



PARENT HANDBOOK 2021-22

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*Please note that the Family COVID-19 Handbook Addendum
overrides any conflicting policy during our heightened alert state.*

Allergy Alert!

The Chabad Garden School is now a Peanut and Tree Nut Free School

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE CHABAD GARDEN SCHOOL

It is with great pleasure and enthusiasm that we welcome you to The Chabad Garden School-Gan Chabad! If this is your family's first year at our school, we're delighted that you're here and we hope that you and your child have a wonderful experience. If you've been here before, it's wonderful to welcome you back.

The beginning of the school year is an exciting time, and for young children especially, it can also be an anxious time. Working together, we can smooth the path, and help your child become comfortable in what we hope will be a "home away from home." We sincerely want you to feel comfortable to come to us with any questions, concerns or suggestions you may have regarding the program and your child - now, or at any time during the year.

In planning for the new school year we try to make sure that standards of excellence are consistent in all facets of our school. As we thought about each of the many aspects of the preschool program, we asked ourselves the following questions: "How does this reflect our vision for the Chabad Garden School? Does this show respect for the child as a competent learner? Is this experience authentic? Does this demonstrate our commitment to families? What are we doing to make learning visible?"

We are blessed to have **so many beloved Morahs** (teachers), each bringing her own unique strengths and talents, but of our Morahs share a genuine passion for young children and deep respect for each child individually. Our staff members are qualified and experienced teachers, trained in early childhood education, who participate in workshops and studies for professional advancement throughout the year. Graduates of the CGS continue in a variety of Jewish day schools, public and private schools in the area, where they routinely excel as they advance in their studies.

OUR PHILOSOPHY AND CURRICULUM

The Chabad Garden School or "Gan", is literally a garden of children, a place where they can blossom. We are committed to providing an extraordinary educational experience for young children, mindfully partnering with parents to facilitate the social, physical, intellectual, creative, emotional, and spiritual development of every child and family. Through innovative pedagogical programs, the CGS offers young children the opportunity to develop self-confidence and self-awareness, enhance their academic skills and creative capabilities, and build their individual identity in a caring, safe environment.

Our early childhood education program embraces the Reggio Emilia pedagogical model based on the principles of respect, responsibility, and community where the children learn through exploration and discovery in a supportive and enriching environment. We begin each school year with blank walls... we leave it to the children to fill them with their works of thought and art. In essence, the "color" of the classroom comes from the children and the learning becomes visible with a sense of ownership and pride for every child. The school curriculum therefore evolves, guided by the children's interests as the classes explore phenomena that arouse their curiosity.

Current thinking in the field of early childhood education echoes a statement by King Solomon, found in the Book of Proverbs: ***"Educate a child to his way, and when he is old he will not depart from it."***

We're beginning to realize how wide is the scope of that simple phrase, "according to his way." It is now commonly accepted that not all children of the same age learn at the same pace or in the same way. The incredibly wide range of learning styles among children tells us that as educators we have to provide a rich variety of experiences in order for all children to thrive. The Multiple Intelligences theories are an example of this approach, and the work we have begun with Reggio as well as Conscious Discipline expands and deepens that work.

As teachers, we strive to provide an environment that is emotionally secure and safe, where every child feels wanted and loved, and which promotes independence by offering choices and allowing the child to take the initiative. We believe in active learning, in encouraging children to manipulate materials, to use their senses to investigate, to explore by hands-on experience, and to search for answers to satisfy their curiosity. The classrooms are planned to include a wide variety of open ended activities and materials so that children can learn in their own way and at their own pace and level. We strive to highlight the unique strengths of every child, and to help each one become an independent thinker.

The philosophy behind our curriculum is that children learn best by doing. Firsthand experiences become the basis for new knowledge and growth. Learning requires active thinking and experimenting to find out how things work, and to learn first-hand about the world in which we live. Children are given the opportunities to explore, using all their senses,

and using real materials, such as blocks, to try out their ideas about size, shape, color and the relationship that exists between things. By moving from the concrete to the abstract, play provides the foundation for academic learning.

Family, community, and culture are by nature important to young children; their experiences in school allow them to make sense of their world and to further develop their perceptions. The Judaic aspects of CGS curriculum (as all other aspects) are naturally and holistically woven into the child's experience and are presented in a way that every child can be equally comfortable with. As their sense of self grows, so too, does their self-esteem.

Social relationships are crucial in so many areas of life, and a positive preschool experience is one of the most important keys to a child's future success in connecting to other people. Teachers help children learn how to resolve conflicts without fighting, and they encourage the development of empathy and concern for others.

Through developmentally appropriate practice we work to implement the curriculum focusing on the social, physical, intellectual, creative and emotional development of each child.

Some of the objectives of the Chabad Garden School program are:

- to provide a setting in which each child will feel safe and happy
- to use each child's interests and experiences as the basis for learning and activities
- to help each child develop a love for learning; a love that is deep, wide, and ever-growing
- to provide opportunities for each child to learn academic skills through day-to-day activities and through interactive experiences with peers and adults
- to encourage each child's love for books and foster the pre-reading skills appropriate to his/her stage of development
- to provide opportunities for each child to make discoveries and to use them in learning, developing the building blocks for the study of science
- to develop each child's problem-solving abilities, developing the building blocks in the study of mathematics
- to encourage each child's creativity and artistic expression
- to encourage each child to ask questions, which will be answered sincerely and honestly
- to develop each child's social skills, in both one-on-one and larger group settings
- to encourage each child to work independently and with his or her peers
- to provide learning materials and equipment, as well as caring and committed adults, to help each child get the most out of school and themselves.
- to help each child feel good about him/herself

Our staff plans, implements, and evaluates the classroom curriculum so your child receives the best opportunities for high quality education. The curriculum, while reflecting children's interests, is designed to meet the highest standards of early childhood education, including the PA Learning Standards for Early Childhood. This includes designing the environment, planning experiences, and selecting materials to help accomplish our goals and give each child a successful start in school. A child should go through the preschool years associating fun with learning. If we're really successful, that feeling will last a lifetime.

