



JON FEINGOLD: Those in the program receive the benefits of cutting-edge training and state-of-the-art technology.

## Specialized care for children

By KENNETH R. CERINI

For over four decades, The Hagedorn Little Village School, Jack Joel Center for Special Children has provided educational and therapeutic services for children with developmental disabilities such as communication delays, autism spectrum disorders, cognitive delays, motor impairments, visual impairments, etc. HLVS provides early intervention, preschool and elementary school evaluations and services to over 1,000 children annually.

"We've successfully expanded our preschool program to provide services to an increased number of very young children. We now provide services that are both home-based and school-based for children beginning at birth through the age of 11," said Jon Feingold, executive director. "As we expand, we maintain our original philosophy that it is essential to continue to help children with developmental disabilities at the earliest age possible."

**How has the focus of the school evolved since 1969?** When we started, there were not enough programs for early childhood learning and for children with developmental disabilities. It is critical to provide early learning and early treatment so that these children can reach their highest potential socially, educationally and emotionally. In 1969, only three preschool children were enrolled; now we have approximately 285 children in our building, so our history truly supports growth.

**What makes the school unique?** We don't only focus on the child's needs; in order to help the child we look at all of the people surrounding them. We provide weekly support groups for mothers, fathers and siblings; educational workshops; conferences; and individual counseling at no charge. We also provide training opportunities for other professionals and parents from the community. We make sure that our staff provides the children and families with the support they need throughout their educational journey as well as their lifetime.

**Do you collaborate with the community at large?** Our school-age program is supported directly by referrals, so we service Nassau County, Suffolk County, New York City and Westchester. We provide education and therapy both

during our school day and after hours. Our teachers and therapists collaborate with preschools and day care centers throughout Nassau and Suffolk.

**What about the school are you particularly proud of?** Our success in responding to the needs of the community, and how our programs have grown to meet the needs of families, schools and professionals. I'm also proud of how we remain on the cutting edge in terms of staff training and technology. To help parents stay connected and feel comfortable, every classroom is equipped with closed-circuit cameras. They have the ability to zoom in, zoom out and listen to what's going on within the classroom. Additionally, in every classroom we are utilizing SMART Board technology. Our extensive, state-of-the-art Augmentative Communication allows children with autism and other language disorders to express themselves.

**What is the ultimate vision for the school?** We strive to continue to provide outstanding educational and therapeutic services to children with a wide-range of developmental disabilities, helping them to achieve their greatest potential. We provide physical, occupational and speech therapies; counseling; social skill groups; play therapy; and more. We are hoping to continue to grow, while providing a safe, nurturing environment for our students to thrive and for parents to feel safe entrusting us with their children.

**Organization** The Hagedorn Little Village School, Jack Joel Center for Special Children

**Address** 750 Hicksville Road  
Seaford, NY 11783

**Executive Director** Jon Feingold

**Phone** 516-520-6000

**Website** [www.littlevillage.org](http://www.littlevillage.org)

**Year Founded** 1969

**Paid Staff** 241

**Annual Budget** \$ 14.47 million

**\*Fundraised Budget** \$439,481

**Program service** 89 percent

\*Fundraised budget is for Little Village R&D, which supports HLVS

Cerini is the managing partner of Cerini & Associates, a full-service CPA firm. If you are a nonprofit agency and have an interesting story to tell, call (631) 582-1600 or send an e-mail to [kenc@ceriniandassociates.com](mailto:kenc@ceriniandassociates.com).