

**CONGREGATION B'NAI ISRAEL
EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER
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PARENT'S HANDBOOK

E-MAIL: CONGREGATIONBNAIISRAEL.ORG

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Dear Parents,

Welcome to the B'nai Israel Early Childhood Center. This Parent Handbook is designed to help familiarize you with the Nursery School philosophy, curriculum, policies and procedures. After you have read it, if you have any questions please contact me. It is suggested that you save the handbook, and refer to it throughout the year.

As your child enters Nursery School, you will begin to participate in their educational process. They will develop social, physical and cognitive skills and you will become their cheering section and their advocate.

Together we will work to make this beginning a strong foundation upon which they will build a love for learning.

Fondly,

Gail S. Weinstein, Director
B'nai Israel Early Childhood Center

PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS

"The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) believes that a high quality early childhood program provides a safe and nurturing environment that promotes the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of young children while responding to the needs of the families. Although the quality of an

early childhood program may be affected by many factors, a major determinant of program quality is the extent to which knowledge of child development is applied in program practices - the degree to which the program is developmentally appropriate.”

At B'nai Israel we are committed to the philosophy mandated by NEAYC. Our school provides a nurturing and stimulating environment in which a child may have the opportunity to develop at his/her own rate and in his/her own way. Each child is viewed as a unique individual with specific needs. The curriculum is designed to meet those needs and to promote optimal physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development.

Additional goals of the program will enable a child to:

- View himself/herself as a competent and valued person thereby enhancing self-esteem
- Learn to like and trust others
- Develop the ability to organize, to plan, and to follow through on simple tasks
- Learn to manage feelings
- Become a social person: to develop the ability to interact with peers
- Develop a meaningful vocabulary and to develop language as a satisfactory means of communication
- Develop new interests
- Expand knowledge through exploration, investigation, observation, assimilation, and reflection
- Exercise curiosity: to ask questions, seek answers, become problem solvers
- Learn to work independently as well as in a group
- Develop physical coordination and skill
- Develop the ability for creative expression through music, dance, and art
- Widen knowledge of the world through listening to stories and books, observation and direct manipulation of materials, field trips, science experiments
- Play in manipulative settings that promote comprehension of mathematical concepts (sequence, quantity, number, classification)
- Expect and accept failures as well as successes

Exploring Jewish life, culture and holidays are an integral part of a child's experience at Nursery School. "Looking at the world through Jewish eyes" will enable each child to:

- Strengthen Jewish identity
- Engage in Jewish activities based on sensory experiences
- Become familiar with Jewish symbols, rituals, and ceremonial objects
- Learn blessings and songs
- Explore the meaning and ritual of holidays and Shabbat
- Become knowledgeable about the Jewish people and Israel
- Recognize and participate in the Synagogue as a place for meeting, study, and prayer

Disciplining = Teaching

At the ECC we believe in teaching, not punishing. We teach our children to make proper choices so that their behavior is socially acceptable. There are many ways we do this.

- Based on our knowledge of child development, we have developmentally appropriate expectations for the children’s behavior. For example, we expect two year olds to have difficulty sharing but do expect them to learn to take turns.
- We phrase our requests in positive ways. *Walking feet* instead of *don’t run* and *inside voice* instead of *don’t yell*. We do not dilute the question by asking *Okay?* At the end of the statement.
- We encourage children to express themselves verbally. *Tell Tommy you don’t like it when he grabs a toy you are using*. When needed we give them the words: Say, “*Tommy, please don’t push me.*” Teachers also express their feelings: *That screaming hurts my ears.*
- We encourage children to generate their own solutions to problems. *There are two girls and one ball. How can we solve this problem?*
- We focus on the accomplishment and use descriptive words instead of just basic praise. We say, “*You used red and blue to make that picture!*” Instead of “good job! Or even “nice picture.”
- We are playful. We attempt to avoid power struggles by making it fun to cooperate. *Let’s pick up the soft blocks two at a time and see if we can toss them in the basket without missing!*
- We acknowledge feelings. *You really want to play with that doll.*
- We anticipate problems and re-direct. A teacher sees two children going after the same truck. *Here’s a truck for Sam; here’s a truck for Katie. Can you make the trucks drive around the table?* We try to have at least 2 of each “popular” toy especially in the Twos.
- We speak to encourage. *I see you found the paper; that’s quite a drawing you made! Can we hang it on the bulletin board? Remember how you cleaned up the books so fast last time. Let’s do it again today.*
- We help children make amends. *What will you use to clean up the play dough on the floor?*
- We rely on natural consequences. *Oh look, now there’s no more water to play with at the water table.*

Taken from the “Positive Disciplining” Curriculum

It seems that human nature makes us draw added attention to a behavior we want to extinguish. Research has found that it is much more effective with children to be positive and tell them what they CAN do instead of what they SHOULD’N’T or CAN’T do. Like any new technique, it is harder to do at the beginning because you have to think on your feet and not say what first comes into your mind. But, with practice, you will become a master and find yourself speaking more positively towards your child and effectively changing your child’s behavior.

