



**S**CHOOL *for* **I**NTEGRATIVE **T**ORAH **E**DUCTION

# 2019-2020 PARENT HANDBOOK

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## SITE HOURS & LOCATION

*The SITE* is hosted at the beautiful Aish building, located at 9550 E Belleview Ave. Greenwood Village CO, 80111. Classes are held on Sundays from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm. It is very important that your child is brought to school by 9:30 am each week. Each week the entire school will start the day together in an opening ceremony called the Site Plan. This will start promptly at 9:30am. We will close the day together as well with a school wide Walkthrough which will conclude at 12:30pm.

*The SITE* will not be responsible for children who are dropped off earlier than 9:20 am. We request that you please pick up your children promptly at 12:30pm. We cannot ensure that there will be anyone to supervise your child after 12:40pm.

## SITE STAFF

*The SITE* is directed by Sarah and Rabbi Lehrfield ([director@hebrewschool.site](mailto:director@hebrewschool.site)). Leah Meyer ([lmeyer@hebrewschool.site](mailto:lmeyer@hebrewschool.site)) is the Assistant Director. Tammy Stitelman brings more than 30 years of experience to her role as Hebrew Reading Specialist.

Our SITE teachers include:

K (Sprout)- Esti Erlanger ([eerlanger@hebrewschool.site](mailto:eerlanger@hebrewschool.site))

1st Grade (Sprout+) - Leah Meyer ([lmeyer@hebrewschool.site](mailto:lmeyer@hebrewschool.site))

2nd & 3rd Grades (Build) - Raina Balsam ([rbalsam@hebrewschool.site](mailto:rbalsam@hebrewschool.site))

4th & 5th Grades (Grow) - Rabbi Yonatan Nuszen ([ynuszen@hebrewschool.site](mailto:ynuszen@hebrewschool.site))

6th & 7th Grades (Ignite) - Shoshana and Dov Ort ([ort@hebrewschool.site](mailto:ort@hebrewschool.site))

## SECURITY

We will have security onsite every week that we are in session. Please do not be alarmed if you see a police car in the parking lot, etc.

Please enter the building through the main entrance only. Please do not enter or exit the building from any other entrances. Please make sure to list additional people who can drop off or pick up your child(ren) on the admissions form.

Each family will receive a unique code sent via email from the facilities manager which will grant you access to the building during school hours. Please keep this code handy and do not share it with others.

## CODE OF BEHAVIOR

1. We expect all students to observe an appropriate level of conduct during all lessons and activities. Students are expected to actively participate productively in all lessons and activities and refrain from being disruptive. Swearing and all foul language or gestures are forbidden.
2. Students must respect the belongings of other students and teachers, as well as the facility.
3. No devices (cell phones, iPods, iPads) will be allowed during class, **except those devices given to teachers at the beginning of the day to be used during Hebrew instruction.** Video games and any similar electric devices are not allowed at *The* **SITE**. (see 'Devices' section below)
4. Violence and bullying will never be tolerated.

Any student that cannot behave at an appropriate level of conduct, may (at the discretion of the teachers and/or Directors) be asked to leave the program.

Our policy is to do whatever we can to ensure that no child is ever asked to leave the program. No refunds will be given to students that have been asked to leave the program.

## DEVICES

Cell phones and tablets may be brought to school and given to the teacher at the beginning of each day. They will then be given out when necessary for instruction.

Video games and any similar electric device are not allowed at *The SITE*. If a student must carry a cell phone during class in order to contact a parent or be contacted by a parent, we ask that the phone be turned off or turned onto vibrate mode and kept out of sight. If an electronic device is found to be disruptive, it will be confiscated and returned to the student at the end of the school day. *The SITE* takes no responsibility for lost or misplaced devices.

## CALENDAR CHANGES/SNOW DAYS

We will do our utmost to stick to the published *SITE* calendar. You should have received the pdf calendar and can choose to download the calendar to your phone. You can also access the calendar online at [joidenver.com/site](http://joidenver.com/site).

Families will be notified of all calendar and schedule changes via e-mail. In case of severe inclement weather, please check your email or call Sarah at 404-858-1884 before coming to school.

## SNACKS

*The SITE* will supply healthy snacks for the students. If your child has any allergies or you have any concerns, please make sure to enter them on the admissions form/waiver provided if they were not entered on the application.

