

**Fidel Youth Centers celebrate the Sigd**

In parades, ceremonies and presentations, hundreds of Ethiopian youth from **Fidel** youth centers across the country joined their family and friends in celebrating the Sigd in Jerusalem.

"Kiryat Gat City" entertainment troupe makes waves in Tel Aviv  
 The KGC entertainment troupe of the **Fidel** youth center in Kiryat Gat performed for enthusiastic audiences at the Freedom club in Tel Aviv (click [here](#) to see their performance).



**ENP budget cuts in 2008 & 2009 hurt Fidel**

Major budget cuts in the 2008-09 budget of the Ethiopian National Project have led to a significant decrease in social and educational programs within the Ethiopian community. Twenty-seven of **Fidel's** Educational & Social Mediators lost their jobs at the beginning of the present school year, leaving some 4,500 students, their parents and school staff without the critical support and help provided by these professionals. School principals have expressed their fear that levels of academic performance will drop while truancy and dropout rates will increase, with fewer students achieving matriculation. **Mr. Desa (Roni) Akela**, Executive Director of **Fidel** expressed his fear that we have turned back the clock and " large numbers of youth will drop out of normative settings and will turn to truancy, vandalism, drug use and other criminal activity".



**2008-9 sees expansion of Netanya Initiative**

The innovative educational program known as the Netanya Educational Initiative whose operating partners are: The Moriah Fund, The **Fidel** Association and the CEI-PEA of New York has been expanded in the 2008-2009 school year. In 2007-2008 the initiative included four schools. Beginning September 2008 another 3 schools with significant Ethiopian student bodies were added to the program. Initial evaluations of the program indicate progress in student literacy, increased parental involvement and greater staff awareness of student needs.



**Youth & Community Activists help Petach Tikvah Youth Center grow**

The **Fidel** Association continues to operate seven Youth Centers throughout Israel even though budget cuts have led to a reduction in staff and program. In Petach Tikvah activists and youth from the Ethiopian community joined forces to prevent the closing of their center. Through a series of activities ranging from letter writing to preparation of large street signs, culminating in a visit to the center by the mayor the youth and activists convinced the municipal leadership to provide the funding necessary for the continued operation of the center.



Petach Tikvah Youth Center activities, overseen by **Meir Zagayeh** include computer classes, music groups, current events and lounge activities.

**Parents Take Responsibility**

During 2007-2008 **Fidel** initiated and operated 44 Parent Groups throughout the country. In addition 2 groups of "Lame' Bore" (Give & Take in Amharic) were initiated to help prepare active parents to become catalysts for change in their schools and community. The program emphasizes a combination of individual initiative combined with communal responsibility.

