* School Psychologist and Occupational Therapist Join **Gan Team**

Supporting the Whole Child at the Gan

Understanding the importance of addressing the educational and developmental needs of all children, Gan Yeladim Early Childhood Center in Stamford hired Hillary Isaacs and Aimee Elsner. Isaacs, a licensed school psychologist with 15 years of experience, serves as the school psychologist, and Elsner, a licensed occupational therapist with 17 years of experience, serves as the occupational therapist. "Words cannot begin to express how grateful we are for the services of Hillary Isaacs and Aimee Elsner. They not only respond to parents who feel that their children are in need, but they are always interacting with students in the classrooms to ensure that issues are not missed. They are the complete picture, making themselves available to the family as well as the child," said Scott Newman, a Gan parent.

Inherroleas school psychologist, Isaacs collaborates and consults with Gan teachers, directors, parents and therapists to understand the individual needs of children, and to provide referrals, screenings and behavioral and educational strategies for children who require additional support. Isaacs supports the social, emotional and behavioral health of children by leading social skills groups and play therapy. If a child requires a referral and support through Early Intervention and Individualized Education Plans through his/her residing town, she serves as the child's advocate and represents families at their IEP meetings. In addition, Isaacs offers lectures and training programs on various topics such as sleep. Isaacs also implements Curriculum Based Assessments for pre-literacy and develops a balanced literacy program for all children at the Gan, with a focus on reading skills in the Gan's Transitional Kindergarten classroom.

In her role as occupational therapist, Elsner utilizes the "Handwriting Without Tears" writing program in all the Gan's classrooms. She works directly with teachers to provide strengthening activities and to ensure that children use the correct pencil grip. Rachel Messinger, current Gan parent, talks about her impressions of the



Jack Friedman, age 2, had fun while building his body strength in the new sensory gym designed by Occupation Therapists Aimee Elsner and Amy Budovitch. The space was made possible through funds raised by the 2011-12 Gan PTA, led

handwriting program: "I'm really impressed with how much writing my son is doing in his final year. I think the handwriting specialist makes a big difference." Elsner also collaborates and consults with Gan teach-

ing staff, directors, parents and therapists in offering children extra attention and support with sensory development, providing screenings and strategies such as "sensory diets" for both at home and school. With money raised by the Gan PTA, Elsner helped plan and design a new sensory gym at the Gan that benefits all children. Elsner also taps into her current research on nutrition and speaks about "Nutrition in the Early Childhood Years.

"Hillary and Aimee are true assets to Gan Yeladim. They enrich the services provided by the school staff and bring valuable resources to children and families both in and beyond the classroom," said Keri Ben-Tzvi,



Understanding that penmanship, a basic foundational skill for learning and self-expression, comes not merely through repetition but also through proper strengthening of muscles, Gan Yeladim has Occupational Therapist Aimee Elsner working with the children from a young age, Shown is Ava Grunberg, age 4, drawing.



The use of hand puppets is one of the many ways the teachers at Gan Yeladim, together with School Psychologist Hillary Isaacs, support the children's social and emotional development. Research shows that healthy social and emotional experiences impact the developing brain. Shown is May Simone Avidan, age 2, with teacher Claudia Brenner.

Sha Om Now a Free Fulltime Channel on Optimum CH 138 Daily Ren's Directly From Israel Outstanding Presentations From The 924 Street Y Children's Programs Every Marning and Alternoon Movies and Entertainment moves and entertainment Interviews of Major Jewish Figures Every Hight Jewish Studies Every Morning and Attornoon – Hebrew, Talanud, Shalom Hartman Institute and Jewish 101

Cách chillre Guide behan on yher mmote far the Shakem TV Channel programa and limes

Shalom TV On Densand continues on Optimum Charmel 5025Heirs and World

A Special Party for a Special Boy

Balloons, presents, cake and games: those are some of the ingredients of a great birthday party, but most would agree that the most important one of all is friends. As any parent will say, children look forward to their birthday not just for the sweets and gifts, but for the chance to have those precious few moments at the center of everyone's

those precious few moments at the center of everyone's attention. They delight in having friends and family fawning over them and celebrating their special day.

