

TEMPLE BETH-EL EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CENTER
The Marjorie and Mark Gershwind Campus of Living Judaism
5 Old Mill Road, Great Neck, NY 11023



GROWING TOGETHER

Vicki Perler, Director
February 11, 2021

Be happy, it's the month of Adar! The Megillat Esther tells us: *"Make days of feasting and gladness and of sending gifts to one another and presents to the poor."* Esther 9:22

Dear Families,

Rosh Chodesh Adar, known in Judaism as the month that ushers in joy, arrives tomorrow evening. The festival of Purim is an especially joyous time during the month of Adar, and the commandment for the holiday, simply put, is to be HAPPY. It's heartwarming to know that Jewish people throughout the world focus on their communities, their children and expressions of joy during the month of Adar and Purim.

It feels inspiring to focus on joy and happiness during a global pandemic, and I'm confident that each of us will find ways to fulfill the commandment. For families with young children, we don't need to look too far for happiness and blessings. It thrills me every day to see happy children. Our children are fully engaged every day, and I especially want to thank our fabulous teachers, who have enthusiastically spent huge blocks of time helping children get dressed (and undressed) for their play in the great outdoors. These early years are the foundation upon which all future learning will occur, and we are blessed to live in an area where we can experience four beautiful seasons. These are some of the most precious years with your children, and they are the years in which significant memories are made. More time at home

has been a new, precious commodity for some working families, and your children will certainly remember these days together. Here are a few ways in which you can achieve positive parent-child interactions each and every day to grow happy children:

1. Greet your child with a hug and a kiss each time you come home.
2. Notice at least three small things each day that your child does RIGHT. Tell the child about it.
3. Start a journal about your child. Write down comical sayings or memorable events in your child's life as they happen. Continue writing in it monthly until your child is an adult. Give it to your child for a graduation or wedding gift.
4. Read to your child. Start early with durable cardboard baby books and read as much as the child's attention level will allow.
5. Frame and display your child's artwork. Pick out a special drawing or painting and put it in a picture frame. Hang it proudly in an obvious place. Let your child know how good it makes you feel when you look at the drawing or painting.
6. Be honest and be kind. Teach by example. Answer questions honestly and appropriately for the child's age level. If you make a promise, keep it. Children need the security of knowing that parents will always be truthful with them.
7. Laugh, have fun and allow for all kinds of experiences with your child. Some of the best learning experiences come in the form of a mess. Puddle stomping, fingerpainting, or rolling in a pile of leaves, mud or snow create some of the sweetest childhood memories.
8. Establish a Family Night. Set aside one day a week for creating closeness through outings or games at home. Let children think of ideas for family night. This is a tradition that children will remember for years to come.
9. Enjoy nature together.
10. Eat family meals together.
11. Say, "I love you." Hold your child's hands and give lots of hugs and kisses. Nothing expresses love more than a warm comfortable bear hug from a parent.
12. Kiss your child goodnight.

As we approach the month of Adar, I would like to take this opportunity to tell you how much I appreciate my involvement with you and your families during these magical early years. It is my hope that each one of you will have a safe, healthy and happy month of Adar.

Shabbat Shalom
Chodesh Tov
Vicki

HAPPENINGS & DATES TO REMEMBER

Fri & Sat, Feb. 12 & 13
Fri-Mon, Feb. 12-19
Monday, February 15
Monday, February 22
Thursday, February 25

Friday, February 26
Sunday, March 14
Sunday, March 14
Saturday, March 20

Rosh Chodesh Adar
Presidents' Week Recess – School Closed
George Washington's Birthday Observed - School Closed
School Reopens
Temple Beth-El Purim Costume Parade on Zoom – For families with children in ECEC through Grade 3 - 6:30-7:00 PM
Purim
Rosh Chodesh Nisan
Daylight Savings Time Begins – Set Clocks Forward One Hour
First Day of Spring

CONNECTIONS

Travel Requirements – Please continue to be safe. We have been blessed with continuous in-person education for our children, and we want to continue that way until June! It is highly recommended that you do not travel unless it is absolutely necessary. If you must travel, it is imperative that you follow all travel-related quarantine protocols set by New York State. Any traveler coming into NYS (who traveled outside NY, PA, NJ, CT, MA or VT for more than 24 hours must quarantine for 14 days UNLESS they receive a negative Covid test before departure and then again on day four of their return. A 14-day quarantine is mandatory for a return to school unless two negative tests results are provided to the school in writing.