YOUR CHILD'S DAY AT SCHOOL

School Hours:

The Chabad Garden School is open from 7:00am to 6pm. The CGS offers many scheduling options to serve the needs of children and families.

- Full Day Care 7am – 6pm
- Early Care extends from 7:00am-9:00am
- Core program 9am-1pm, or 9am - 3pm

- Nap Time - 1pm-3pm. Most toddlers and younger 3s nap to nap. Older 3s and 4s nap according to individual schedules. 4s generally do not nap, but do rest. Parent/child preferences are considered on a case by case basis and can include active, rest or nap time depending on individual needs.
- Late Care 3pm-6pm
- Afternoon program extends from 3-6pm.
- During the days between Daylight Savings Time, the school closes early on Friday. Please see the calendar for specific closing time.

If you would like to extend your child's day or week at CGS, we will be happy to accommodate you, provided there is room in the segment you desire.

BEFORE THE SCHOOL YEAR

School begins on Monday, August 30 with a regular schedule for all students.

HEALTH

For the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic, CGS will follow the health and safety screening and exclusions as outlined in the COVID-19 Handbook Addendum.

We hope that everyone stays healthy, and we work to keep the Chabad Garden School a healthy environment for all. Our primary consideration is for the wellbeing of all students and staff. So while it is normal and even healthy for young children to be sick in the early years (it helps develop a strong immune system), communicability remains an important consideration in deciding if a child is well enough to be in school. **Keep your child home if he or she has:**

- acute diarrhea, characterized as twice the child's usual frequency of bowel movements with a change to a looser consistency within a period of 24 hours
- two or more episodes of vomiting within a period of 24 hours
- elevated temperature of 100.5 F and higher within 24 hours of time child's scheduled arrival in school
- sore throat or constant cough
- skin rash, excluding diaper rash, lasting more than one day
- excessively runny nose, especially with green mucus
- begun an antibiotic for a contagious condition less than 24 hours ago
- been fussy, cranky or out of sorts for the last 12 hours
- had very little sleep the night before

Children who are too sick to participate in full program activities, including outside play, or who require constant one-on-one attention, should be at home. **Please call school when your child is absent due to illness.** If your child becomes ill in school, we will call you to take him/her home. Any child with a fever of 100.5 F or higher (as determined by an ear thermometer) needs to be at home. Please do your best to arrive as soon as possible. If you are unable to arrive within an hour after being called, it would be best for your child and others in the CGS if someone else can be called to pick up your child. If we can't reach you, designated emergency numbers will be called. **Any other arrangements for the care of a sick child must be given to the office in writing.** The school reserves the right to determine if a child is well enough to be in school. **A child must be fever-free for a full 24 hours (not counting the use of fever-reducers like Tylenol) before returning to school.** For example, if a child is taken out of school on a Monday, the child will return on Wednesday.

Please note that CGS uses "Caring for our Children" (nrckids.org/CFOC) to establish policies and practices regarding care plans for children with special needs, asthma, medical needs, food allergies, and medication administration.

BEGINNING OF THE YEAR

Please note that home visits have been suspended for the 2021-22 school year due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Saying Goodbye

Saying Goodbye can be stressful for both parents and children. It is very important for you to say goodbye to your child with confidence and an upbeat disposition. After saying goodbye, please leave promptly even if your child protests your departure. Children need to know that you trust that they will be okay with their teachers and peers. And please know that if your child cries, this is a sign of the healthy bond they have with you, and that their teachers (and sometimes even their peers) will comfort them.

We are committed to making the start of school successful and smooth for all children and families. Feel free to contact Devorah with any questions you may have (or to check on your child's emotional state during the day). We look forward to experiencing together with you the fruits of our efforts early on.

Getting Ready Each Day

Some suggestions for what you can do to help your child:

- Make sure they are well rested.
- Allow lots of time for personal routine, a good breakfast, a pleasant, safe ride to school.
- Have a cheerful, positive attitude as your child leaves you, either at home or at school.
- Your child may initially just stand and watch, please know that observation is one way of participating.
- Don't put pressure on your child to produce something to take home.
- Encourage your child to talk about school by asking specific questions, such as "What color did you paint with?" or "What was snack?" rather than "What did you do today?"
- Inform the teacher if there is something going on at home that might affect your child.

Building New Attachments

The ability to form strong attachments is one of the primary building blocks of emotional health, and many believe it is the foundation of all further positive growth. The flip side is that separation is not easy. Going off to preschool is a big step for a small child, and it's a big step for parents, too – especially if this is your first child.

Most important of all: Project a feeling of calm and confidence, (even though you may be feeling shaky yourself!). This will reassure your child even though s/he may be upset. During the first few weeks of school, don't be disturbed if your child:

- is shy and clings to you at drop-off
- doesn't play with other children as well as s/he usually does
- tires easily and cries more often than usual
- resists using the school bathroom and/or has accidents
- doesn't talk much about what happened at school
- doesn't want to go to school

Many children will continue to "fuss" at drop-off time, even though they play quite happily as soon as the parent or nanny has left. (See "Arriving at School") These are all symptoms of tension about a new situation and they should disappear as your child becomes used to the classroom routines, the other children, and the teachers. Be sympathetic and supportive!