But for some kids, a birthday party is not something they take for granted. "It always bothered me that making a party for Danielle was so difficult, but she and her school friends have special needs, which can make social interaction difficult and scheduling a nightmare,

said Marsha Weinstein, a parent.
That's where the Friendship Circle comes in: armed with a cake, decorations, hats and plenty of friends,

the Circle brings the party to places it would otherwise not have been. The central goal of our organization is to provide the wonders of companionship to those who otherwise would miss out on it. What better time to do that than on a birthday?" said Malya Shmotkin,

executive director of the Friendship Circle. On a recent December evening, Max Meberg, a 9-year-old boy diagnosed with autism, broke out a bright smile when two Friendship Circle volunteers, some staff and other friends burst into his family home with gleeful shouts of "Happy Birthday!" It was his mother, though, who seemed genuinely moved by the gesture. "Max was beginning to notice that his sibling's birthday was celebrated differently than his and I think he wanted some of that; the friends, the fanfare and of course, the attention," said Diana Meberg, Max's mother.

See "Party" on page 14



V

tion to Bits and Pieces, call 321-1373, ext. 107, or e-mail me at

bulf.org. le and Rabbi

birth of a gra

irth of a daughter. Bus and Jeff Schlanger on the r on the birth of a grandson, son and Daulel Schaffer. SaNogueira and Adum Farstrup

and Rubbi Jay TelRav on the a daughter, Nill Lu. e Stein on the birth of a grand-r, Harper Rachel, daughter of

rlease and Michael Alexander and adjoel Albadef on the engagement ldren, Caroline Alexar

Daniel R.Ginsberg Humanitarian

m Renjamin on harvesting more than pounds of produce from the Harvest

rden for the hungry, and Richard Breslow and Sus Hip Clark, of Wayne, PA, on t

agement of their children, Rob slow and Timothy William Clar suta Fischel on the engagen

lendy and John Fitzgerald on the trage of their son, Adam Fitzgerald, una Forsthoefel. rline Gewanter and Lloyd Contract

and Philip Granowitz on the stol their son, Dumny Granow-

herry Hertzberg, Tracy Shevell and dy Speter, who were honored at bad's Loaves of Love.

LIGHTING TIMES CANDLE

)-444)=404 					
Feb. 7 5 pm	Jan. 31 4:51 pm	Jan. 24 4:43 pm	17	10	Jan. 3 4:20 pm	Dec. 27 4:14 pm	Dec. 20 4:10 pm		Dec, 6 4:07 pm	4:08	Nov. 22 4:12 pm

- Proxentations From The 92m Street Y outrants Every Morning and Alberton
- halom TV <u>On Demond</u> continues on Option
 Charmel 002 below and World



skyon the engagement of their grand-daughter, and Sheery and Bennet Kine and Frinet and Bryan Herstle, L of New Rochelle, W, on the engage-ment of their children, Zach Kfare

Amy and Mark Schneider on cir daughter Sara Kocek's first vel beingpublished, "Promise Me aula Simon on receiving the Distin-shed Service Award from Rensselaer

barn Smith and Ilan Burstein on the engagement of their children, Raquel Spilla and Eymn Burstein. inch institute.

Inchnic Institute.

Inchnic Institute.

Inchnic Burstein and Bar
Inchnic Institute.

In

ouise Siela on the engagement of daughter, Brenza Stein, to Charles

Schong, of Philadelphia.

Hildi and David Todrin on their
daughter, Maya Todrin, being chosen
to be part of Team Connecticut playing
unified doubles tennis at the Special
Olympies National Games in June in
polympies National Games in June in DEL TOV TO B'NAI MITZVAH:

Benjamin Gilcksman, son of Audrey Sumers and David Bilcksman, and grand-son of Edith Sumers and Ed Smith Matthew Greenbaum, son of Allison

Frederic Greenbaum loa Kraus, daughter of Tamar and

David Lang, son of Elicia and Jay

Jelone Leichter, daughter of Belle-1 Abrams and Jerrold Leichter

EJ Rimerman, son of Claudia and loward Rimerman, and grandson of forma Kraut and Ron Schacht Max Roitman, son of Sonia and Brian

even Spezzano Eli Stockman, son of Karen and Alan undrew Spezzano, son of Stacy and

eth Yazzron, daughter of Jenson of Neda

l Hirron and Linda and Larry Rezak Ryan Meiteles, son of Meryl and Larry inthan Haron, son of Rachel and Dan

CONDOLENCES TO: rdini on the loss of his father,

Ralph Arditti.
Jill Cymrot on the loss of her father. Surah Darer Litmann on the loss of her

our family and friends and mark wonderful way to connect with UJF Tribute Cards are a

any occasion while supporting the extraordinary work of UJE. go to www.ujf.org, To send a eribute,

Sha om New a Free Selltime, Channel

Citick enthins Guidos buttons on your remotes for the Challen TV Charmal programs and smea







Abraham Lebow and Carole Bolen-**BITS AND PIECES** a. Constance Elianson on the loss of her d. mother, Gladys Field.

et Livran Karberov, Michael Farberov and G. Lilby Glasker on the loss of his wife and I're their mother, Markya Farberova.

for their mother, Markya Farberova.

for yeary Jacobs on the loss of his wife.