Turning negative comments/commands into positive statements

<u>Use the Positive</u>
Please walk/walking feet
Hands down/Hands in your lap
Inside voice
Blocks are for building
Toys are for playing with
Feet on the floor
Tush in the seat/sit down
Give that to...Let’s put that.....
Hands off/Hands down
Let’s...../We....
We talk with our mouths/we eat with our teeth
<u>Change the Negative</u>

Don’t run
Don’t hit
Don’t yell
Don’t throw the blocks
Don’t throw the toys
No jumping
Don’t stand on the chair/Don’t sit like that
Don’t take that
Don’t touch that
We don’t do that
No biting

PROGRAM/CURRICULUM

Our teachers prepare the environment for the children to learn through active exploration and interaction with adults, other children, and materials. Children develop an understanding of concepts about themselves, others, and the world around them through observation, investigation, and problem solving. They have ample opportunity to select many of their own activities from a variety of learning areas such as blocks, dramatic play, puzzles, books, games, and manipulatives. Math, science, and social studies are integrated through meaningful activities such as field trips, cooking, working with clay, paint, sand, water, in observing and recording changes in the environment, and in the study of animal and plant life. Outdoor activity provides the opportunity to develop large muscle skills. The development of small muscle skills is enhanced through

drawing, painting, cutting, pasting, and through the use of puzzles, pegboards, and construction materials. The children develop aesthetic expression and appreciation through art and music forms such as easel and finger painting, woodworking, clay, singing, using musical instruments, and in listening to tapes and records. Language skills are promoted by listening to stories and poems, dictating thoughts and ideas, communicating with others, observing classroom charts and printed materials, and participating in dramatic play. Social skills such as cooperating, helping, negotiating, and sharing are encouraged throughout the program.

FACULTY

Classes are taught by professionally trained teachers. The staff is supervised by the Director through regular staff meetings and classroom participation. The staff participates in professional organizations and attends conferences and in-service training to continuously enhance their teaching and nurturing skills.

Each staff member is required to take First Aid training and Pediatric CPR. We are also trained in EpiPen injections and administering of oral medications.

A movement specialist teaches weekly in the threes and fours classes. The three and four year olds take trips during the school year. Our Cantor teaches music to 3's & 4's twice weekly.

CLASSES FOR TWO-YEAR OLDS

This class will consist of eight children with two teachers. The child must be 2 years old by December 31 to be eligible. The group will meet for 2 ½ hours twice a week on Monday and Wednesday or Tuesday and Thursday. In December, the school day is extended to 3 hours. Fee is adjusted from January to June. The parent/primary caregiver must remain in the building during the first weeks of school until the child is comfortable. An optional lunch program will be offered from January – June with a separate fee.

CLASSES FOR THREE-YEAR OLDS

A 3-day a week class is offered. The child must be three years old by December 31 to be eligible. The group will meet from 9:00-12:00 pm, Monday, Wednesday and Friday. An extended day is offered on Mondays and Wednesdays from 12:00-1:00 pm. The child is required to bring a lunch to school on the extended days. Extended day programs begin in October. There is a separate fee for the extended day. A 5 day a week three year old class is also offered from 9:00-12:00. The child must be 3 by December 31st to qualify. An extended day is available Monday-Friday from 12:00-1:00 pm. The child is required to bring a lunch on extended days. There is a separate fee for lunch days. For the 3's classes, a parent/primary caregiver for each child is required to stay in the building the first two days of school. On the third day parent/primary caregiver may leave as soon as the teachers feel the child is secure in his/her surroundings.

CLASSES FOR FOUR YEAR OLDS

We offer classes for 4 year olds. The child must be four years old by December 31 to be eligible. The group will meet five days a week. Hours Monday-Friday are 9-1 p.m. Lunch is a part of the school day. The child is required to bring a lunch to school.

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REGISTRATION

Families and siblings currently enrolled in our program have first priority for registration.

Children whose parents/guardians are members of the congregation but who are not currently enrolled in our school have priority registration at a time to be determined.

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

All class assignments are decided with much input from classroom teachers, and are based on the individual needs of each child and the group dynamics of each class.