REMEMBER: A MORE RELAXED PARENT MAKES A MORE RELAXED CHILD.

BOOKS CAN HELP! Picture books about the beginning of school can help to ease apprehensions and open a channel of communication about school between you and your child - and what a wonderful habit for life! Story characters

modeling a successful adjustment to school help children as well as parents. Books reinforce positive feelings about school and are helpful long after the first day.

Please call Devorah if you have any questions about your child's start at the Chabad Garden School.

ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL

BRINGING YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL – THE FIRST DAY AND BEYOND:

[Please reference the COVID-19 Handbook Addendum for the most updated Drop Off and Pick Up instructions](#)

Arrival and Dismissal for all students will take place outside of the school building. For safety's sake, as well as to benefit the children in their transition into school, parents (or other authorized drop off/pick up person) are not permitted in the school building during drop off or pick up. We have found that it is actually in the best interest of your child if parents are not in the classroom during the school day, as this may make separation more difficult.

We ask that you do not arrive at school before the school day begins. Our teachers are preparing for the morning and are not available for the needs of the children prior to 9:00am (Students enrolled in Early Care are grouped and staffed separately for the morning). Your punctuality helps your children to be on time.

PARKING – AND THE DRIVEWAY:

When you drop off or pick up your child, please park your car in a legal space on the parking lot. Always follow the one-way signs and drive at a safe rate of speed. Refrain from using your cell phone when driving in our parking lot so that your full attention can be given to pedestrians. It is prohibited to park in a handicapped space unless your license plate displays a handicapped symbol.

Parents should exercise extreme caution in the driveway; drivers should be alert to little children. When walking with your child in the parking lot, hold hands at all times.

Do not leave children unattended in the car for any reason.

WHEN YOU ARRIVE : It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that your child has entered the classroom and been acknowledged by a staff member. Children may not walk from the car into their classroom without direct supervision from their parent or other authorized adult.

Each child must be signed in and out of their school by an authorized adult only.

Please note that staff are not legally permitted to put a child in, nor take a child out of his or her car seat. It is the responsibility of the parent or authorized adult to do this.

For Infants & Toddlers: Drop off for infants and toddlers will take place at the front entrance. Staff will be at the doors to greet your child(ren).

For 3's and 4's: Bring your child to his or her exterior classroom door (even if they insist on going in alone), **make contact with a teacher** – and then you may say goodbye. Parents are not permitted to enter the classroom, nor is this a time to engage teachers in extended conversations.

A NOTE ON GREETING AND STARTING THE DAY: We like to greet children warmly at the start of the day. Our greeting time extends until about 9:15. After that time, we transition into more formal classroom activities and the focus of the staff is on the group as a whole. For your child to have that warm one-one-one beginning, it is important that you arrive on time. If you are late, we will do our best to smooth the way, but please understand the limits of the situation.

DISMISSAL: Please send a note whenever there is a change in who will pick up.

Please arrive promptly for pick up. After pick-up, you are responsible for supervising your child. Be sure that your child understands with whom they are going home. If your child is going home with someone other than his other regular driver, please inform the teacher with a dated note or indicate on tadpoles. Parents must provide us with the names and

telephone numbers of persons authorized to bring/pick-up their child. Your emergency pickup list can be updated at any time by your request. It is the parent or guardian's responsibility to notify the Preschool office and teach of any changes in this authorization. If someone other than the authorized person is to pick up your child, please notify us in writing. A photo ID may be required at pickup. We may release children to authorized persons only.

Please keep us informed. All information on the emergency and authorization form and in your child's file must be kept current. It is your responsibility to inform the office of changes.

TARDINESS AT PICK-UP TIME:

We understand that emergencies can happen, and we do our best to deal with exceptions when necessary. We ask you to keep in mind that teachers need to be elsewhere when sessions finish, and that we are not able to properly accommodate children after their scheduled pick up time. It is clear that this situation is upsetting to children and can ruin a perfectly fine

day! Please be sure to be prompt.

In the event that you are going to be late picking up your child, please call the school before pickup or closing time. We suggest that you carry the school's number with you at all times.

If your child is picked up after the closing time, two staff members **must** remain to provide supervision. As many centers do, CGS will grant a total of five minutes tardiness "grace". After those 5 minutes, you will be charged \$5 for each five minutes or part thereof after that, **each day** that you are late. Tadpoles is used to clock your arrival time; the office will handle billing.

WHAT YOUR CHILD NEEDS IN SCHOOL

a) Clothing: School clothes should be comfortable, washable and appropriate for preschool activities (sandbox, sitting on the rug, art activities etc. – in fact, some families buy second hand clothes just for school!) Clothes should allow for self-dressing in the bathroom. Outdoor clothing should be warm enough for playtime. **If jackets, etc. have drawstrings, please remove the drawstrings for safety.** Children should wear/bring boots in snow and muddy weather. We get messy!

b) Two complete changes of clothing to be kept in school: Each item should be marked with your child's name. Remember to keep extra clothing in school during toilet training, and to change the clothing with the seasons.

c) Mark clothing: Outerwear and sweaters should be marked with your child's name (also boots, hats, gloves, scarves). To school – they are a safety hazard.

d) For Toddlers: Toddlers not yet toilet trained should have a supply of diapers and wipes sufficient for several days in school, to be replenished as needed. We do not initiate toilet training, but we will support your efforts as much as possible. State regulations do not allow us to keep potties in school; we use stepping stools where needed. (See toilet training policy).

