

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
November 12, 2021

Dear Families,

In this week's Torah portion, *Vayetzei*, we read about the journey of our forefather, Jacob. Like our own lives, which have been a roller coaster of highs and lows during the past year and a half, Jacob's life had many ups and downs. Perhaps the most symbolic of stories is the night he stopped to rest. Sleeping on the ground and using a rock as a pillow, Jacob dreamed of a ladder reaching from Earth to Heaven with angels ascending and descending on it. He realized the significance of this dream and named the place, Beit El, House of G-d.

A ladder is a wonderful metaphor for the path of human life, with continual ups and downs, and our desire to stay positive and keep moving upward. Hopefully, each one of us is able to focus on the more joyous moments rather than on the low moments and remember to stop to reflect on the many ways in which we should feel grateful. We all strive to create the best for our children, but how we help them to stay positive and thrive in this complicated world is to provide them with the proper tools to enhance their "life skills."

Ellen Galinsky, president and co-founder of Families and Work Institute, addresses these values in her book, [Mind in the Making: The Seven Essential Life Skills Every Child Needs](#). As you already know, our school not

only values these skills, we also embrace them as necessary components of our social and emotional curriculum. Here is a summary of Galinsky's conclusions:

“Focus and Self-Control – Children need this skill in order to achieve their goals, especially in a world that is filled with distractions and information overload. It involves paying attention, remembering the rules, thinking flexibly, and exercising self-control.

Perspective Taking – Perspective goes far beyond empathy: it involves figuring out what others think and feel, and forms the basis of children understanding their parents', teachers', and friends' intentions. Children who can take others' perspectives are also much less likely to get involved in conflicts.

Communicating – Communicating is much more than understanding language, speaking, reading and writing – it is the skill of determining what one wants to communicate and realizing how our communications will be understood by others. It is the skill that teachers and employers feel is most lacking today.

Making Connections – Making connections is at the heart of learning – figuring out what's the same, what's different and sorting these things into categories. Making unusual connections is at the core of creativity. In a world where people can Google for information, those who can see the connections and go beyond simply knowing the information will use this information to their advantage.

Critical Thinking – Critical thinking is the ongoing search for valid and reliable knowledge to guide beliefs, decisions, and actions.

Taking on Challenges – Life is full of stresses and challenges. Children who are willing to take on challenges (instead of avoiding them or simply coping with them) do better in school and in life.

Self-directed, Engaged Learning – It is through learning that we can realize our potential. As the world changes, so can we, for as long as we live – as long as we learn.”

Even though we are, once again, preparing for Thanksgiving and Chanukah during a pandemic, take some time this Shabbat to reflect on how you can continue to stay positive and move upward with your family and loved ones.

Shabbat Shalom
Vicki

HAPPENINGS & DATES TO REMEMBER

Tuesday Nov. 16

Wednesday, Nov. 17

Tuesday Nov. 23

Wednesday, Nov. 24

Thurs & Fri, Nov. 25&26

Sun-Mon, Nov. 28-Dec. 6

Tuesday Nov. 30

Wed. Dec. 1

Thursday, Dec. 2

Friday, Dec. 3

Sat & Sun, Dec. 4&5

Wednesday, Dec. 15

Pee Wee Pros Sports Program for 3s and Pre-K

Pre-Thanksgiving and Chanukah Tkiya Music Program for School

Pee Wee Pros Sports Program for 3s and Pre-K

Thanksgiving Recess – School Closes at 1:00 PM

Thanksgiving Recess – School Closed

Chanukah

Pee Wee Pros Sports Program for 3s and Pre-K

Registration for Temple Members

Registration for Currently Enrolled and Former Students

Registration Open to the Community

Rosh Chodesh Tevet

Parent-Teacher Conferences – School Closed

Wednesday, Dec. 22
Fri-Fri, Dec. 24-31

Early Bird Registration Deadline
Winter Recess – School Closed

CONNECTIONS

November is Jewish Book Month – Have You Read a Jewish Book to your Child Lately? Read about PJ Library - <https://pjlibrary.org/about-pj-library>