LUNCH

Our school is a peanut and nut free environment. This must be observed during lunch and snack, birthday and Shabbat celebrations. We do not allow ham, pepperoni and shellfish in the building.

ENRICHMENT CLASSES FOR CHILDREN NOT ENROLLED IN OUR FULL DAY PROGRAM

Enrichment classes begin in October and will be available with a preregistration.

Enrichment classes have separate fees and require payment in full before each session begins.

AGE REQUIREMENTS

- Two's class - A child must be 2 years old by December 31.
- Three's class - A child must be 3 years old by December 31.
- Four's class - A child must be 4 years old by December 31.

Coffee and Cuddles is a program for moms and newborns. We also have a program for moms/caregivers and toddlers (12 months – 2 years). Call the Nursery School for more information.

MEDICAL

A yearly examination by a physician and completion of a medical form are required by Connecticut State Law. Forms must be submitted to the Nursery School prior to opening day. The medical form must be submitted each year. The health form is valid for one year from the date of the last physical check-up.

TUITION PAYMENTS

Temple policy mandates that in order to set up a payment plan at the time of registration, the Nursery School will be asking for post dated checks or your credit card information (VISA & MASTER CARD ONLY) and your account will be charged as follows: 1/3 Now, 1/3 Nov. 17 and finally, 1/3 March 17. Your deposit will be credited to your second 1/3 payment.

No reductions in the fee will be made in the event of a child's absence from school. No refund of tuition will be made if a child is withdrawn from the school either prior to or after opening day. A prorated portion of the fee will be returned in the event the space is filled.

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HOME VISITS

Before school begins, one teacher visits each child who has not previously been enrolled, at his/her home. This one-on-one connection on the child's familiar territory aids immeasurably in the transition from home to school. This visit is especially for the child. Parents will have an opportunity to visit with the teacher on other occasions.

FIRST FEW DAYS OF SCHOOL

The first few days of school are special times for parents and children and have been designed to ease the child into the class program. The first few days will be shortened to allow for a gradual introduction to school routines. Prior to the beginning of school you will receive the days and time your child will attend during the first week.

NOTICES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

All information going into school mailboxes must be approved by the Nursery School Director.

HOUSE PARTY INFORMATION

Parents wishing to promote house parties/business through the school, including putting information through the school mailboxes must donate 5% of sales to N.S. Fund. This money will be used to enhance our programs.

DISENROLLMENT

If a child frequently displays severe behavioral problems the teacher will contact the parent to discuss the behavior and possible solutions. Our school works with outside experts and will make recommendations to assist the parents and the teacher to develop a plan to modify the behavior. The school may refer the family to a behavioral therapist, child psychologist or the Special Education Department in the town the child resides. In order to provide the appropriate care and education for the child the parent must agree to share all assessments and recommendations made by outside sources. A plan will be put in place for the child's continuation in the program and the parents must agree and follow through with all recommendations for the child's enrollment to continue.

If it is determined that a different type of environment is needed for the child, the school will make every effort to assist the parent in finding a more appropriate program.

B'nai Israel Nursery School reserves the right to dismiss a child at any time we deem necessary at the sole discretion of the administration. Reasons that a child may be dismissed:

- Excessive disruptive behavior by the child
- Excessive disruptive or uncooperative behavior by the parent
- Failure to pay tuition on time
- Excessive lateness in picking up the child

BITING

Our school recognizes that biting is, unfortunately, not unexpected when young children are in group care. We are always upset when children are bitten in our program, and we recognize how upsetting it is for parents. While we feel that biting is never the right thing to do, we know that children bite for a variety of reasons. Most of these reasons are not related to behavior problems. Our program does not focus on punishment for biting, but rather on effective techniques that address the specific reason for the biting. When biting occurs, we have three main responses:

- Care for and help the child who was bitten
- Help the child who bit learn other ways of dealing with their frustration and feelings.
- Observe the child who bit and document a possible pattern or reason for his or her biting.
- In circumstances of chronic biting it may be necessary for the parent to pick up the child and/or agree to a management plan until the child passes through this stage.

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Our teachers express strong disapproval of biting. They work to keep children safe and to help the child develop a plan of specific strategies and techniques to address it and it is shared with the parents. We do not and will not use any response that harms a child or is known to be ineffective.

We give immediate attention and if necessary, first aid to children who are bitten. We offer to put ice on the bite if the child is willing. If the skin is broken, we clean the wound with soap and water. Then we call the child's parent and inform them of a bite with broken skin.