e) Tzedaka: We encourage the children to bring tzedaka (money for charity) every day. A penny or two is fine – the point is to develop a daily habit of sharing. It also helps children associate money with giving and doing good.

f) Lunch: Please send lunch in a **labeled bag or lunch box** if your child stays for lunch. **(See section on Snack and Lunch for important details).**

g) Bedding: If your child naps at school, CGS will provide your child with an individual, labeled cot for his or her use during school. Please provide a sheet, blanket, favorite pillow or stuffed animal (if desired) for your child to use for rest. The bedding must be stored at Chabad and taken home each weekend to launder. It is advisable to provide an extra fitted sheet to be kept at school for backup in case of need.

h) Shoes: Sandals and slip-on shoes are dangerous for climbing and running as well as uncomfortable when mulch and sand are present.

i) Tote bag or large backpack: Please provide a large "tote-bag" or backpack which is large enough to transport your child's art and projects. Your child works hard on these "masterpieces" and it would be devastating if they were ruined while being stuffed into a bag too small.

SNACK AND LUNCH

ALLERGY ALERT: The Chabad Garden School is now a PEANUT AND TREE NUT FREE SCHOOL. We currently have students enrolled with life threatening allergies and we need everyone's help to keep our school safe for each of our

students. Each family must sign the Allergy Alert Form stating that they are aware of this policy and will comply. Please read packages carefully.

a) Snack: Please provide adequate morning and afternoon snacks for your child. Please include a variety of fruits and vegetables as well as other snacks that your child will enjoy. Fruit & Veggies must be ready to eat (cut as needed). Please be sure to include snacks that have nutritional value and are filling.

Additionally, please provide your child's teacher with a selection of non-perishable snack to keep in the classroom for your child as backup. Children's appetite can vary greatly, and we'd want to be sure to have additional snack on hand in the case of need. Children attend late care should have an additional afternoon snack.

b) Lunch: Recommended guidelines include protein (fish, eggs, cheese, tuna, etc.), fruit & vegetable (or 2 fruit or 2 vegetables), carbohydrate (bread, cereal, pasta, crackers). If your child stays for the afternoon and you want to specify specific food for the afternoon, please indicate which foods are for later. All packaged food and drinks must have Kosher certification, and all ingredients in prepared foods should also be kosher.

Upon request, teachers may warm up your child's lunch in the microwave. Please note that only ready to eat/fully cooked meals will be warmed. Please do not send frozen or uncooked meals to be cooked or heated.

MARK THE OUTSIDE OF THE LUNCHBAG/BOX WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME.

PLEASE AVOID SENDING:

Any type of candy, popcorn, hard pretzels sticks, raw peas, and carrot chunks (baby carrots and carrot sticks are okay).

Fruits with small pits (like cherries):

- Over 4 years of age: should be cut up to less than a half inch
- Under 4 years of age: should be cut up to less than a quarter inch

Whole grapes: Not recommended for children under 3 years of age; if used with this age, they should be cut into small pieces.

If we see these items, we will put them aside and return them to you with a "whoops" note.

Children may not share food at all for Kashruth as well as allergy and other health related reasons.

AFTERNOONS AT THE CHABAD GARDEN SCHOOL

REST TIME

Toddlers and Younger 3s: Toddlers and younger 3's are expected to nap. Naptime follows lunch; after nap children have snack and participate in a variety of activities (see below).

Older 3s and 4s: For older 3's and 4's, each child is expected to rest for 30 minutes each day. They may have books or they may simply listen to music. Children who sleep (or who need to sleep) will be encouraged to lie down with blanket etc. Children who usually do not sleep (or whose parents do not want them to sleep) may sit up with a book. We honor parental requests to wake older 3's after one hour of sleep. We do NOT keep children awake if they want/need to sleep. Please keep in mind that a child's rest needs in school may be very different from the schedule they follow at home. While not all children need to nap, time for quiet reflection and relaxing is beneficial, especially when children spend a lot of time with other children. It gives them their own "space" and is purposely non-stimulative.

Bedding: If your child naps at school, CGS will provide your child with an individual, labeled cot for his or her use during school. Please provide a sheet, blanket, favorite pillow or stuffed animal (if desired) for your child to use for rest. The bedding must be stored at Chabad and taken home each weekend to launder. It is advisable to provide an extra fitted sheet to be kept at school for backup in case of need.

AFTER REST TIME: Late afternoons at CGS are a blend of active and quiet activities that reflect the natural flow of a child's day. For example, children during the afternoon hours are generally more tired and less structured and our curriculum mirrors their experience. Age groups often mix, which offers special opportunities to both younger and older children, including fresh faces and new friends! Snack is served.

PLAY DATES: These are wonderful opportunities for young children, and we support the efforts of parents to arrange play dates for children who are in full day care.

BIRTHDAYS IN SCHOOL

We love to celebrate birthdays! School celebrations are small scale and are centered around snack time. Parents are welcome to join in the birthday celebration in school. Birthday guidelines are:

Plan: Discuss plans with your child's teacher at least one week before the celebration.

Birthday treats: Please check with the office to determine the list of approved bakeries. Only approved items will be permitted to be served in school. The school can also facilitate the purchase of mini cupcakes for the class at the cost of \$7 for each package of 12 cupcakes. Please notify the office if you would like this for your child's birthday.

Decorations: You may supply special cups and napkins, but let's draw the line there. Please follow the school policy regarding Superheroes and movie paraphernalia (see below).