Thanksgiving Tzedakah Drive – November 1-12 – Help us help others! Our children are learning about the value of giving and helping other people. It is always a blessing to help those who are in need, especially during holidays, and **we are partnering with St. Aloysius Food Pantry.** Please help provide a special Thanksgiving for local needy families during our annual Thanksgiving Tzedakah Drive. We are grateful that we are able to teach the concept of Tzedakah (Charity) and Gemilut Hasadim (deeds of kindness) in a meaningful way to our children.

Please bring the following specific food items (no glass bottles please) to help families in need in Great Neck: Rice, Parmalat milk boxes, canned or dry beans, canned vegetables, canned fruit, apple juice, crackers or tortilla chips, cookies, oatmeal or 24 to 48oz cooking oil. **A large barrel is outside TBE's main entrance from November 1-12. Thank you for your overwhelming support.**

Registration for 2022-2023 – We are very excited to announce that registration will begin on December 1 for the 2022-2023 school year. Registration Materials are going home today. **The deadline for the Early Bird is December 22, 2021. Prices will be locked-in at the Early Bird rate for next year's tuition.** Please remember that families of current students can register before the general community. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call or email me.

NAEYC Accreditation - While talking to families about our school during the registration process, prospective parents often ask me about our national accreditation with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). For those who are new to our school, accreditation provides a process by which early childhood professionals and families can evaluate programs, compare them with professional standards, and identify areas needing improvement. A NAEYC accredited program has demonstrated a commitment to providing the highest quality program for young children and their families. Our school has had the honor and distinction of being accredited with the NAEYC since 2001, with re-accreditation occurring every five years since then. We are extremely proud to be considered a high-quality school and are elated that we are still the **ONLY** nationally accredited Synagogue early childhood school on Long Island.

Nut-Free School – Reminder - We are a Nut-Free and Sesame-Free School. Please do not send food with nuts or sesame seeds in any form. And please do not give any of these foods to your child on school grounds. We have many children with serious food allergies this year. Thank you so much for your cooperation.

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. As the weather becomes colder, we will continue to be outdoors. It's a good time to start purchasing waterproof snow pants, jackets, snow boots and mittens for the winter. Please label all children's clothing! Thank you for your cooperation.

Mask Protocols – Masks are mandatory for all students when indoors, except when eating, drinking or napping. Wearing masks outdoors is optional. All students are required to arrive at school with their mask on. Some days, we go directly inside; other days we stay outdoors. Because we are in close contact at the entrance area, teachers, parents, siblings and ECEC students must wear a mask in these outdoor areas when arriving and dismissing students at all times. Thank you for your cooperation.

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 – Plain pasta, sauce, shredded mozzarella and vegetable

Tuesday – Baked chicken fingers and corn

Wednesday Pizza and Israeli salad

Thursday- Sliders/hamburgers, sweet potato fries and cucumber salad

Friday – **New Lunch** – Pancakes and applesauce

Our 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.

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. Your cooperation is essential and very much appreciated.

Shabbat Sing – Every Friday, I celebrate Shabbat with the toddlers, three-year-olds and Pre-K students. We join together on Friday mornings 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. We sing, dance, and work together as a school community to create a joyous Shabbat celebration.

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 yperler@tbgreatneck.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://pjlibrary.org/beyond-books/pjblog/june-2021/what-is-rosh-chodesh>

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

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

https://www.peacequarters.com/harvard-psychologists-say-parents-raise-good-kids-5-things/?utm_medium=social&utm_source=Facebook&utm_campaign=hiylfb

<https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/223-creating-routines-for-love-and-learning>

<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/may2019/outdoor-play-is-essential>

<https://www.communityplaythings.com/resources/articles/2010/outdoor-play>

<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>

<http://www.zerotothree.org/child-development/>