When children bite, their parents are informed the same day. When children are bitten, their parents are informed personally at pick up and given a copy of the accident form to sign. We keep the name of the child who bit confidential to avoid labeling and give our teachers the opportunity to use their time and energy to work on stopping the biting. Documentation is kept on all biting incidents with the names of all children involved should the information be needed for any medical reason. We attend workshops on this issue at least once a year and have current resources on biting available for staff and parents.

INJURIES

Children participate in a variety of activities and at times may incur an injury. A written accident report will be made out for the parent to read and sign. If medical attention is required it is expected that the parent use their medical insurance to cover the cost of medical expenses. This is also the case of damage done to personal property, such as eye glasses.

SEPARATION

Separation anxiety is a natural part of the school process for young children. Parents and teachers will work together to help the child feel secure in the school setting. Teachers are accustomed to handling a child's distress. Although it is heartrending for a parent, an upset child will often be fine shortly after the parent leaves. At that time it is likely that the teacher will be able to involve the child in an activity.

We advise parents to discuss school with their children prior to their first day. For some children, the separation anxiety can be eased by bringing in a comfort object to school the first few days (favorite stuffed toy, special book, family snapshot).

Each child needs to adjust to school at his/her own pace. It may be necessary for a parent to stay in school until the child is comfortable and is adjusted to the surroundings. It is important for the parent to take cues from the teacher in determining the appropriate time to leave the classroom or building. It is the determination of the staff to decide when and if it is necessary for a parent to remain in the classroom or building.

SPECIAL SEPARATION GUIDELINES FOR THE TWOS

During the first couple of weeks of school, it is very important that your child get comfortable being left in this new situation.

We ask that since this is such a new situation, that a parent or any primary caregiver stay nearby and leave gradually during the first couple of weeks of school. Plan to stay until your child feels comfortable. You can leave to get a cup of coffee and then return to reassure your child as needed. The length of time is dependent upon the age and development of your child and your needs. Teachers will guide you through this process. Since each child is unique, it is the teacher's discretion as to when the parent or caregiver can leave for the entire class time.

We offer a well planned curriculum that provides children with opportunities to exercise self-competency and mastery, which in turn makes children feel comfortable and safe.

Our nurturing staff is trained to be sensitive to the needs of the young child.

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FOR PARENTS: NURTURING SEPARATION

Separation is a time when both you and your child will experience many different emotions. Your child will often be caught between their need to be close to you and growing independence. Here are some strategies to help make the process go more smoothly.

1. Do something special the night before.
You and your child can pick out what he/she would like to wear the next day, and he/she might like to help to select what you are going to wear, too.
2. Try to have a special morning ritual.
Take time to do something special, just your family. Even sitting down to a quick breakfast can help get the day off to a good start. If you have time, plan and fix breakfast together.
3. Decide on a special "friend" or object to bring to school.
Because these important objects can be comforting in the early days of school ask you child if he/she might like to choose a favorite stuffed animal, toy, or even a favorite hat to bring to school. Blankets and pacifiers must be kept at home.
4. On the way to school, discuss what each of you will be doing that day.
After your child has adjusted to school and knows you will be leaving, take time to talk about what you will be doing after you leave him/her at school.
5. Let your child see that you and his/her teacher are building a relationship.
Greet you child's teachers warmly, and, as you talk, bring your child into the conversation. "Mrs. Stein, guess what Jennifer and I fixed for breakfast this morning – pancakes and raisin faces. Have you ever had them? Jennifer, let's tell Mrs. Stein about the ones we made together".
6. Always take time to stay goodbye.

It may seem tempting to leave while your child is involved in an activity and might not notice, but this does not promote trust in the long run. Clear goodbyes build trust. Overtime, they can strengthen your child's belief that you will come back.

You might ask your child, "How should we say goodbye? Do you want to give me two hugs? Can we rub noses?" This way your child has a choice about what you will do, and together you can build your own goodbye rituals. Be sure to leave your child with an image of what you will do together at the end of the day.

ARRIVAL AND HAND WASHING

1. Please have your child use the bathroom before school begins and wash his/her hands. You may wash hands in the classroom sink if your child does not need to use the bathroom.
2. Teachers arrive at school each day prior to the arrival of the children. This time is needed to prepare for the busy, exciting day that is planned for the children. Classroom doors will open at 9:00 a.m. Please respect his policy. Bring your child directly to his/her teacher and make sure both your child and the teacher know when you're leaving. Please make eye contact with each of them before you leave the bathroom.
3. It is important to say your goodbyes and leave the classroom promptly so that your child may begin his/her day.
4. If you need to speak to the teachers, it should be brief or an appointment can be made to talk at another time. Greeting all the children and parents and getting them involved must be the teachers' focus during the arrival and dismissal periods.