Favors and gifts: Please do not distribute birthday favors. Instead of these, we suggest that your child present the class with a gift for the classroom in honor of his/her birthday. Each classroom has a wish list. Giving school a gift helps develop the value of giving, and not just the usual birthday "getting".

Parties outside of school: Invitations to a party outside of school may be distributed in school only if all of the children in the class are invited to attend, and if the party is not held on Shabbat or a Jewish holiday. Some children at CGS have allergies and additional kosher requirements. If you would like to ensure to include everybody in the food, please speak to us and we can help you. This is a great opportunity to teach your child about consideration and thoughtfulness.

Parties in preschool not during school hours: Chabad is available for birthday parties on many Sundays or after school – please speak with Devorah for more information.

SUPERHEROES

Television and movies are populated with superheroes who are portrayed in ways that are very attractive to young children. Although these programs often draw a sharp distinction between good and evil, they almost always seem to resort to fighting to settle problems. The messages that children infer from these shows are often of questionable value. Obviously it is up to each family to decide how to deal with this issue. As early childhood educators we have to deal with the impact of these programs on a daily basis. Our approach is two-pronged: We highlight **stories** (not movies and films) featuring heroes with moral strength (often including great "special effects" e.g. Moshe at the Burning Bush) and at the same time, we simply do not allow weapon play or pretend fighting play at all. If teachers observe this type of play they suggest other options to the children.

We prefer to keep the cultural fads of the moment out of school including TV and movie theme clothing, toys, and other items, for a variety of reasons that are grounded in concern for children's overall development.

MY SPECIAL THINGS

Children like the idea of bringing their own things to school. For toddlers and young 3's who are working out separation issues a treasured "security items" can help bridge the gap. For the special opportunities that are part of the curriculum plans in the older classes, items from home can enrich everyone's experience. Please use discretion and judgment in deciding what items should come to school, as we cannot guarantee that it will come home!

SHABBAT PARTY

All groups have Shabbat party on Friday. Every class has its own special tradition – it is truly a highlight of the Chabad Garden School experience. Through the year, the students in the older toddler, 3s and 4s will each have opportunities to be the "Shabbat Star". Parents will be notified in advance and are encouraged to join if possible.

If your child is not registered to attend CGS on Fridays, we will be happy to arrange for you to participate in a CGS Shabbat party. Speak to child's teacher to make arrangements.

J-Babies – Music Class & Mommy & Me

Taught by Devorah & our fabulous music teacher, this is a delightful program for mothers (or caregivers) and babies or toddlers. JBabies meets on Friday mornings from 9:30-10:30 in the Chabad Garden School. The program includes Challah Baking and a Shabbat music circle time. For more information, visit our website at Jewishmc.com).

GUIDING CHILDREN'S SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- A major goal of emotional development is to help children become self disciplined. We view this as an integral part of educating young children.
- Children are learning behavior skills, just as they are learning cognitive skills, etc. and it is important for adults to approach this area of development with skill and sensitivity.
- Positive guidance is critical, and at Chabad Garden School we try to make sure that every child receives positive guidance every single day.
- Redirection, guiding a child to a different activity and/or area, is a key tool in guiding young children. The younger the child, the more important redirection is.
- Incorporating logical consequences, particularly as children get older, and especially with groups, helps a child internalize responsibility. "If we don't clean up, we won't have time to hear the end of the story today".
- The CGS has a win-win approach to conflict resolution that fosters respect, fairness, and self esteem. All staff members are trained in implementing this approach to help children through the normal challenge of developing social skills.
- If after trying these methods a child is still having a problem with appropriate behaviors, a teacher will remove the child from the activity. This is done to help the child calm down and sometimes to discuss the situation in private.
- Under no circumstances are abusive, neglectful, corporal, humiliating or frightening punishments ever implemented. No child shall be physically restrained unless it is necessary to protect the safety and health of the child or others.

At The Chabad Garden School we believe that most of the common discipline problems with young children can be avoided by properly structuring the environment and the activities. Appropriate expectations are crucial to promoting appropriate behavior. The following are some of the ways in which we implement this idea:

- Setting limits for children: This includes demonstrating proper use of materials, pointing out the safe way of doing something, etc. **Our 4 basic rules are: walking feet (indoors); put back what you take out; gentle hands; quiet voices.**
- Keeping the ratio of staff to students below the State requirement. This allows for close supervision and attentiveness to what's happening, which often stops trouble early.
- Limiting group size in specific areas of the room or for specific activities.
- Providing a rich array and variety of activities, with a balance between active and quiet choices available.
- Being consistent in our expectations of children. These are all factors in helping children to succeed.

We feel that in most cases, ordinary, typical "misbehaving" does not need to be carried over from school to home and vice versa. There are exceptions, such as when we are dealing with major behavioral issues, when a consistent approach is more beneficial to the child. If this should happen, we will, of course, communicate with you on a very frequent basis until the problem has been resolved. Likewise, if there are major behavioral issues that you see at home, we ask that you communicate with us so that we can work together for the benefit of your child. The teachers or Director may suggest outside resources to parents to respond to concerns regarding a child's social or emotional development. The information will be kept confidential and only released to outside resources with express written permission provided by parents.

We expect children at this age to have occasional behavior difficulties and are prepared to guide them to more acceptable ways to express their feelings. At times, a child's behavior can be extreme and pose a danger for his/her safety and the safety of the other children and adults, often requiring continuous 1:1 support that is not available throughout the day. CGS adheres to the state recommendations for ratio per age group, which is unable to

accommodate any single student requiring ongoing individual support. The school must ensure that the safety and supervision of every child in the call is upheld.