For more information on the quarantine requirements and other procedures for travelers, please see the NYS Department of Health guidance found at the following link https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/11/interm_guidance_travel_advisory.pdf

Challah Dough Details if Your Child is Absent from School – The school will put your dough in the freezer, and we will give it to you when you return. Once you receive the dough, it will need to be completely defrosted. It takes 6-7 hours to completely defrost, and then needs to be brought to room temperature before you prepare it and braid.

Registration for the Summer Program – We are very excited to announce that Karen Wasserman, our fabulous Pre-K teacher, will be our Summer Program Director this year. Morah Karen is an exemplary teacher and has taught in our ECEC for the past 15 years. She has much experience with children in school and in camp, and she is very eager and motivated to take on this new role. We are excited for you to get to know her. **Registration materials were sent out this week.** We are offering programs for children who are two, three, and four years old. We are excited to offer the opportunity for our students to continue their experiences at Temple Beth-El during the summer. Stress-free transitions are important for young children, and our Summer Program is a wonderful way to provide consistency and a seamless flow of the year. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call or email.

Registration for 2021-2022 – Don't get closed out of a class! Registrations are still coming in for the 2021-2022 school year. If you have any questions about our program for your child for next year, please don't hesitate to call or email me.

PTC Challah Fundraising Program - We are offering an opportunity for you to order dough for your weekly challah to take home on Thursdays. This is a fun and educational way to enhance your Shabbat experiences with your children by making a fresh challah at home every week. **The Challah Program began this week. You can still sign up!** A huge thank you, to Marianna Costa and our extraordinary PTC, for initiating this wonderful experience for our children and families.

Purim Costume Parade – **Wear your costume for an erev Purim, pre-Megillah reading Zoom Costume Parade – on Thursday, February 25 from 6:30-7:00 PM!** Come in your favorite costume or fun pajamas. Join Cantor Adam in singing silly Purim songs. Have dry beans, two paper plates, markers or crayons and a stapler on hand to make groggers. Stay on Zoom for a 7:00 PM Family Purim Megillah Reading! Everyone is invited!

Health and Safety Precautions During the Pandemic - The health and safety procedures in the ECEC are very specific this year. Please wear your mask, stay physically distant from each other,

and never bring your child to school if s/he appears ill. We will need to send your child home if s/he exhibits symptoms. **All children in the school MUST be symptom free.** Your cooperation is essential and very much appreciated.

Dressing for the Outdoors – Please be attentive to the weather every day to ensure that your child is appropriately dressed for outdoor play. Our goal in all weather is to keep the children warm, dry and comfortable. If they are not dressed properly, the class is unable to take advantage of the open air and the many interesting outdoor spaces around the temple building. Boots, raincoats, an extra pair of sneakers, two complete changes of clothing (to be left in school), sweaters, hats, mittens, and a warm jacket are necessary. We are outdoors when the temperature is above 30 degrees. Please label all children's clothing! Thank you.

Parent Teacher Council – The PTC is comprised of parents, teachers and lay leaders from the Temple and school community who work together to make decisions and provide ongoing support for the school. Our PTC Co-Chairs for the 2020-2021 school year are Dalia Hagooli, Marianna Costa, and Samantha Talasazain. Thank you for your hard work and dedication to our school. If you would like to be a part of our exciting Parent Teacher Council, please feel free to contact Dalia (dharoooni@aol.com), Marianna (mari.mostovaya@yahoo.com) or Sam (stalis625@gmail.com) at any time. We are grateful to all of you for your participation.