5. Remember that for young children it can be difficult to comfortably enter the classroom if they are late. Please make sure you do not place any stress on your child by arriving late, on a regular basis, after the class begins.
6. Please call the office and leave a message if your child is going to be absent so we do not worry and wait to start circle time for someone. Notice of illness help advise parents of communicable illnesses.

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PLEASE BE SURE TO SIGN-IN ON THE SIGN-IN CLIPBOARD WITH YOUR NAME AND EXACT TIME OF ARRIVAL AND SIGN-OUT AT PICK UP. THIS IS A DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH LICENSING REQUIREMENT.

DISMISSAL

1. It is important to pick up your child on time. If you must be late, please call the Early Childhood office so we can inform the teachers and they reassure your child. Children who are not picked up at the scheduled time will be brought to the Director's office to wait. Sign the sign-in/out sheet at the end of each school day.
2. If you are carpooling, be sure that the staff has a detailed list of drives and schedule on the required **Student Emergency Sheet.**
3. Teachers are never permitted to dismiss a child to anyone other than the parent or the designated car pool person or caregiver, unless the teachers are given clear, written, dated and signed instructions from the parents in the form of a handwritten note or on the classroom notebook. All new pick-up people must be introduced to the teachers and Director before we will dismiss a child to them.
4. If a family changes caregivers any time during the year, the school must be informed in writing and the above procedure applies. Please sign-out and collect all papers from your child's mail pocket on a daily basis.
5. Once your child has been dismissed from the teacher, she/he is in the caregiver's care and is now that person's responsibility.

SCHOOL VISITS

Parents and grandparents are always invited to visit the school to observe and to participate. Please make arrangements with the teacher in advance. Other visitors may enter the classroom from time to time, at the discretion of the teacher or director. To maintain the state regulated student/teacher ratio, siblings may not attend class.

PARENT-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

There are scheduled parent-teacher conferences each year. All parents are invited to attend a "we're getting to know your child conference" in February/March. A conference may be arranged at any time throughout the year at the request of the parent or the teacher. Parents are expected to be available upon the request of the teacher or director, if problems develop during the school year.

Early in September, a Parent Orientation is held for all mothers and fathers. This meeting provides the opportunity to learn about plans for the upcoming year. It also offers parents an opportune time to learn more about practices and procedures at the Nursery School. We also have a "Back to School Night" scheduled in October.

Each child has a "mailbox" outside the classroom. This mailbox will be filled each day by the teacher with information that parents need to know. This mailbox needs to be checked and emptied each day. If someone other than the child's parent is picking up, that person should take all papers out of the mailbox.

It is important that you keep the school informed of any changes in your child's daily life or family circumstances over the course of the school year such as a new caregiver, a parental trip, an illness or death in the family (even that of a pet), and any changes in living arrangements or work schedules. These may affect your child's attitudes towards school and the content of your child's play. We can support your child much more successfully if we are aware of such events.

PROCEDURES FOR REFERRAL AND SPECIAL SERVICES

If any staff member has a concern about a child, she must discuss the matter with the director. At the same time, the teacher will document the concerns and review the child's record. The preschool director will also observe the child in the classroom. If the director validates the concerns, the parents will be asked to schedule a meeting with the teacher and director. At this

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time, the teacher will provide the parents with a written statement including the reason for recommending a referral for additional services, and a brief summary of the observations made by the teacher(s) and director. The preschool staff will make every effort to accommodate the child's needs. If necessary, the director will refer the family to the appropriate service. Neither the preschool staff nor the director will make any referral without written consent of the parent(s). All parent conferences, referral recommendations, and child observations will be recorded and placed in the child's file. The school provides hearing assessment for 3's & 4's. Speech/language assessment will be provided upon teacher recommendation from staff of 3's & 4's. All information will be shared with parents.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS - WEATHER RELATED

We use the Fairfield School System as a guide for determining delayed openings and closings. When Fairfield announces a delayed opening, all programs will begin at 10:00 a.m. When Fairfield announces that schools are closed, all programs are closed. Listen to WICC (60 AM) radio station for information concerning school closing due to inclement weather. If in doubt, please call your child's teacher. If the weather should turn inclement during the school session, you might want to pick up earlier than our scheduled closing time. In case of an emergency closing i.e. broken or frozen water main or no heat, an announcement will be made on radio station WICC. In addition, all families will be notified by phone. It is essential that parents leave a number where they can be reached all day. You will also be notified by computer on our B'nai Blitz site.