In the case of a behavior concern, the teachers will communicate frequently with the parents to help resolve the behavior. If the behavior can not be resolved in this manner, the director and teacher will meet with the parents to establish a Family Agreement outlining the modification strategies that the school has/will implement, as well as to outline the expectations of the parents in facilitating the necessary intervention and services. The full cooperation of the parents is imperative in the success of this Agreement. If additional staff is required to facilitate the child's safe attendance in school, it will be the responsibility and expense of the parents to secure a qualified individual to support their child in school. The Agreement will be monitored for compliance. Non-compliance could result in immediate discharge due to safety and supervision concerns.

The discipline policy of the Chabad Garden School is reviewed annually with the full staff.

"OUCH!" BITING HURTS!" -- RESPONDING TO CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR IN TODDLERS

Along with all the information we have given you about our toddler rooms, we want to discuss a behavior which is, unfortunately, not unexpected in toddler groups but can be very emotionally charged. That behavior is biting. There are many reasons toddlers may bite. Sometimes the biting is related to teething. Sometimes toddlers bite to express feelings they cannot yet express with words. We have seen children bite when they are frustrated, and we have seen them bite in excitement of a happy moment.

No one can predict which children may bite, but we are ready to help toddlers who do bite, to learn other behaviors. And of course, we are ready to give treatment, sympathy and advice to children who are bitten. Here are the ways we work to prevent biting and how we respond to it when it does happen:

- We try to plan the day so frustration levels are kept to a minimum by providing a calm and cheerful atmosphere, stimulating and soothing age-appropriate activities and multiples of favorite toys. We also model acceptable and appropriate behavior for the children.
- If a bite does occur, we help the child who was bitten. We reassure him or her and care for the bite. If the skin is not broken, we wash it with soap and water and use a cold pack. If the skin is broken, we clean the bite with soap and water, and follow medical advice. If it is likely that the bite may get dirty, we will also cover it to keep it clean. If your child is bitten, we call you to let you know about the bite (we do not share the names of the children involved). The teachers complete an accident report on tadpoles, which is reviewed by the director and sent to the parents through the app. We also respond to the child who did the biting. We show the children strong disapproval of biting. Our specific response varies depending on the circumstances, but our basic message is that biting is the wrong thing to do. We also help the child who bit learn different, more appropriate behavior.
- The teachers and director try to analyze the cause of consistent or pattern biting. We work to develop a plan to address the cause of the biting, and put all our energy into keeping children safe and helping children who are stuck in biting patterns. When we need to develop such a plan, we share the details with parents so they know specifically how we are addressing this problem.
- Parents are notified if their child starts to bite. We ask parents to keep us informed if their child is biting at home. Children who bite in our program do not necessarily bite at home. But if your child is biting in both places, it is important for all of us to be consistent in dealing with it. Communication is very important in order to help your child stop biting.

We wish we could guarantee that there would never be any biting in our program, but we know there can be no such guarantee. We will support your toddlers whether they bite or are bitten. We want the best for all the children in our program. If you want more information on biting or have any questions or concerns, please let us know.

When 3's bite this poses a more significant educational and safety concern and therefore will be addressed with even more careful attention by the CGS.

If excessive biting in any classrooms becomes a safety or supervision concern, a Family Agreement as outlined above may need to be implemented.

LANGUAGE DIVERSITY IN OUR SCHOOL

Unlike monolingual children, multilingual children learn and develop two or more languages as they navigate their home, community and early child care and education settings. The experiences, environment, exposure to languages and opportunities to use language all play key roles in each child's early language development. In particular, multilingual children need additional attention to their individual linguistic needs and experiences as they develop both their home language and additional languages. CGS policies, practices and assessment tools are designed to support children who are culturally or linguistically diverse. Children whose first language is not English are encouraged to use home language, gestures, communication devices, sign language and pictures to communicate when needed.

CGS POLICIES ON TOILETING AND DIAPERING

We do not require a child to be toilet trained in order to participate in the program, and the timing for initiating toilet training is up to parents to determine. Most children are developmentally ready to begin toilet training between the ages of 2½ and 3½, however each child does develop at his/her own rate. Our toilet training policy has been developed with consideration for our children and years of experience.

Learning to use the toilet is a big event in a young child's life. Timing is everything when it comes to potty-training success—

and trying to force the potty on a not-quite-ready kid only prolongs the process. Toilet training is much easier when a child is ready.

How do I know if my child is ready to be potty trained?

- He remains dry for at least 2 hours at a time during the day.
- She has regular and predictable bowel movements.
- He walks to and from the bathroom, knows how to remove his pants and pull them up on his own.
- She seems uncomfortable with soiled or wet diapers.
- He tells you when he needs to go — or uses body language, like going into corner or grunting.
- She seems interested in the toilet, potty and underwear.

If a child has most of these skills, then he/she is probably ready to start toilet training. If he/she does not have most of these skills or has a negative reaction to toilet training, wait a few weeks or months until most of the skills are checked off. Starting too soon can actually delay the process and cause tears and frustration. Toilet training is much easier when a child is ready.

Children should be sent to school in underpants only after they have had two successful dry days in a row at home and have had a bowel movement in the toilet 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. It is helpful to notify your teacher and discuss toilet training in advance of your child using the toilet.

We will take newly toilet-trained children to the bathroom frequently; however, do not be alarmed if they are not as successful at school as they are at home. Children who are completely trained are taken to the bathroom on an as-needed basis and during appropriate transitions (before outdoor play, lunch, nap time). We are always mindful to ask children many times during the day if they have a need to use the bathroom.

