East

The Israel Project (TIP) will begin airing a television ad campaign that focuses on the need to teach peace on both sides and to peacefully stop Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. Three ads will air May 2-5 in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. By the end of the week, the commercials will have aired more than 600 times on CNN, CNN's Headline News, Fox News and MSNBC.

"Today we celebrate Israeli Independence Day and it is a time to focus not only on the tremendous achievements but also on the ongoing threats to Israel's existence and what can be done to move towards a better future," commented Jennifer Laszlo Mizrahi, Founder & President of The Israel Project. "I believe there is no question that teaching peace and tolerance to children as Israel does as an official part of their curriculums is paramount. I only hope that Palestinian leaders will adopt this model and stop teaching hate so that together we can work toward a common more peaceful future."

One ad features three high school teachers from Ami Asaf School in Bet Berl. Yael Barkol is the principal, Zehava Kaufman teaches Psychology and Sociology, and Barbara Ory teaches English.

All three teachers believe education should promote peace and understanding. "I think teachers should promote peace in some ways. One way is with the children. The other way, I think, is between Palestinian and Israeli teachers, because we are responsible. We are the leaders of the class. What they hear from us influences them. So I think that one part of the job is talking to the children, bringing values and morality," said Barkol.

The second ad features Nonie Darwish talking about her upbringing as a child in Gaza. She brings attention to the deceptions and hatred embedded in her as a child, which continue to be part of her culture to this day.

"I learned to hate Israelis and Jews at an early age," she said. One popular song children in her school sang proclaimed, 'Arabs are our friends and Jews our dogs.' "I learned that hate, vengeance and retaliation are important values to protect Islam and Arab honor," Nonie said. "The severe indoctrination is devastating on children. Those who end up as terrorists are simply the ones who took their education and upbringing seriously and did as they were told."

TIP's ad campaign is also designed to encourage the world community to work for a peaceful solution to the Iranian nuclear crisis and to increase awareness that Iran is the largest state sponsor of terrorism.

Iran's pursuit of nuclear technology is in defiance of the international community, which has imposed sanctions on the regime and even offered incentives to persuade Iran to halt its uranium enrichment program. Iranian officials have said they plan to share their nuclear technology with others.