HEALTH PROCEDURES

NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE

Parents are required to inform the center by 8:30 a.m. if a child will not be at the center on a scheduled day. This will enable the center to more effectively maintain appropriate ratios and help the classroom teacher effectively plan for the day.

If your child is ill, we request that you notify the center director not only the absence, but also of the nature of the illness. This enables our faculty to keep track of any illnesses, which may occur at our school. This information will only be shared with staff on a "need to know" basis. If your child has a communicable disease, we ask that you share the diagnosis with the Center Director, so that the parents of the children in the school may be notified that a communicable disease is present. Once again, only the communicable disease information will be shared. The ECC will take all measures necessary to protect your child's confidentiality. Parents are not required to disclose this information by law, and your continued enrollment will not be based whatsoever on your decision to share, (or not) the reason for your child's absence from school.

TOILETING AND TRAINING

Most children are developmentally ready to begin toilet training between the ages of two-and-a-half and three-and-a-half. However, each child does develop at his/her own rate. Our toileting policy has been developed with these differences in mind.

In order to meet the State of Connecticut's Department of Public Health requirements, the staff must follow a Department of Public Health approved plan regarding the changing of diapers and the toileting of young children. Children entered the Twos do not need to be toilet trained. There is a changing table in each Twos room. We ask that parents keep us updated on any changes in the toileting process of their children.

Children should be sent to school in underpants only after they have had two successful dry days in a row at home. Please be realistic about your child's ability to use the potty when sending him/her to school in underpants. It is very important that your child be able to verbalize his/her need to use the toilet in order to be successful at school.

Sitting your child on the toilet to "catch him/her" does not mean that he/she is trained. Please understand that we do not have the luxury of time to "catch the moment" with your child. It is helpful to notify the teacher and discuss your at-home experience in advance of your child attempting to use the toilet at school.

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Occasionally children in the process of toilet training have a setback when a new baby arrives or something else happens to disrupt the family routine. Please do not be discouraged. You can pick up the training in a few weeks when your routine is reestablished. Once your child is wearing underpants, we expect your child to show consistency in using the bathroom at school.

If a Threes child is not toilet trained, we ask parents to be working on the process with their child during the fall. In the event of an occasional wetting incident, the teacher will assist the child in changing his/her clothes. All children are changed in the closest bathroom to the classroom. Please inform us of your child's toileting schedule so we can anticipate bathroom needs. We take the children to the bathroom as needed and ask the children throughout the morning.

Please practice with your child on how to remove and replace his/her clothing by him/herself.

Dress them in comfortable, loose clothing that can be removed easily. Suspenders, overalls and zippers can be difficult for young children, so **please keep clothing simple for the younger ones.**

Sweat pants and pants with elastic band waists are easiest for children to wear when beginning the process of toileting on their own. We know that accidents can happen so please send in extra clothes that fit well and are seasonally appropriate, so children can be changed into dry, clean clothes if the need arises.

All children will be offered the opportunity to use the toilet at regular intervals during the day. Children are encouraged to tell a teacher when they need to use the toilet so that can be taken care of. Teachers promote independence in a child's skills in toileting; i.e. having the children wipe themselves. A teacher will always accompany children to the bathroom and help with clothing as needed. Practice with your children the correct way to wipe themselves throughout the toilet training process.

HEALTH CARE POLICY

School is a place for children to learn and interact with others. An ill child is not comfortable in a school setting and may be contagious to others. Parents should observe their child before sending them to school. If a child is ill or is still recovering from an illness they should be kept home. If your child has a communicable disease (i.e. lice, chicken pox, etc.), the preschool must be notified. If your child gets sick while at school, every attempt will be made to contact a parent, or in the event that a parent cannot be reached, the person(s) designated on the emergency form. The child will be separated from the others in the group until he/she is taken home. Great care is taken at school to prevent the spread of infection. All the tables are wiped with antibacterial solutions after each project and before and after any food is used. Toys are either wiped or dipped in a bleach solution weekly. The rugs are vacuumed and the floors are washed and swept daily. Sinks and toilets are cleaned daily with antibacterial solutions. (The synagogue custodians do these housekeeping duties). Children and staff must wash their hands after toileting or diaper changing and before snack or lunch is eaten. All staff and children must wash before and after any cooking project is done in the classroom. Tissues are available in each classroom, and children are to wash using antibacterial soap after sneezing, coughing and wiping noses. We strongly discourage the dispensing of medicine at school. However, we will dispense LIFE-THREATENING medications such as an EpiPen. Children who require the use of an EpiPen when exposed to a specific allergen, which could potentially cause a severe allergic response (anaphylactic reaction), must supply B'nai Israel with an EpiPen for the individual child. This will require:

EpiPen

- a) A written physician's order for the EpiPen use for this child.
- b) Written parental permission for the use of the EpiPen, which includes a detailed description of the specific signs of allergic reaction for each affected child.
- c) Specific directions for follow-up emergency care, in the event that the child encounters an allergic reaction while in preschool.