## COMMUNICATION

We strongly believe that a positive parent-teacher relationship is essential to a student's progress. We encourage parents to communicate with your child's teacher. You can email teachers directly using the email addresses above.

The Directors of SITE are always available to meet with you to discuss any concerns you may have regarding your child's progress. If a problem occurs, it is essential that you communicate with the Directors and/or the teacher without delay.

## **REINFORCING LESSONS**

To adequately retain the information learned each Sunday, regular attendance is expected and students must review the material at home throughout the week. This is particularly true of Hebrew reading and comprehension. Most of the review will be done through an app (see below) which will make the lessons quick, fun and engaging. These are best done together with a parent.

Although homework is not required it is highly recommended for families that value Hebrew reading proficiency. Children will be rewarded in school for completing their homework.

## **TECHNOLOGY IN THE CLASSROOM & AT HOME**

In order to facilitate fun, engaging and effective review as well as individualized instruction in class, we will be utilizing an app from Jewish Interactive. It will have custom games created to supplement what is being taught in each class. These lessons will be assigned by your child's teacher specifically for him/her.

The app can be downloaded online at <https://jitap.net/app> or from the App Store and Google play by searching Ji Tap. You can also access games and assignments from a web browser at [jitap.net](http://jitap.net).

A login has been created for each student. To log in, scan your child's personal QR code with the camera on your device. The QR code will be given out on the first day of school.

Many classes will also be utilizing Mango - the language app. If your child's class will be utilizing the app, you will be notified and an account will be created for him/her.

To access, download the mango app from the App Store or Google Play and login using the information below.

The email address for each account is the student's first initial, last name @hebrewschool.site (so if the students name is John Smith, his email would be jsmith@hebrewschool.site) The password for each one should be 'sitestudent9550'.

## SCHOOL-WIDE INITIATIVES

### TORAH TIGERS

We are trying to encourage our students to internalize the following:

1. G-D LOVES ME AS I AM AT THIS MOMENT.
2. I AM IMPORTANT AND VALUED. Each positive act and victory is important.
3. At every moment, I AM CAPABLE of growth and self-control. I can cope with difficulties and challenges that come my way.

To accomplish this, we will introduce your children to a program called The Torah Tigers, based on both The VICTORY METHOD by Dr. Miriam Adahan and Dr. Carol Dweck's Mindsets. This method helps children become responsible, kind-hearted and self-disciplined and empowers them to embrace and overcome challenges by celebrating every day Victories. **A VICTORY is anything a person does that is difficult and requires self-restraint.** Because everyone is unique, this will vary from one person to another. What is a VICTORY for one child is not necessarily a VICTORY for a different child.

When parents and teachers praise children for practicing self-control at an early age, they will be more likely to be disciplined teens and adults. Even a three-year-old can be praised for "victories," such as being patient and helpful. Training children in the VICTORY method helps them internalize the message, "I can resist temptation. I get joy from victories and face life's challenges with love, courage and faith." This will prepare our children to practice self-control and feel self-assured for the rest of their lives. The more we acknowledge our power to choose a VICTORY, the more we see ourselves and the people around us as G-dly. Every act of self-control builds self-respect.

Make a conscious effort to create excitement and enthusiasm for victories. You don't need to demand anything heroic. Simply notice, "Wow, what a VICTORY! I'm so proud of you for not responding to that insult. That must have been really challenging!"

We will make every effort to share your children's victories with you at pickup so that you can reinforce the VICTORY METHOD at home. Please send VICTORY notes with your child to Hebrew school of victories that they had at home.

#### **WHAT CAN YOU DO TO ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD TOWARD SELF-MASTERY?**

1. Express enthusiasm when a child shows kindness, self-discipline or courage. For example, "A VICTORY! You didn't hit back!" "You shared your toy." "You listened the first time I asked!" You will find that children as old as 3 years of age can speak about truly amazing acts of kindness and self-discipline.
2. Be Patient: Middos (character development) work takes time; celebrate each millimeter of growth.
3. Gain Cooperation: Instead of giving an order when you need help, ask, "Can you do this victory?" This makes it easier for them to want to help! If they refuse, say, "It's a victory for me to find a different solution."