Once your child is wearing underpants, your child needs to show consistency in using the bathroom at school. Children who are trained or who are in the process of being trained must be dressed in clothing that is easily taken on and off.

It is best to attempt the toilet training process over an extended weekend (beyond the typical 2 days) or longer break at a time when your family can be home with few social engagements. This process should be stress-free and if many accidents occur, try at another time.

We understand accidents do happen and we are prepared to deal with them in a loving way. However, if your child has more accidents than successes, we will need to reconsider whether underwear is still an appropriate option in school.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

We really want to have smooth communication and meaningful connections between school and home. These are some of the ways we do so – what do you think?

a) Tadpoles: Communication is emailed daily via our Tadpoles program. Tadpoles is also available as an app for download on mobile devices. Parents can use Tadpoles as a way to notify staff of any relevant student information that is automatically forwarded to the classroom device.

b) Weekly Class Newsletters: The newsletter reports on the week that is ending and highlights important classroom events ahead.

c) Parent Classroom Visits: While parents are not permitted in the classroom at drop off or pick up, we hope to schedule classroom activities that will give you an opportunity to enjoy special times with your child in their school setting. Some events are more formal, while others are more casual and aim to involve you in the day-to-day life at school. Either way, we will try to give as much advance notice as possible.

d) Parent-Teacher Dialogues: These dialogues take place twice times each year. The first scheduled conference takes place at a face-to-face meeting in mid-January. The second conference can take place over the phone in May. In addition, parents or teachers may request a conference at any time if they feel it would be beneficial.

e) Talk to the teacher: Arrival and dismissal times are appropriate for greetings and very brief exchanges. These are not good times for long conversations, as the teachers need to be involved with the children. (You are encouraged give the teacher a note with information relevant to your child's day and/or asking her to call you later). To speak to your child's teacher during school hours, leave a message for her. Your call will be returned within 24 hours. Please do not call your child's teacher at home or on her cell unless she has specifically requested you to do so.

Please do not text a teacher during school hours. School policy prohibits staff from using their phone while supervising children.

f) Monthly E-Newsletter: This monthly email from the director will include important communication about current and upcoming events.

g) Family Events: These happen several times a year and are wonderful opportunities for families to socialize and meet new friends.

h) Families-as-Subs: This program gives parents an opportunity to participate "from the inside" by substituting for preschool teachers when they are absent (volunteer or paid).

i) Absences: Please let us know when your child will not be in school. Call the Preschool office in the morning if your child is sick so that the teachers can be notified. If your child has an infectious illness that requires us to warn other families, it is important that you inform us of this. If your child will be absent for pleasure reasons, (travel, visiting grandparents) please let the teachers know ahead of time.

j) Assessment: Each child is assessed at 45 days of enrollment and throughout the year using the "Ages & Stages" assessment survey and other developmental and educational assessment tools. The results of these assessments is shared with the parents and used to guide curriculum and instruction.

k) The teachers or Director may suggest outside resources to parents to respond to concerns regarding a child's development. The information will be kept confidential and only released to outside resources with express written permission provided by parents.

l) IFSP/IEP: If a child has an IFSP/IEP that has been developed by his or her existing support team, we strongly recommend that parents share this with the school. Our teachers are trained and encouraged to use the information and goals included to best support the student in the classroom. Parents are encouraged to schedule IFSP/IEP review meetings to take place at CGS with the teacher and/or director present.

m) As necessary, the CGS teachers and administration have access to referral resources including social, mental health, educational, wellness and medical services. In our communication with parents, we will share these resources as recommended. Parents can also inquire with the director to learn more about services available through the various service providers.

Keep us informed, as well: If both parents are out of town, the school must be informed. As with all changes in arrangements, this should be **in writing**. It is also extremely helpful if you let us know when things are unusual at home – stress can come from even positive situations, and teachers who are aware of the home situation are better able to help the children. Please make sure your contact information is kept up to date in the office.

Suggestions: Put your ideas in writing, and share them with us.

Email: Email is an easy way for our office to send reminders about school pictures, class dinners etc... Please make sure your current email address is on file with us.

MEDICAL FORMS:

a) Your child's health form must indicate a physical exam by a doctor. By state regulation, current forms must be on file in order for children to be present in school.

- Infants (up to 1 year) – Initial medical form must be dated no more than 3 months prior to first day of attendance and updated at least every 6 months.
- Young Toddler (1-2 years) - Initial medical form must be dated no more than 6 months prior to first day of attendance and updated at least every 6 months.
- Older Toddler & Preschool (2 years and up) - Initial medical form must be dated no more than 1 year prior to first day of attendance and updated at least every 12 months.

If your child has an allergy listed on their application or on their medical form, an allergy plan signed by their doctor will be required. Allergy Plan Forms are available on our website or from the office.

MEDICATION: Staff members may administer medications to the children only with prior approval of the director and if the following conditions are met:

- A Medication Authorization Form must be completed by the parent (forms are available on our website or in the office)
- The medication must be in its original packaging and clearly state the child's name, medicine dosage and frequency printed on the prescription packaging.
- Staff are unable to administer the child's first dose of any medicine. This must be done by the child's parent.
- If any of this criteria is not met, staff are unable, by law, to administer any medication. If medications have been administered at home, parents are asked to notify the teacher as a child's behavior can be affected by medication.

OVER THE COUNTER OINTMENTS, ETC. The ointment, etc. must be marked with your child's name; you must complete the authorization form in the office.