Jules Kaplove on the loss of his father, Jay J. Kaplove.

Stephen Kirshner.

Mare Passy on the loss of his father,
Meir Passy. Mark Kirshner on the loss of his father,

Enmily and friends of Rose Raft.

Demais Schoem on the loss of his father,
Richard Schoen.

Linda Wess on the loss of her mother,
Sylvia Cilman.

NEW AROUND TOWN

Alison Patnick, UJF

creater Stanford, New Canana and Darden with e office manager.
Annick has experience in office management and computer.
She has been responsible for all supers of IT infrastructure,
including purchasting and leading of equipment and software
and hardware troubbehooding. She has also been responsible
for the effect of the administration, office supply purchasing and
assisting with employee recruitment, as well as organizing root
assisting with employee recruitment, as well as organizing root
assisting with employee recruitment, as well as organizing root
assisting with employee recruitment, as well as organizing root
assisting with employee recruitment, as well as organizing root Allson Patnick recently joined the United Jewish Federation of



rate evenius and activities such as United Way Day of Caring. Size. Altion Fourids speaks basic German and French. Francis is ortpitably from Shoffield England. She has lived in the area since 1985. UJF GEO Jim. Onhen welcomed Francis tas a recenterent, noting "Albon's exceptional computeration between the as treamer of the Organization. We are so impry she has Joined our tecam."

"Emotionally Responsive Practice" **NOTES FROM A JEWISH EDUCATOR**

A Foundational Value in Jewish Early

BY VIVI DEREN Childhood Education

"Whatdoes Moses at the Burning Bush have in common with a 4-year-old who is anxious about Daddy being away on a business trip? What can the custom of covering the challah on the Shabbat table

teach us about dealing with a child who is embarrassed about spilling his juice?"

I thought about these questions at a

Young, daughter of Sheryl recent Can program.

Three times a year, parents and staff at Can Yeladim come together for "Windows on their World." They spend time together in the classroom so that parents an become familiar with what their child Each year, the staff studies a particular area in order to deepen their under experiences each dayat Can, and to share the big picture of how learning happens

2014 school year, the area is "Emotionally Responsive Practice." parents, and enables deeper collaboration between home and school. For the 2013

husband and their father, Stanley Darer. proach to education that builds on research
showing the effect of social and emotional
experience on the developing brain, and
the positive effects of working partner
ships between educators and school-based
and solorier. The local and all the ships between educators and school-based psychologists. This includes working with curriculum, classroom routines, and teachimotionallyresponsive practice isan ap ach to education that builds on research

inciligence in children
Hillery Jasacs, the Can school psychologist, introduced the topic and office or childrens' emotions behind this choice: Childrens' emotions span diverse landscapes, for beyond their ability to verbalize. It is crucial for the adults in their lens to understand what facilitates healthy growth and de-



supporting a young child's separation a mavery, holding a howeite blanket can to south-those feelings and allow the child on to enter into the classroom neutrino, of Ching find apply blending researchers, the lease went on to explain how extend-

ing this concept into the clowcoom can have a powerful impact. To her book Pears, Bern, Stery-where! Supporting Children's Envolved Health in the Clawcoom's Leslie Noplow, director of the Context for Emotionally Responsive Practice at Bank Street College, to develope the Context for Street College, to develope the Context for Emotionally Responsive Practice at Bank Street College, to develope the Context for Emotional Responsive Practice at Bank Street College, to develope the Context for disruptive behavior in the classroom supporting childrens' emotional grov classroom process can give children a at vocabulary to instill confidence

an overwhelming experience it was, and how reassured Moses must have been to hear his father's voice first, before know that God first called to Moses in the volce of his father, Amram. Think about wha Torah through this lens, the exampare abundant and varied. In the case Moses at the Burning Bush, Rashi teac was to highlighthow Ganaddresses th issues from a Jewish perspective. It taschusted to find that when examin founding director of Gan, my

ing that God was speaking to him.
As to the challsh cover? We cover the challsh because we are making Kiddush on wine, and noton challsh, and we don't much more careful must we be with the feelings of real people?
Vai Dairn is the founding director of the



OPENING Minds, BRIDGING Differences, LIVING Jewish Values

Challenges in Jewish

Agudath Sholom to Host Pane







This year, the panel will feature Rabbi oabua Lookstein, the head of achool at Westchesser Day School in Mamaroneck, NY, and Harry Bloom, strategy manager for financial assuma billty at the Partner-

The topic for this year's panel is "Day Feldstein at michael School Aufordability: The Challenge... com or 203-973-6279.

