



Downtown Hebrew for Kids

The Hebrew School Your Kids Love

Parent's Handbook

Downtown Hebrew for Kids
Steen Family Jewish Children's Educational Center
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Dear Parents,

Imagine a Hebrew School where kids don't want to miss a day. They come in with a smile and leave humming a Hebrew song. Walking through the rooms, you can hear the sounds of lively discussion, of singing, laughter and learning. Imagine a child who feels the warmth and spirit of Judaism and loves learning Hebrew. Imagine the pride of his/her parents.

Welcome to Downtown Hebrew for Kids 😊

Thank you for giving us the chance to teach your children. We are humbled by this responsibility and your faith, entrusting us with the monumental partnership in your child's Jewish education.

We are excited to get acquainted with your child and begin our journey into Hebrew and Judaism. You should be proud that you have now joined thousands of families around the world on a passage into our rich culture and birthright.

Please take a moment to review the parent's handbook so that we can be partners in creating the best, safest and most enjoyable experience at Hebrew for Kids.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Devorah Kaplan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Devorah Kaplan,
Director Hebrew for Kids

Mission Statement:

At Hebrew for Kids we are proud of our refreshing approach to Jewish Education! Our mission is to provide and promote the highest quality Hebrew and Judaic education to a diverse community of Jewish children. Our aim is to nurture and build the foundation of your child's Jewish identity, through our interdisciplinary educational approach. The focus of our dedicated teachers is to inspire a twofold love; a love for learning and a love for Judaism. A well-balanced Hebrew School education will develop in our students a commitment to using Jewish values as a guide to the decisions of life, community and family.

Philosophy

The Downtown Hebrew for Kids environment is one of openness; welcoming families from all backgrounds. We acknowledge and respect the diversity of our children; while emphasizing Jewish values of family, community, caring, joy, tradition and rituals. Through comprehensive learning, holiday celebrations, and community events, our children gain pride in the richness of their Jewish heritage, culture and history as one united Jewish Nation! We value each and every family that joins us!

Educational Goals

- ❖ To develop within our students a positive attitude towards Judaism and their Jewish identity
- ❖ To give our students knowledge of Torah, Holidays, Prayers, Jewish History, customs, laws, culture, ethics and ideals.
- ❖ To develop within our students a sense of belonging and commitment to the Jewish people along with the knowledge and understanding of our love and spiritual ties to Israel.
- ❖ To foster care and concern for each individual Jew, encourage support of Jewish charities, and acts of kindness towards humanity as a whole.
- ❖ To develop, through Hebrew reading competency, a familiarity with our prayer book, synagogue rituals and observances.
- ❖ To instill in each of our students a love for Jewish learning and a commitment of Jewish study that will last a lifetime!

Staff Credentials

- ❖ Certified and trained teachers.
- ❖ Knowledge of Pedagogy and Child Psychology.
- ❖ Numerous years of experience in childhood education.
- ❖ Trained in CPR, first Aid and anaphylactic care.
- ❖ Special Needs Advisor with her Masters in Special Ed and 30 years' experience
- ❖ Knowledge and fluency in multiple languages; Hebrew, Yiddish, English Spanish.
- ❖ Qualified and ample assistants in each class for the optimum learning environment.

Methods in the Classroom

- ❖ Visual aids – Touching, feeling and seeing the actual Biblical items and artifacts
- ❖ Circle time – Interactive and all inclusive: visual and audio included.
- ❖ Story time – Incorporating musical expression, pictures and role playing.
- ❖ Role playing – Understanding and personalizing the morals and values taught in the Torah
- ❖ Debates – Allowing the diversity of the children to be expressed and acknowledged
- ❖ Video – Presentations in song and play for the visual learner in all of us
- ❖ Puppets – Fun and entertaining learning tool
- ❖ Music / Song / Audio - Exciting & enjoyable audio learning tools
- ❖ Centers - Hands on learning centers in smaller groups, for specific, focused learning & comprehension
- ❖ Montessori Style ambiance - Children assisting and teaching other children
- ❖ One on one time- Personalized one on one teacher / child learning
- ❖ Games - Implementing and reinforcing concepts through imagination and games
- ❖ Hands on manipulation – Channeled freedom to express the lesson learned eg: baking
- ❖ Children's personal creativity and interpretation
- ❖ Problem Solving – Critical thinking skills
- ❖ Compare and contrast – lending value to all opinions and thoughts
- ❖ Internalizing the lessons in our daily lives
- ❖ Hebrew computer programs and game lab

Special Needs:

Please be sure to notify us of any special needs or information that would help us better accommodate for your child and the children in his/her class. Please do not have discussions with the teachers at drop off and pick up.

Please make an appointment either via e-mail or phone.

We will surely do our best to accommodate you.