Inclement Weather Arrival and Dismissal Procedures – Please arrive on time and sit in your car until the teacher notifies you. Your child's teacher will text you to inform you that it is your turn for arrival. **By intentionally following this staggered procedure, we have created an organized and efficient arrival and pick-up.** Thank you, parents, for your help and cooperation. Please note that during these extreme inclement weather days, the designated outdoor drop-off and pick-up location for the Rabbi's Garden Play Area is outside the Temple's main entrance. The designated outdoor drop-off and pick-up location for the two-year-old classes is the Rudin Garden entrance.

Shabbat Sing – On Friday, we join together to experience a beautiful sing-along with me. It is the highlight of my week - every week. I feel very blessed to be able to teach your children beautiful Shabbat melodies. Our Shabbat Sing experiences will be different this year as they will be outdoors and physically distant. We look forward to creating joyous Shabbat celebrations every week.

Hot Lunch Program - The foods children eat and lifestyle habits they learn have a lasting effect on their health. Due to the overwhelming interest of our families to provide nutritious meals for lunch, we offer meat and dairy lunches for all students. As you know, one of the values of our school is to maintain the highest quality of care whenever possible. This value should also be reflected in the foods we eat.

Lunch Menu:

Monday – Pasta, meat sauce, vegetables

Tuesday – Baked chicken fingers and vegetables

Wednesday Pizza and Israeli salad

Thursday- Grilled cheese and vegetables - NEW

Friday – Baked fish, rice, vegetables

This year, the lunch is provided in individual packages for each child. We also have whole wheat bread and soy butter available to children who have not yet acquired the taste for these new foods. We hope that over time, children will discover and enjoy a variety of foods.

Important ECEC Telephone Information – If you have an important message and cannot reach me or Nancy on the telephone during the day, please ask someone in the main office to find us and relay the message. We hope this system will help you if you are unable to talk to us in person.

Contact Information - Please call, email or see me if you have anything you would like to discuss. My email address is vperler@tbegreatneck.org. This is usually the best way to reach me.

Links to Remember – I invite you to visit the websites connected to the links below. The links relate to information about early childhood education, Jewish life and learning, and helpful hints for parents.

https://d2gesac5hma2c2.cloudfront.net/uploads/attachment/file/1690/Winter_Thrive_Guide_2021.pdf (Ideas for Family Fun During Winter Months)

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/joyful-parenting/201705/not-naughty-10-ways-kids-appear-be-acting-bad-arent>

<https://www.jnf.org> (Plant a tree in Israel for Tu B'Shevat)

https://parenting.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/09/04/teaching-children-empathy/?_php=true&type=blogs&_php=true&type=blogs&smid=fb-share&r=5

Harvard Psychologists Say: Parents Who Raise 'Good' Kids, Do These 5 Things!

<https://tinyurl.com/v97pbd6p>

35 Children's Books That Teach Empathy and Kindness <https://tinyurl.com/y5aczd6p>

<https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/helping-kids-navigate-scary-news-stories>

<https://www.zerotothree.org/early-development>

<https://www.mommyshorts.com/2015/03/5-ways-kids-learn-at-a-reggio-emilia-preschool.html>

<https://pjlibrary.org/home>

<https://pjlibrary.org/getmedia/c63e85f1-58d9-44fd-ae8a-696825e88d25/Jewish-values-ECE.pdf>

<https://childhood101.com/an-image-of-the-child-understanding-emergent-curriculum/>

https://www.huffpost.com/entry/if-we-dont-let-our-children_b_1017485?guccounter=1

<https://www.wbur.org/cognoscenti/2016/04/08/children-play-nature-john-lee>

<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/vc/mar2018/promoting-social-and-emotional-health>

www.tbe-ecec.org

<http://www.naeyc.org/>

<http://families.naeyc.org/>

<http://www.reggioalliance.org/>

<http://www.brainy-child.com/article/reggioemilia.shtml>