4. Do not force a child to do a VICTORY, as this creates resistance and resentment. Instead, ask, "Can you do this VICTORY?"
5. MAKE THEM THINK! When a child misbehaves, ask, "Think about what you are doing/just did. Is that a VICTORY?" "Is it a VICTORY to eat that/say that/do that?" Slowly, she will realize that she can choose her own victories and develop an inner voice of conscience and self-control.
6. Encourage children to problem solve and come up with three possible solutions to each problem (on their own) using the 5- step problem solving routine:
  1. Identify the problem;
  2. Brainstorm three ways to handle it;
  3. Choose one way to try first, and decide on a back-up plan;
  4. Try out the strategy;
  5. Evaluate how well the strategy works.
7. Respect children's limitations and never compare one child to another. What is easy for one child may be difficult, if not impossible, for a child of a different age or temperament. Some children are naturally obedient and organized, while other are not.
8. Share your own victories, when appropriate. This shows children that middos (character development) work is important at all ages and is the source of true spiritual joy.
9. Praise for effort, not success. (See the mindsets on the following page)

## **GROWTH & FIXED MINDSETS**

Stanford professor Carol Dweck outlines in her book *Mindsets: The New Psychology of Success* that how we praise our children can benefit or detriment their self view. Being mindful about how you praise your child can help him or her foster a growth mindset and boost his or her motivation, resilience and learning.

There is a strong message in our society about how to boost children's self-esteem, and a main part of that message is: Protect them from failure! While this may help with the immediate problem of the child's disappointment, it can be harmful in the long run.

### **UNDERSTANDING THE FIXED MINDSET**

When you praise intelligence, you foster a fixed mindset, the belief that one's intellectual ability is inherent. Those with a fixed mindset tend to agree with statements such as "You have a certain amount of intelligence and cannot do much to change it." They see mistakes as failure and as signs that they aren't talented enough for the task. More concerning, they seek experiences that reinforce their ability and prove their intelligence, leading them to avoid challenging tasks, to look smart instead of to be smart. The desire to learn becomes secondary.

Praising kids for smarts encourages them to avoid the most useful kind of learning activities, those in which we learn from our mistakes. Without experiencing and focusing attention on mistakes, minds will not revise models. Mistakes are repeated and challenges avoided.

### **UNDERSTANDING THE GROWTH MINDSET**

When you praise for effort, you encourage a growth mindset, the belief that intellectual ability can be developed through education and effort. Those with a growth mindset believe that they can get better at almost anything, as long as they spend the

necessary time and energy. Instead of seeking to avoid mistakes, they see mistakes as an essential precursor of knowledge.

## **WHAT CAN YOU DO TO ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD TO DEVELOP A GROWTH MINDSET?**

When giving praise, always praise the effort and not the result. Avoid praising natural abilities or anything that did not require effort (which says “You have permanent characteristics and I’m judging them” as opposed to “You are a developing person and I’m interested in your development.”)

Avoid using words like easy and quick and never use them as praise “You finished that project so quickly!” (Instead praise the method they used or try: “That project didn’t seem so challenging for you this time, you’re brain must have gotten so much bigger! Would you like to try something more challenging?”)

Citing specific behaviors such as the amount of time spent or the approach your learner is taking to figure out the task enables the child to connect their actions with results. Additionally, the praise needs to be sincere, otherwise he or she will discredit all praise – insincere and sincere. Your child will intuitively know if the praise is deserved or not. In fact children who are praised insincerely actually translate praise and criticism.

Reinforce the positives of new learning experiences with “Good job trying something new and different – I know you haven’t done this before.”

## **GIVE SPECIFIC PRAISE**

When giving praise try and be as specific as possible, defining the character, the action, and acknowledging the challenge.

I.e. I am so proud of how...

... you were, when you did/didn't do xyz, that must have been really challenging, but you did it!

## **FRAME THE CHALLENGE**

Framing challenges and victories as an opportunity for growing our brains or neshama (soul)— “This looks like a challenge, a chance to grow our brains!”

Everyone makes mistakes. Children should see mistakes as part of life, not something that derails them. Embracing/normalizing mistakes helps children stay calm and address the issue.

Making mistakes is an opportunity to do something differently and learn. Instead of becoming frustrated about a mistake, children can turn it around and think of it as a chance to grow their brain.

Help children connect to previous learning successes and remind them about the confidence and excitement of learning something new through practice and working hard.

Close each day or focus a few minutes at the dinner table, with the question “What challenge did you work on today?” and/or “What victory did you have today?” and make sure to share your victories and challenges as well.