Curriculum Summary:

Hebrew Reading and language

At Hebrew for Kids, we strive to provide the highest standard of Hebrew language study in the limited amount of time. In all classes, children immerse in the Hebrew language. Each class incorporates the four strands of language acquisition,

- reading
- writing
- listening
- speaking

Our focus is to impart relevant Hebrew language skills integrated with Jewish studies. This allows the children to practically apply the language into appropriate areas of their lives. We incorporate two programs:

- Aleph Champion Hebrew Reading
- Hebrew Legend - Language and Conversation

Aleph Champion Hebrew Reading allows each individual child to advance in reading at their own pace and become proficient Hebrew readers. Aleph Champ is based on the Karate motivational system and integrates color based levels for Hebrew reading. Students start out on the white champ level with a white champ book and white flash cards and a burning desire to pass to the next level. Age appropriate, creative and motivational methods are used.

Hebrew Legend is an innovative program that enables the children to incorporate Hebrew language and vocabulary into their Hebrew World! In the very first stages of Hebrew reading - as soon as they master the letters and even one vowel, the children are introduced to numerous related words that they can integrate into sentences and their life.

The program follows 15-20 essential word groups and necessary vocabulary and grammar, throughout their years at Hebrew for kids. The goal of Hebrew Legend is to impart the children with the knowledge and ability to converse in Hebrew.

Aleph Champion Levels:

- Level 1- White Aleph Champ:** First 19 Letters of the Hebrew Alphabet
Pre-reading skills; involving proficiency in the names and sounds of the Aleph-Bet.
- Level 2 - Red Aleph Champ:** Next 13 letters of the Hebrew Alphabet.
- Level 3 - Orange Aleph Champ;** The first 3 vowels of the Hebrew Reading System:
Kamatz, Patach, Tzeirei
- Level 4-Yellow Aleph Champ;** The next 3 vowels...Segol, Shva, Cholam
- Level 5 - Green Aleph Champ;** The last 3 vowels: Chirik, Koobootz, Shoorook
- Level 6 - Blue Aleph Champ;** Exceptions to the Rule: Patach Chet, Double shva, (middle & end of words) Yud vav, Patach yud...
- Level 7 - Purple Aleph Champ:** 60 wpm (words per minute) Prayers
- Level 8 - Brown Aleph Champ** 70wpm, Prayers from everyday & Shabbat prayers
- Level 9 - Grey Belt!** Proficiency
- Level 10- Black Belt!** Can Read like the Cantor 😊

Hebrew Legend Levels:

- Level 1 Pink legend-My Magical Alef-Bet** Focus is on the names and sounds of the Aleph-Bet and Pre-reading skills. Vocabulary and songs introducing the new world of Hebrew language. Introduction to vowels and script letters.
- Level 2 Peach Legend- I Can Read Hebrew** Hebrew Reading is taught in context, involving pronunciation of all letter and vowel combinations. Vocabulary & language comprehension.
- Level 3 Lime Legend** Focus on accuracy in reading. Vocabulary units, reading comprehension,
- Level 4 Violet Legend Reading** fluency and accuracy. Hebrew language skills, involving vocabulary units and beginner's grammar.

Level 5 Turquoise Legend Consolidating Hebrew Language skills, involving more extensive grammar and writing.

Level 6 Silver Legend Developing Hebrew Language skills as you read and explore Hebrew text

Level 7 Gold Legend Become a Black Aleph Champ Legend and take the Hebrew language with you. Hebrew from Birth onward-Journal writing and conversation.

Jewish Studies

Our unique Jewish studies curriculum combines seven carefully chosen themes. This is in addition to all the Jewish Holidays, covered two lessons prior to every festival.

Level 1 My Magical Mitzvot

Jewish Ethics and Values in Order of the Aleph-Bet

Ahavat Yisrael/Love thy Neighbour; Bikkur Cholim/Visiting the Sick; Gemilut Chasadim/Acts of Kindness; Derech Eretz/Respect; Hachnasat Orchim/Inviting Guests; Vatanut/Patience; Zrizut/swiftness; Challah; Netilat Yadayim/Washing Hands; Kibud Av V'Em/Honor your Father and Mother; Lashon Tov & Lashon Hara/Talebearing; Seder V'Nikayon/Order and Cleanliness; Mezuzah; Tzedakah/Charity; Emet & Sheker/Honesty; Talmud-Torah/Torah Study.

Level 2 Beginnings - Bible Stories of Bereshit

Genesis- Stories of the 1st Book of the Torah.

Famous Jewish heroes and characters; timeline of events; storyline; lessons, morals and messages for our lives today. Topics include: Creation; Noach and the Flood; Dor Haflaga/Generation of Confusion; our Patriarchs and Matriarchs; Joseph & the 12 Tribes.

Level 3 Torah Travels

Shemot-.Devarim Stories of 4 Books of the Torah

Famous Jewish heroes and characters; timeline of events; storyline; lessons, morals and messages for our lives today. Topics include: Moses and the Israelites in Egypt; Exodus; Mt Sinai- The Giving of the Torah; Jews Travels in the Desert.