UNUSUAL MEDICAL CONDITIONS: CGS staff is trained according to State of Pennsylvania regulations in administration of emergency medication, including epi-pens, oral and topical medication. For specific information, please refer to the CGS medical policy.

Allergies: If any child has a serious food allergy that child's classroom will be free of that food. You will be notified in this case.

ACCIDENTS AND EMERGENCIES:

Our staff has been certified in pediatric first aid and infant/child CPR. The staff will administer first aid if your child has a minor accident. If your child needs immediate medical attention, we will call the local ambulance service, which will transport him/her to the local hospital. We will call you as soon as possible, and we will also attempt to contact your child's primary health care provider. A staff member will escort your child in the ambulance, if you are not present. A Child Emergency Information Sheet for your child must be on file in The School Office. This authorizes emergency care for your child and transport to a facility for treatment. Emergency contact information for reaching the parent, guardian or other authorized adult must also be included on the Emergency Information Sheet. Parents are responsible for updating this information as it changes. You will be required to review the emergency information every 6 months.

COMMUNICATION: When a child has a communicable condition, the information will be posted and included in the notes home (with anonymity preserved) so parents can watch for symptoms. The appropriate authorities will be notified.

PLAYING OUTSIDE IN COLD, HOT, OR WET WEATHER

Winter: Children do not go outside under 25 degrees F. or when hand or feet get wet, or when they do not have proper winter clothing

Summer:

Over 90 degrees F:

9-11am best judgment

11am-2:30pm 20 minutes or less

2:30-6pm best judgment

Under 90 degrees F:

9-11am no time limit

11am-2:30pm 30 minutes max

2:30-6pm best judgment

PTA

Fresh Challah delivered each week? Welcome Coffees, Family Sukkot, Family Chanukah, Family Shabbat, parenting education, and so much more. These are just some of the wonderful things that will happen at CGS under the leadership of our capable, talented and devoted PTA. Involvement in PTA offers:

- Real benefit to the school.
- Great opportunities to meet new friends.
- All sorts of options for involvement, because we know how stretched you are for time.
- And, most important, the chance to show your child by example what it means to be a giving member in a caring community.

We'd love to have your involvement!

SNOW CANCELLATION & DELAYS

You will receive a text message, and an email by 6:30am announcing cancellations & delays. The cancellation will also be posted on the CGS closed Facebook page.

* Please note that we do not necessarily follow the decisions of the Upper Dublin School District, so it is necessary to get specific information about the Chabad Garden School.

DURING THE SCHOOL DAY: If school must close during the day due to developing weather conditions, we will call parents to pick up their children or to make arrangements for someone else to do so. ***If we cannot reach you, we will call the numbers on your emergency forms.***

SNOW DELAYS: When there is a delay, there is no early care.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

SECURITY:

In the event that there is (G-d forbid) a security emergency affecting the Upper Dublin area, please know:

- We will take care of your child for as long as needed. This could be overnight and/or could potentially involve relocating to another site.
- We will make parent notification a priority (second to the protection of your children) and use resources available (phone and Internet). However, if these are not functioning, we urge you to remember that your children will be taken care of until we are able to contact you and safely return your child(ren) to you.
- Children will only be released to parents or the individuals listed on the emergency contact form. Please make sure these forms are always current.

CHABAD GARDEN SCHOOL POLICIES: Chabad Garden School policies are not completely covered in this Handbook. You are welcome to review all of these policies, which are available in the office.

LOST AND FOUND: Check in the office for lost and found. To prevent loss, please label your child's belongings. Items will be kept for several months and will then be donated.

REFUND POLICIES: There are no refunds for absences, vacation, dismissal or withdrawal from the school (unless the withdrawal is for medical reasons).

SPREAD THE WORD: Many families come to the Chabad Garden School because of what they hear from friends whose children go to school here. The highest compliment we can receive is to have CGS parents serve as Ambassadors. Please tell us if you know of anyone who should be receiving our enrollment information and brochure.

INCLUSION AND EXPULSION POLICY

The Chabad Garden School endeavors to establish policies that eliminate or severely limit expulsion, suspension, or other exclusionary discipline; these exclusionary measures are to be used only as a last resort in extraordinary circumstances where there is a determination of a serious safety threat that cannot otherwise be reduced or eliminated by the provision of reasonable modifications. Even in such extraordinary cases, the program will assist the child and family in accessing services and an alternative placement through, for example, community-based child care resource and referral agencies. In addition, CGS will ensure that discipline policies comply with Federal civil rights laws.. Should a situation arise where there is documented evidence that all possible interventions and supports recommended by a qualified professional, such as an early childhood mental health consultant, have been exhausted – and it is unanimously determined by the family, teacher, program, and other service providers that another setting is more appropriate for the well-being of the child in question – all parties, including the receiving program, will work together to develop a seamless transition plan and use that plan to implement a smooth transition. When making decisions about transitioning a child and family to another program, specific attention will be paid to ensure that the new program is inclusive and offers a rich social context and opportunities for interactions with socially competent peers to ensure that children can optimize their learning, and develop their social skills alongside their peers in a natural environment. CGS staff will then undergo a self-evaluation and identify systemic reforms and professional development actions they may take to prevent the need for such transitions in the future. The family will be encouraged to inform the child's primary health care provider so that developmental and health evaluations may be conducted and so the health care provider may serve as a coordinating support to the family.

CGS is committed to not exclude current or potential students for medical or developmental delays such as, but not limited to, asthma, toilet training, medication, or allergies.