

# Early Childhood Newsletter

Yeshiva Toras Chaim Toras Emes

Parashas Nasso

May 30, 2014 א סיון תשע"ד  
Candle Lighting 7:49 P.M.

## THANK YOU:

Mr. Amos Prync for making video copies of the Pre-KI Around The World performance for each of the children.

## SHAVUOS VACATION

TUESDAY, JUNE 3-THURSDAY, JUNE 5  
NO SCHOOL

FRIDAY, JUNE 6  
CLASSES RESUME AT 9:00 A.M.



## KINDERGARTEN GRADUATION

KII & KIV

Wednesday, June 11  
10:30 a.m.

KI & KIII

Thursday, June 12  
10:30 a.m.



## MAZEL TOV:

Dr. Dovid and Nechama Bistriz on the Bar Mitzvah of their son Ezra.

## PASSING OF THE TORCH AT ECE

After close to 40 years of educating Toras Emes students, more than 30 of those years as Director of the Early Childhood Department, Mrs. Naomi Bloom is announcing her transition to part-time ECE Consultant beginning with the 2014 - 15 school year.

Mrs. Bloom, a legend in Early Childhood education circles in South Florida, is renowned for the meticulous attention she lavishes upon every aspect of the ECE program and for her ability to connect with children and adults from across the community. Under her leadership, the Toras Emes ECE program has enjoyed a reputation for the highest standards of academics and safety, enveloped in a warm, loving environment. The enrollment has more than doubled since Mrs. Bloom assumed the helm, in the 1980's.

The current Assistant ECE Director, Mrs. Talia Levine, has been elevated to the position of ECE Director, beginning with the 2014 - 15 school year.

Working in consultation with Mrs. Bloom, Mrs. Levine is poised to build upon and enhance our ECE's current successes.



Dear Parents,

With *Shavuos* upon us, it is worthwhile to focus on the lead-up to *Kabbolas HaTorah* – accepting the Torah. Our *Chazal* teach us *Derech Eretz Kadma L'Torah* (*Vayikra Rabbah* 9:3) – “appropriate behavior is a prerequisite for (acquiring) Torah.” Before we can set our sights upon great accomplishments in Torah learning we need to set our inner compass to a path of civility, responsibility and consideration for others. Seemingly insignificant issues within our communities may be indicative that we have a very long way to go in this area.

A few years back, a renowned educator wrote about a common (mis)behavior of many children. He portrays a typical scene at a *shul Kiddush* where an elderly man with a walker searches for a place to sit. He was standing by a table, but every seat was filled with “sweet, wonderful, *ehrlische* children....!” Not one child got up to offer a seat – not deliberately ignoring the old man, but because of their preoccupation with the *cholent*, no one noticed or cared. This problem of a lack of *Derech Eretz*, specifically of not fulfilling the *Mitzva of Mipnei Sayva Takum*, standing up for the elderly, is commonplace, and we need and can do something to help our children improve their ways.

The most effective means to making a change in a person's *midos* and behavior is “through action that requires physical and mental involvement and has a ‘cost’ as sociated with it.” The mindless exercises that we have our children go through, such as putting our money in a *pushka* does not really create a *Ba'al Tzedaka*. It's only when the child donates his own money, many, many times, does his behavior and attitude start to conform to what he's been doing. (Quoted from *Rabbi Shneur Aisenstark*)

Our responsibility as parents and teachers is to look carefully and analyze what behaviors we want to see in our children, and come up with a specific plan to achieve it. If we value *Derech Eretz*, we need to notice the challenges and opportunities our child is confronted with when he or she spends time in *shul*. We need to come up with a short list – including being quiet during *Davening*, *Davening* for a few minutes, not eating before *Kiddush* is made, not sitting if there's an adult who needs a seat, and not running in *-shul*. We need to articulate the need for a certain standard of behavior in each area. We need to help our child envision possible challenges and how to deal with it. Brainstorm together. One example might be when your child is sitting quietly next to you in *shul*. Two of his friends come over and invite him to play with them outside. What do you want to happen and if what you want is for your child to politely decline, how have you trained him or her to achieve that? How have you helped him to feel good about himself doing the right thing, or the better thing?

There is no one or only way to fashion your child's behavior and attitude. Offering rewards for reaching specific goals (e.g. sitting quietly for 20 minutes, offering an adult a seat, bringing an elderly person some item from the *Kiddush* etc.) is effective, when preceded by a reminder of what the expectations are. Most effective is for your child to be able to observe you displaying these very behaviors.

Our children can reach tremendous heights in *mentschlichkeit* if we would focus on the specific issue at hand, take some time preparing them by outlining expectations and then following through with a reward for their efforts. You will be setting your children on the path to great happiness and fulfillment, you will be giving them the best preparation for accepting the Torah and you will be sowing the seeds for future generations that will bring great pride and *nachas* to their forbears.

May this *Shabbos* be a harbinger of a wonderful *Shavuos* to come,

Rabbi Kalman Baumann