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- d) The EpiPen must have the pharmacy label attached. Accommodations for children with special health needs will be made as best as possible. In each classroom, there is a list of all the children with allergies. Children who are allergic to the snack supplied by the preschool (snacks provided by the preschool are posted) must bring their food from home. Parents must give the school a complete listing of all that their child is allergic to, and what guidelines the school is to follow.

If your child should encounter a cut, abrasion, etc. during the course of the day, routine wound care is provided by cleansing the affected area with soap and water, and application of a band-aid. Ice is applied for bumps and bruises, as needed. Any child who encounters a wound or injury which appears to be of a more serious nature is given basic first aid and the parent is contacted for further follow-up with their medical provider. If a child needs emergency care, all attempts to reach the parent(s) are tried. Home, work and cell phone, which are all on file in the children's records. If a parent cannot be reached following this, then each designated emergency contact is called. When all efforts have been exhausted and a parent or back up cannot be reached, then the director will call 911 for emergency transport of the child. Either the director or the teacher will accompany the child, and all emergency papers will be in the hands of the accompanying staff member. All emergency phone numbers are posted by the phones, in each classroom.

Parents are asked to keep their child home if any of the following are present:

1. A fever, or fever during the previous 24 hours;
2. Nasal discharge that is yellow or green;
3. A persistent cough;
4. Vomiting and/or diarrhea (three or more loose bowel movements anytime during the day before)

5. Reddened eyes with discharge and/or crusty eyelashes.
6. Mouth and skin sores
7. General fatigue, unusually fretful behavior or loss of appetite might indicate an oncoming illness. Chickenpox – A child can be re-admitted to school only after the rash has scabbed and no new lesions are forming (approx. 5-7 days from onset).
8. Head lice – Please report any case to the office and keep your child home until they are successfully treated and nit free. The Director will check your child's head before allowing them to return to the classroom.
9. Strep Throat or Scarlet Fever – A child should be kept home until he/she has been on an antibiotic for at least 24 hours.

In order to return to school following an illness, they should be able to participate fully in activities, including outdoor play. They must be fever free for 24 hours.

ALLERGIES

We are an allergy sensitive school. We have so many different food allergies we have put this statement into our parent handbook. Please alert your child's teachers to any food allergies, as our curriculum involves a great deal of cooking. We can then take careful precautions with recipes and with informing other parents of allergies in the classroom. If your child has a food allergy, you may be asked to send in special snacks. If there is a child with food allergies in your class, you will be notified as soon as possible. In cases where the allergies can be dangerous to a child, all the parents will be informed immediately of that child. If you have difficulties or questions regarding lunches, we have a list of alternative nutritious foods that children tend to like. We realize that this may be difficult for picky eaters, but we hope to use these opportunities to help children learn "to take care of their friends".

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SNACKS

The children will have a nutritious snack each day. The snack provided will be nut free. Please do not send candy in your child's lunchbox. It is not particularly nutritious and often causes problems among the children.

HOLIDAYS

Class will not be held on the Jewish holidays and secular holidays which are listed on the school calendar.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

The school would be happy to celebrate your child's birthday in the classroom. Parents may bring in a snack (nut free). The family must communicate to the staff what will be brought into school. An approved birthday food list will be distributed at the beginning of the school year. Children in the 3's classes will make a birthday celebration snack for each other. Should you have an out-of-school celebration and would like invitations to be placed in class mailboxes, in order to do this; the whole class must be invited.

TOYS

Due to the risk of damage, sharing issues, and loss, children are asked not to bring in toys from home, unless specifically requested by the classroom teacher for use as part of the curriculum. Please consult the teachers to find out which books and tapes would complement the curriculum. We welcome appropriate books and tapes, which can be shared with the class. Except for "transitional" toys needed in the early days of school, especially the Twos, we ask that your children leave all toys at home. All toys that do come from home are to be placed in the child's cubby upon entering the classroom.

CLOTHING

All parents enjoy seeing their children looking their best. In school, children need to dress in clothing that can withstand an active pace, survive paint and outside play!