Level 4 WikiTorah

Fundamental Mitzvot and Foundations of Jewish Faith.

Topics include: Gam Zu LeTova/Everything is for the best; Torah study; Jewish Birthdays; Kashrut/Kosher; Anava/humility; Shabbat; Blessings; Hashgacha Pratit/Divine Providence; Simcha/Joy.

Level 5 In their Shoes

Jewish History from Joshua to the Second Temple Era

Events covered: Judges; Samson the Great; Deborah the prophetess; Kings Saul, David & Solomon; Elijah the prophet; Temple I; Babylonian Exile; Purim; Oral/written Law

Level 6 Stepping Forward

Jewish History from the Second Temple Era until Today

Events covered: The second Temple era; Ezra and Nechemia; the Chashmonaim; Chanukah; Christianity; the Middle Ages; Spanish Inquisition; European Jewry; Great Jewish Scholars; Holocaust; Modern Israel

Level 7 Kids in Action/ Lifecycles

The Torahs' Perspective on Lifecycle Events.

Participate in the real thing, and learn it, live it, love it!

Topics include; Birth and the Neshamah/soul; Brit; Bar/Bat Mitzvah; Adolescence-think the Jewish way; Jewish Wedding; Mourning; Death; Techiyat Hamaitim/After life; Moshiach and the Jewish Future.

School Sessions: Hours

Sunday 10:00am – 12noon

Tuesday 3:30pm – 5:30pm *Class based on sufficient enrollment

Ages

Boys and Girls Ages 4 –13

Dress Code

There is no official uniform at Hebrew for Kids

Children are welcome to wear appropriate clothing of their choice.

Shirts and shoes are mandatory.

Kippahs/ Yarmalkahs are provided at Hebrew for Kids and the boys are encouraged to wear them during class and prayers.

Tzedakah / Charity

Tzedakah is a basic concept in Judaism. Our Hebrew School attempts to develop a commitment amongst our students to share with others less fortunate by donating a few pennies a day to charity. Please provide your child with a coin for Tzedakah.

We will provide for those children who forget to bring. You may want to encourage your child to take from their allowance. At the culmination of the year we will send the Tzedakah to a specific charity so the children can see what they have accomplished.

Mitzvah Notes – Random Acts of Goodness and Kindness

A mitzvah note is a note describing a good deed your child has done. Each classroom has a Mitzvah tree that the notes are hung on. The children love to share their personal experiences and acts of kindness with their friends. Let's watch our tree grow!

Homework & Parental Participation

Homework is not mandatory but is greatly encouraged! We fully understand and appreciate the other academic responsibilities of the students. However, in order for your child to retain the reading skills they learned in school, please encourage them to practice his / her reading at least 10 minutes each night.

First Fridays Family Shabbat

Join us for select First Fridays during the year.

Sing with the Rabbi & his guitar in a circle of family and friends!

Enjoy traditional Oneg Shabbat Treats!

Check www.DowntownJewish.com for dates

Arrival & Dismissal

Arrival / Dropoff

Sundays class begins at 10:00am prompt! Please do not come earlier as our staff are preparing and we do not have proper supervision until 10:00am.

A staff member will be outside at the corner from 9:50am – 10:15am to assist you in unloading your children and to ensure a safe drop-off.

Please be careful when pulling in and out of the parking lot.

Dismissal / Pick up

School Ends on Sundays at 12:00noon.

Please do not come earlier! Every minute of class time is essential to the learning process. Please do not pick up from the parking lot;

Please line up in your cars, north bound on SE 11th street (animal clinic), we will bring your child to your car.

Staff members will be outside to assist in carpool.

Snacks

Hebrew for Kids provides healthy snacks and water.

Children with allergies such as gluten free, egg free etc, are encouraged to bring their own kosher snack. We cannot guarantee that we will have appropriate snack for them each week and we do not want them to be hungry. Learning on an empty stomach is very disturbing to some children. We want to be sure they are satiated and ready to learn with the least amount of distractions.

Photos

Kids love to see themselves in photos and parents love to see the smiling faces and activities going on with their children while they are not around 😊

We take photos and videos each and every day at Hebrew for Kids, updating our photo page and allowing you a glimpse into our classrooms and all the fun we are having!

We are very sensitive to your privacy. Please NOTE:

The Hebrew school photo link can only be accessed on our Hebrew school page on our

website – not from the usual home page.

Our Facebook page is a private page and only open to invited Hebrew school families.

Staying Connected!

Each week, on our Facebook group, we will post photos and a short description of that week's class for your enjoyment. Please join our group - "**Hebrew for Kids**". We will also create a Whatsapp broadcast group for last-minute reminders and news.

Please download the app on your phone. Facebook & Whatsapp are our two most used forms of communication, so please be sure to join!

Additionally, we will send out e-mail updates a few times during the year. We are sure you will take great pride in your child(ren)'s academic achievements and smiling faces.

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