

PROFILE

Neville Goldschneider

CAMP Simcha chief executive Neville Goldschneider is absolutely brimming over with enthusiasm. He told me: "Camp Simcha becomes your life. It takes over your life. It's so meaningful, so magical. It becomes a calling, not just me, but for all our staff and volunteers."

The charity, which Neville joined in 2005, cares for sick Jewish children and their families from all over the UK.

Neville has been enthusiastic about helping kids since the days when he left school early to work for a medical and surgical supply company, while he was a leader at his local Jewish youth club.

He said: "I was so involved in my local Jewish youth club that I decided that maybe I could work at it professionally. That's exactly what I did."

Neville qualified as a mature student as a youth worker. He began his career at Liverpool's Harold House, before moving back to London with wife Roz.

He then worked for the United Synagogue, the Association of Jewish Youth, which became part of UJIA,

BY DOREEN WACHMANN

where for many years he trained youth workers in different Jewish organisations.

He gained a Master's degree in management practice and became a United Synagogue asset manager.

His job was to sort things out when the US closed and amalgamated shuls — often a very contentious issue.

But Neville was the man for the job, soothing frayed tempers and gaining reconciliations.

He said: "It was a

Camp Simcha has therapeutic effect on ill kids and siblings



very big issue. The US owns all its assets.

"It has more than 60 synagogue buildings in different communities. I was managing those

assets and was responsible for closing and opening shuls and renovating buildings."

He confessed: "I was not a property expert. My work was to liaise between local communities and the US headquarters to try and make sure that everyone understood together what we were trying to achieve, that was to maximise the use of shuls and to set in motion a whole range of different projects."

He was happy in his job, but in 2004 he received a phone call from Meir Plancey.

The son of Glasgow-born Rabbi Alan Plancey had become close to an Israeli fam-

ily while in yeshiva there.

His hosts, who invited him for Shabbat meals, had a little boy with a brain tumour. Meir befriended him.

He used to sleep with him in hospital and take him out for trips.

At one point, Meir took the boy to Camp Simcha for children with cancer in the American Catskills.

On his return, Meir was determined to set up a similar charity in this country to sup-

port Jewish children with cancer.

For 10 years Meir and his wife Rachely ran Camp Simcha UK from their London home, until he phoned Neville.

Meir knew about Neville's professional background as the Goldschneiders lived in Borehamwood, Hertfordshire, where Meir's father was the rabbi.

Camp Simcha UK has changed tremendously since Neville took over.

He told me: "Today, we don't run a camp, although we do send children every summer to the camp in the Catskills."

"Today only a quarter of the sick children we help, have cancer."

"The other 75 per cent have a wide range of other serious medical conditions."

"I came into this job with the express intention of being able to help a lot more children."

"My job was to develop the charity in all its aspects to help a lot more children who were ill. We grew quickly."

Camp Simcha trained young people aged 19-25 throughout the country to be big brother and sister volunteers. These youngsters support not only the sick child, but also their siblings, parents and even grandparents.

He said: "Our credo is that everyone is affected in the family."

"We work with everybody, all the children and their parents. We provide things like hospital transport, emergency food, counselling and support, parties and outings."

He explained: "Children live much more in the moment than adults. Therefore we can make the promise of tomorrow's treatment more important than today's treatment."

"Giving kids amazing times has a tremendously therapeutic effect, also on their siblings."

Camp Simcha also

vide support to Jewish families, regardless of Jewish observance or affiliation."

Camp Simcha support goes from premature and sick babies to sick 18-years-olds. The service is totally confidential.

Neville reckons that the organisation supports around 1,200 individuals.

They give lifts to hospitals, where the volunteers arrive, laden with balloons and toys.

Neville said: "We reach more than 12,000 children a year around country. We give them to all the children in the wards."

"You can't go into a hospital and say, 'Put your hand up if you're Jewish'. That would be a *chillul Hashem*. It has to be for all children."

With no government funding, Camp Simcha has to raise all its revenue.

Neville said: "Every penny we raise from the community is absolutely vital. It all goes on providing services for families, for whom we make a real difference."

"I always feel so humble when people are so generous as to provide us with *tsedaka* (charity). We really have to make sure we use that money to make a real difference."

"We only employ the absolute minimum staff necessary and try to keep costs low. No-one's giving money to fund offices. The money goes directly into services for families."

BORN: London, 1962.

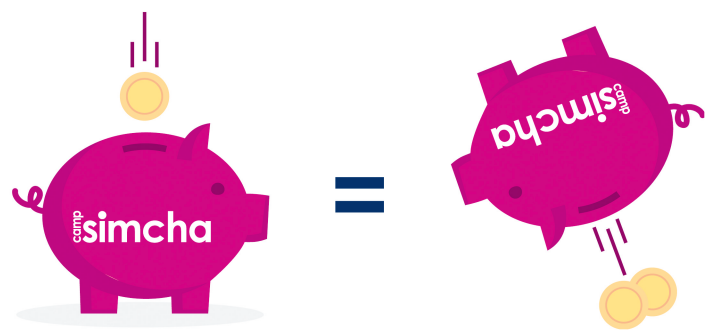
EDUCATION: Jewish Free School; Bulmershe College, Reading; Middlesex University.

POSITIONS: Harold House, Liverpool, youth worker; United Synagogue youth worker; Association of Jewish Youth worker; UJIA youth work trainer; United Synagogue asset manager; Camp Simcha chief executive.

FAMILY: Wife Ros, children Adam and Leah, grandson Yosef. HOME: London.

camp simcha
supporting families with serious childhood illness

ONE DONATION, TWICE THE IMPACT



Camp Simcha has been chosen to participate in the UK's largest match funding campaign, **The Big Give Matched Giving Challenge 2019.**

During challenge week, from now until midday on 10th December, online donations made to Camp Simcha using the link below will be matched pound for pound.

Donate now at
campsimcha.org.uk/thebiggive

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Bomb hoax man jailed

A MAN who targeted Jewish schools in the UK in 2014-16 as part of a wider terror campaign of bomb hoaxes here and abroad has been jailed for four years.

The judge at Exeter Crown Court heard that Jewish schools were "over-represented" in the targets chosen by Andreas Dowling, of Cornwall, as he made 107 sophisticated bomb hoaxes in the UK, America and Canada.

Simon Laws QC, prosecuting, added that threats to the Jewish schools referred to bombs going off at 4.20pm, a reference to Adolf Hitler's birthday of April 20.