Family Service Executives Meeting of Connecticut Jewish

Connecticut Jewish Family Service Execu-tives meeting to discuss the needs and concernsoftood anon-profitsocraliservice of agendes. At the meeting in October, State of Senator Gayle Slossberg (representing Millord, West Haven, Orange and Wood-Senator Gayle Slossberg (representing Milford, West Haven, Orange and Wood-bridge), who is the assistant provident Matt Greenberg, CEO of Jewish Family Service Stamford attended the

w Committee, joined the group to hearthe lide oncents raised by the JSS vacuatives.
The many subjects discussed reduct to the delivery of immuna services in Convey needeau, in particular, those performed why JSS and in safer agencies—on page 18 of the SISS services. and co-chair of the Human Servi



Herweitz, rescutivedirector, Wederhery; Jonathan Gerfinkte, executivedirector, New Haven; e Rex Kofshern, etircion, Dembury, Missing, from photos Anne Demoltes, ED, West Hearland



Education

Under the new leadership of Marlyn Agatstein, Reading Partners is off to a

Reading Partners Off to a Strong Start Come Read with Us!



during the programming year, and distinct Peldstein, who is charing the programming the program, "We've set the bar preety high to with many outstanding specifies in past ryears, but I'm very confident that this to ward-panellsswitt meetand even exceed to our high expectations."

nty is invited to

pushing younger students to progress eather and treach stricter competency standards. There are still vast pools of emerging readers who struggle with these standards because they haven't had the volunteers who can re-assure these students with 'Yes you can!' and 'I believe in you.' Reading Partners are in their corner, one There is much flux in the Stamford educational community and the recently adopted "Common Core Standards" are "praise" phrases that can maintain high ting reading at an early stage gatstein. "What the program table is a corps of dedicated

Reading Partners program was based on that model. The National Jewish Condition for Literacy now operates in many cities across the U.S. The video highlighted the meaningfulness of the

olunteers as well.

ghted the meaningfulness of the rm, not only to its students, but to

and Practical Solu-tions," a subject about which many parents of day-

in Anat Chavkin, associate vice president
OUR, added, "It is wonderful to see so
so drUR, added, "It is wonderful to see so
is many new and droughner obtuneers who
a urepart of the Reading Partners program.
This is an excellent example of how,
through dedicated volunteers, we leverage

enthusiasm and dedication of Marlyr and Ellen is infectious, and is really help ing the program to expund and reach a higher level."

Jim Cohen, C.E.O. of UJF, said, "The thrustasm and dediention of Mariyn

Agateain, Reading Partners is off of a extrong sour this year. Nearly 40 new vol- a unceen have already signed up to join it in the cadere of weteram volunteens who read to go of an hour each wock with children in yrades kindergarten to three in the public like schools and after-chool programs. There are now 100 active volunteers in the the Reading Partners program and new the Reading Partners program and new the Reading Partners of the Reading Partners program and new the Reading Partners of the Reading Marlyn Agnasteln, director of Reading Partners, and Ellen Weber, team leader at the Boys and Girls Glub and Chester Addison Genter, led three orientations

The orientation/trainings focuse

school tutors

ing the ressions more effective. Againstein highlighted the importance of creating a

recounted his personal and professional relationship with Herbert Glbor, a fellow lawyer. He highlighted the "likkin olan" philosophy of helplag people to improw overseen At the school orientation, Smith, trustee for the Gibor Foundati

their lives, enabling them to be stronger and more fulfilled adults.

The school orientation included a viewing of the "Greater Boston Jewish Coalition for Literacy" video. Boston began the first pilot program, It was considered so successful that the local

day a week, for one The program recruits and trains people on an ongoing basis. To become a Reading Partner, contact Agastein at reading partners@ujf.org or 203-321-1878, ext. 115.



We Are Closer Than You Think

More than an Education. A Foundation for Life

Accepting students with no Jewish day school background We are like no other school in the area Competitive Athletics Vibrant Arts

Excellent Academics

Middle School Open House Sunday, December 15 • 9:30 a.m. – noon

Lower School (K-S) Upper School (6-12) White Plains, NY 10405 Harriedele, NY 10530

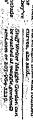
SOLOMON SCHECKTER

www.schechlerweslchesler.org 914-948-8333, ext; 8110 usadmissonswischechlerweslchesler.org

> Visit www.ujf.org, facebook.com/stamfordFederation, or tweet UJF at ujfstamford









e Rosenberg eats her lunch, Left, teachers and stu-the Cun Yoladim Early Childhood Learning Center