A DESIRE TO KEEP CLOTHING FREE FROM MESS OR STAINS SHOULD NEVER TAKE PRECEDENCE OVER NEW EXPERIENCES AND DISCOVERIES. Please send your child in clothing that allows them to participate comfortably and without worry of getting dirty. Clothing with lots of buttons, zippers, belts and snaps make independence at the toilet difficult. Simple clothing that allows for independence gives children that wonderful feeling of success! Sneakers or rubber-soled shoes are necessary for the active play at nursery school.

Each child needs a COMPLETE CHANGE OF CLOTHING to be brought to school on the first day of class. Please mark each piece with the child's name and then place in a gallon size zip lock bag, also marked with your child's name. You may also send in the clothes in a shoe box which your child, if desired, might decorate or paste on family pictures.

Please be sure to label all sweaters, coats, and hats with the child's name. Many items of clothing are the same or may look alike.

The children will play outside daily. It is important that you dress your child appropriately for the season. Please provide jackets, coats, boots, mittens and hats as needed. Please label everything.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are an integral part of the school program. They will be planned to suit the interests and ages of the children. Parent volunteers will be needed to help chaperone and to transport the children. A separate activity fee will be charged to parents of 3 and 4 year olds. This fee will be used for entrance fees for trips and special visitors to the school.

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THE NURSERY SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The B'nai Israel Early Childhood Center is governed by the Early Childhood Committee, which is comprised of the Director of the school and parents of children enrolled in the varied programs. The Chairperson of this committee reports to the Board of Trustees of B'nai Israel. The Committee determines school policy that promotes the developmental approach to early childhood education. There are many ways in which parents can become involved at the Nursery School. If you are interested, please contact the director.

PARENT PARTICIPATION & CLASS ROOM PARENTS

Parents are encouraged to be involved in the nursery school experience. If you have a particular talent that you could share with the children, please let the teacher know. If you would just like to spend a morning in the classroom, please make arrangements with the teacher. Each classroom needs two class parents. These parents volunteer their time to help make phone calls to pass information to all families, to assist in getting other parents to serve as drivers for field trips and/or chaperones, and to help plan class parties. If you would like to serve as a class parent, you may sign up at Parent Orientation or on the volunteer sheet included in your packet.

SPECIAL NEEDS POLICY

The Early Childhood Center of Congregation B'nai Israel will attempt to meet the educational needs of all children. The needs of most children can be met within the traditional program of regular classrooms. Some children may require specialized or individualized modifications which may be provided within the classroom. In a very few instances, it is anticipated that a child's needs may not be able to be met by reasonable modification or accommodation. When requested by either parent or a member of the staff, a committee comprised of the nursery school director, staff teacher, and special needs professional will meet with the parents to discuss the educational program for each child with special needs. The nursery school director and staff reserve the right to make the decision as to what educational program would be appropriate for the particular child. The expense of any specialized accommodation will be the primary obligation of the parents.

COMPLAINT/GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

The procedure is for child day care programs which are licensed under the authority of Connecticut General Statutes 19a-79-1a through 19a-79-12.

Most problems within a day care are non-life threatening and can be resolved by discussing the problem.

In the case that a staff member is involved, the staff will not, at any time, use corporal punishment to discipline children. Under no circumstances will children be neglected, embarrassed, frightened or humiliated. In case of such incident, the ECE Director will follow guidelines as stated on the policy dealing with the Prevention of Child Abuse found in the Licensing Book located in the ECE office.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

In the case of a grievance, the ECE Director may be notified in one of the following ways:

- A phone call to set up an appointment to speak with the Director. It will be done at the earliest possible time.
- A message may be left on 335-5058 and a phone call will be returned at the earliest possible time.
- An e-mail may be sent to gweinstein@congregationbnaiisrael.org.

If anyone feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved for all parties:

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- The ECE Director may contact the Department of Public Health if deemed necessary.

In case of an emergency, notify the Department of Public Health as soon as the emergency is under control.

In case of abuse/neglect or life threatening situations, contact the Department of Children and Families at 1-800-842-2288 and the Department of Public Health - Day Care Licensing Unit.

ALL INSPECTION REPORTS AND COMPLIANCE LETTERS ARE AVAILABLE FOR YOUR INSPECTION AT THIS DAY CARE PROGRAM OR BY CONTACTING THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH-DAY CARE LICENSING UNIT AT:

410 Capitol Avenue – MS#12 DAC
P.O. Box 340308
Hartford, CT 06134-0308

1-800-282-6063
1-800-439-0437
1-800-509-8045

THE SAME PROCESS WORKS FOR COMPLIMENTS AS WELL!

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**B'NAI ISRAEL NURSERY SCHOOL IS A LICENSED FACILITY FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
FULFILLING ALL REQUIREMENTS SET BY THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT**