

# PARENT HANDBOOK



GAN YELADIM  
EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER



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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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- 1** All About Gan Yeladim
- 2** Curriculum
- 5** Start of the School Year
- 6** Arrival and Dismissal
- 7** Your Child's Day
- 8** Release of Child & Parking Lot Safety
- 9** Communication
- 10** Meals
- 11** Emergencies
- 12** Clothing, Outdoor Play, & Toys
- 13** Health and Safety
- 16** Weather Emergencies & Security
- 17** Social and Emotional Development
- 18** Unpredictable Behaviors & One-to-One Aide
- 19** Toileting/Diapering & Superheroes
- 20** Getting involved in the Gan Community
- 21** Jewish Holidays
- 22** Contact Us



# All About Gan Yeladim

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## Welcome

It is with great pleasure that we welcome you to Gan Yeladim Early Childhood Center! If this is your family's first year at Gan, 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.

## Our Philosophy

Gan Yeladim translates literally to a garden of children - and we strive to be a place where your children can blossom. We are committed to providing extraordinary educational experiences for young children, mindfully partnering with parents to facilitate the social, physical, intellectual, creative, emotional and spiritual development of every child and family.

## Our History and Credentials

In September 1989 Gan opened its doors to 29 children, and each year Gan has, thank G-d, grown and matured. In January, 2007, we moved into this beautiful new building! Gan Yeladim is licensed by the State of CT and was the first Jewish preschool in the area to be accredited by NAEYC (2001- 2007). In the spring of 2005 Gan Yeladim was one of 13 preschools nationwide to be selected to partner with JECEI, The Jewish Early Childhood Education Initiative. 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.



# Curriculum

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## Reggio Emilia Inspired



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

**“Educate a child to his way, and when he is old he will not depart from it.”**

Current thinking in the field of early childhood education echoes a statement by King Solomon from the Book of Proverbs: “Educate a child to his way, and when he is old he will not depart from it.” It is now commonly accepted that not all children learn at the same pace or in the same manner. The wide range of learning styles among children compels us to provide a rich variety of experiences.





## Curriculum *continued*



## Intellectual

First hand experiences become the basis for new knowledge and growth. Learning requires active thinking and experimenting to discover how things work and the world in which we live. Children are given the opportunities to explore, using all their senses, and use real materials to try out their ideas about size, shape, color and the relationship between objects. By moving from the concrete to the abstract, play provides the foundation for academic learning. We strive to highlight the unique strengths of every child and to help each one become an independent thinker.

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## Social



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. Your child will work both independently and with their peers and caring adults to develop their social skills. Teachers help children learn how to resolve conflicts and aid in the development of empathy and concern for others. 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.

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## Physical



Children are provided constant opportunities to develop their fine and gross motor skills, to develop finger strength and dexterity, and arm-eye and body coordination. Class-centered activities focus on fine motor skills, while our outdoor play area and our indoor gym give the children the opportunity to work on gross motor skills. Aimee Elsner, our OT consultant screens each child and provides private services for who are in need of extra support. Anatolie, our gymnast instructor, works weekly on gross motor skills with all the children at Gan.

## Curriculum *continued*



### Emotional

Children are encouraged to develop a positive self-concept, to understand the difference between right and wrong and to develop responsibility. They are encouraged to recognize that people are different and to be accepting of others. We help them learn and practice appropriate ways to respond to others and to recognize, understand, and express their feelings constructively.

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### Judaism is woven into the child's experience

Being a Chabad School our objective to share the love, warmth & joy of Judaism in an organic, holistic & fun way! Jewish practices, customs, traditions & knowledge are naturally woven into the child's experience and are presented in a way that every child can be comfortable with. We aim to give each child a personal relationship with Hashem (G-d) through helping each child see their own value & importance, As their sense of self grows, so too, does their self-esteem.

The curriculum, while reflecting children's interests, is designed to meet the highest standards of early childhood education, including the CT framework for Preschool Benchmarks. 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.

Our classrooms provide opportunities for each child to learn academic skills through day-to-day activities and interactive experiences. Including:

- Encouraging each child's love for books and fostering the pre-reading skills
- Providing opportunities for each child to ask questions and make discoveries, developing the building blocks for the study of science
- Developing each child's problem-solving abilities and developing the building blocks in the study of Mathematics



# Start of the School Year\_\_\_\_\_



## Class Room Visits

We are inviting all of the families to visit the classroom on Sunday before the first day of school. This will be an opportunity for you and your child to meet the Morahs and see the classroom together. Please bring all of your supplies to make the first day of school an easier transition.

## 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. 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: project a feeling of calm and confidence (even though you may be feeling shaky yourself!). A more relaxed parent makes a more relaxed child.

During the first few weeks of school, (or after school breaks) don't be disturbed if your child:

- Acts shy and clings to you
- 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 their caregiver has left.

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. Connect, listen, and support.

## Incremental Schedule

New toddlers and 3's will follow an "incremental schedule" where they will gradually spend more time at school until your child is on their regular schedule. The exact amount of time and number of days it takes for your child to be acclimated is individualized and you can discuss your child's progress with their teacher.

### **A Helpful Tip: Story Books**

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. Story characters modeling a successful adjustment to school help children and reinforce positive feelings about school.

# Arrival & Dismissal \_\_\_\_\_

## Drop-Off & Pickup Times



Except as noted on the Calendar, the regular school day is as follows:

Class	Schedule
<b>Infant/Toddler Core</b>	8:45-12:45
<b>Threes Core</b>	9:00-1:00
<b>PreK</b>	9:00-1:00
<b>PreK with Enrichment</b>	9:00-3:00 (F: 1:00)
<b>Core Plus</b>	7:30-3:00
<b>Full Day</b>	7:30-6:00

**\*Friday Pick up for Full Day is 3:00**

**Please note** For Full Day pickups: If your child is picked up after 6 p.m. two staff members must remain to provide supervision. Gan will grant a total of ten minutes tardiness "grace" for the year. If those ten minutes are used up, you will be charged \$10 for the first five minutes or part thereof, and \$5 for every 5 minutes or part thereof after that, each day that you are late. A staff cell phone will be used to clock your arrival time and the office will handle billing.

We like to greet children individually at the start of the day. Our greeting time extends until 9:15am. Once activities begin 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 drop off after 9:15, we will do our best to smooth the way. If you know you will be late in advance, please send a message to your classroom Morah.

Please be prompt. 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. This situation is also upsetting to children and can ruin a perfectly fine day. We understand that emergencies can happen, and we do our best to deal with exceptions.



## Your Child's Day

Gan is open from 7:30-6pm and offers many scheduling options to serve the needs of children and families. Please note the scheduling times are slightly different by age group to make pickup and dropoff run smoothly for all families.



- Families with children in both the toddler and preschools, who are not earlybirds, will be dropped off at the front entrance at 8:50am.
- Gan closes at 3pm on Fridays. Kabbalat Shabbat is offered from 3-6pm on Fridays at an additional cost.
- If you would like to extend your child's day or week at Gan on a permanent basis, we will be happy to accommodate you provided there is room in the classroom. We are unable to extend on a per day or temporary basis.

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## Naptime/Resttime

Toddlers and younger 3s are expected to nap. Older 3's nap according to individual schedules. 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. 4's have a rest time, they may have books or simply listen to music. While not all children need to sleep, time for quiet reflection and relaxing is beneficial especially when children spend a lot of time with other children.

Please send a sheet and blanket for toddlers and 3's, pillows and stuffed toys are welcome. All bedding must be stored in school in the provided napping bags and take home weekly to be laundered (For safety, plastic bags are not allowed).

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## Afternoons and Enrichments

Late afternoons at Gan are a blend of active and quiet activities which reflect the natural flow of a child's day. Children become more tired and less structured and our curriculum mirrors their experience. Age groups are often mixed and snack is served. Enrichment is available to 4+. To enroll, please reach out to [wendy@stamfordchabad.org](mailto:wendy@stamfordchabad.org)

## Release of Child Policy

Children should always be accompanied by an adult when they enter the building. Please send a note whenever there is a change in who will pick up and ensure they are on the 'Permission to Remove' list and have proper identification. Only children 14 years and older may pick-up/drop-off a child at Gan.

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## Parking Lot Safety

- WE DO NOT ALLOW CHILDREN TO RUN IN THE YARDS IN FRONT OF THE BUILDING OR CLIMB ON THE RAILINGS. PLEASE ENFORCE THIS POLICY WHEN YOU ARE AT SCHOOL FOR CONSISTENCY.
- Traffic is heaviest at 9am, 1pm and 3pm. The left and right sides of the driveway are Fire Lanes and must NEVER be used for parking.
- The steps should NEVER be blocked by cars, even for "a minute".
- Parents should exercise extreme caution in the driveway and be alert to little children. When walking with your child in the parking lot, hold hands at all times.
- Never leave your car idling or any child unattended in a car during drop off. If it is difficult for you to come in, please call the front desk for assistance.
- If you want to catch up with other parents, please use the meditation garden behind the building.





# Communication

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The teachers, office staff, Leah and Hillary are always available if you have any questions or concerns. Except in cases of emergency, and routine issues, if you need to speak with a teacher, please call the office or message on our Remini app and your child's teacher will call you at their earliest convenience.

Our goal is smooth communication and meaningful connections between school and home. Please make sure we have your correct contact information, especially your daytime phone number and email address.

Arrival and dismissal times are appropriate for greetings and brief exchanges; but are not good times for long conversations. To speak to your child's teacher during school hours, leave a message and your call will be returned within 24 hours. We invite you to reach out with any questions or concerns you may have. Either a phone conference or visit will promptly be arranged.

If there are any changes in the home, please share with us. 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.

Some of the ways we stay connected with parents and caregivers:

#### **Remini:**

- Remini is a communication tool used to track the daily routines (snack, lunch, diapering and toileting) as well as a tool to communicate with pictures and updates to the parents.

#### **Gan Classroom Blogs**

- Classroom reflections are posted outside each classroom and regularly on the classroom blogs.

#### **Back to School Night**

- Designed to deepen a family's connection to the classroom. Check the Gan events calendar for the date.

#### **Parent Classroom Visits:**

- Parents are always welcome in school.

#### **Parent-Teacher Dialogues**

- These dialogues take place two times each year. Parents or teachers may request a conference at any time if they feel it would be beneficial.

#### **Journey Binders:**

- These binders will accompany your child through the Gan years and include documentation of your child's experiences. Please come in to read them any time with your child.

#### **Identity Boards:**

- The Identity Boards hanging outside each classroom highlight significant moments of each day and give parents and visitors a sense of life in the classroom.

# Meals

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## Breakfast, Snack and Lunch

Make sure your child has a good breakfast. If there is no time for breakfast, please make sure to send in a labeled breakfast and let the teachers know.

Please label the outside of lunchbag with your child's name. State regulations require that you send an ice pack in the lunch box to prevent spoilage. Children may not share food at all for Kashruth as well as allergy and other health related reason.

If we see any of the below items we need to put them aside and return them to parents with a gentle "whoops" note.

- **Allergy Alert: The Gan is "nut free.":** Nuts are not allowed (peanuts, tree-nuts, coconut, shea butter, Cetaphyl) in any classrooms or childcare areas including the lobby, indoor gym, and playgrounds.
- **Please do not send:** Any type of candy, popcorn, hard pretzel sticks, raw peas, and carrot chunks (baby carrots and carrot sticks are okay for children over 3). Whole grapes: Not recommended for children under 3 years of age. Please cut into small pieces if providing.
- All packaged food and drinks must have Kosher certification and all ingredients in prepared foods should also be kosher.

Gan offers a lunch program. Please contact Ruth Rodriguez for details [assistantdirector@stamfordchabad.org](mailto:assistantdirector@stamfordchabad.org)

**Snack:** Gan provides morning including a variety of fruits and vegetables and an assortment of "dry snack" If your child stays for the afternoon please send a clearly labeled afternoon snack





# Celebrations

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## **Birthdays at Gan**

### **Celebrations in school:**

School celebrations occur during morning snack time. Please do not bring in any snacks or favors from home. You may order a fruit platter or cupcakes for an additional fee. Please reach out ahead of time to your classroom teacher and the office to discuss and see the birthday flyer with different packages.

At Gan, we learn about both English and Hebrew Birthdays. All children will receive a special Kippa/Tzitzit or candle from Rabbi Moshe and Morah Leah on their 3rd birthday.

### **Celebrations outside of school:**

With the goal of being inclusive to all children, please either invite the entire class, all children of a single gender, or less than four children. Invitations to a celebration outside of school may only be distributed in the classroom if all children are invited to attend. Parties should not take place on Shabbat or Jewish Holidays. All refreshments should be Kosher. As some children have allergies, we encourage you to be mindful of common allergens when planning your party.

\*The Gan is a wonderful place to host your child's birthday party and is available on many Sundays. Please call the office for more information.



## **Shabbat**

Every classroom has a party on Fridays with each class having its own tradition - singing songs, making challah, or a special Shabbat craft. If your child does not attend Gan on Fridays, we invite your child to join us once a month for this experience.

**Tiny Treasures:** This is a delightful program for parents (or caregivers) and babies/toddlers. Tiny Treasures Tot Shabbat meets on Friday mornings from 9:30-10:30.

## **Jewish Holidays**

Even though Gan is closed in observance of many Jewish Holidays, (See our School Calendar for specific dates) the celebration of Jewish Holidays serves as guideposts for both our curriculum and planned activities. For each holiday, the children experience age-appropriate lessons and activities. Some holidays also include a school-wide celebration. On days when Gan is closed, there are often many family-oriented activities hosted at Chabad of Stamford (or within the broader community) that we encourage you to join and celebrate the holiday with your child! Reach out to Morah Leah or Rabbi Moshe for any questions regarding celebrating a Jewish Holiday.

## **Rosh Chodesh**

Rosh Chodesh means the “head of the new moon,” and it is a day—or two—of celebration marking the start of a new lunar month. Rosh Chodesh has many special customs in the Jewish tradition - and at Gan we celebrate with our school-wide music and dance party. Children are invited to bring in musical instruments and wear their Gan t-shirts to celebrate each month.

## **Clothing**

School clothes should be comfortable, washable and appropriate for preschool activities. Your child is very active; engaging in art, playing in the sandbox, sitting on the floor for music and stories, playing in the gym and more. Clothes should allow for self-dressing in the bathroom. Please make sure to send in a complete change of clothing and rain gear (boots and rain jacket) to be left at Gan

## **Outdoor Play**

Children play outside in cold, hot, and wet weather. Children go outside in the winter, for an appropriate amount of time, provided they have the appropriate clothing. On particularly hot days, (Over 90 degrees) we limit time outdoors during peak sunshine (11am - 3pm) to 20 minutes or less. Please make sure you apply sunscreen in the morning

- Outdoor clothing should be warm enough for playtime. If jackets have drawstrings, please remove the drawstrings for safety.
- Children should wear/bring boots in snow and muddy weather. Outerwear and sweaters should be marked with your child's name. (Including boots, hats, gloves, scarves).



## **"Special Things" from Home**

- 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!

# Health and Safety

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## Medical Forms

- Your child's health form must indicate a physical exam by a Primary Care Provider **within a year's period**.
- By state regulation current forms must be on file in order for children to be present in school. Vaccines according to the State of CT vaccine schedule at each visit.
- The emergency form, with contact numbers, must be kept up to date.

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## Medication

Gan does not administer medication. Parents should give medication before and after school. Medicine may not be left in school except:

- **Emergency Medication:** Including Epi-pen, Benadryl, Atarax and/or Albuterol. Gan staff is trained according to State of Connecticut regulations in administration of emergency medication, All medication needs to come in an unopened, child safe container labeled with a pharmacy label or by the parent if OTC.
- **Over the counter ointments:** The ointment must be marked with your child's name. This includes all ointments for diapering, and sunscreen.

For any medication, including ointments and sunscreen, you must complete the authorization form in the office. Medication orders are valid for up to a year.

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## Sick Policy

We ask that you call the school when your child is absent due to illness. Policies apply to all teachers, children, volunteers and families. Alerts for communicable illness will be sent home to all families who had a child that was potentially exposed to a communicable illness.

**Written communication from a Primary Care Provider must be provided regarding a child who has a condition that poses no threat to themselves or anyone else, in order for that child to remain in school**



**Exclusion of Ill Children:** Children who are sick or uncomfortable deserve the comforts of home. An uncomfortable child needs the full attention of a teacher, possibly compromising the care of other children in the program. Therefore, children who are too sick to participate in full program activities should be at home. The school reserves the right to determine if a child is well enough to be in school. Parents will be notified immediately if a child is too ill to remain in the program. Children must be picked up within 30 minutes

**Symptoms and signs of possible illness include:**

- Fever (Temp >99F axillary, 100°F forehead, oral, or rectal) accompanied by behavior changes or other symptoms of illness;
- Lethargy that is more than expected tiredness;
- Uncontrolled coughing;
- Inexplicable irritability or persistent crying;
- Difficulty breathing;
- Wheezing, or; Other unusual signs for the child.
- Diarrhea, defined by more watery stools, decreased form of stool that is not associated with changes in diet, and increased frequency of passing stool, that is not contained by the child's ability to use the toilet.
- Blood in stools not explainable by dietary change, medication or hard stools
- Vomiting illness (two or more episodes of vomiting in the previous 24 hours) until vomiting resolves
- Persistent abdominal pain (continues more than 2 hours) or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs or symptoms;
- Mouth sores with drooling, unless a health care provider or health department official determines that the child is noninfectious
- Rash with fever or behavior change, until a health care provider determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease;
- Purulent conjunctivitis (defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge), until after treatment has been initiated. (For 24 Hours)
- Pediculosis (head lice), until after the first treatment and nits removed. (Remember to check your child's hair for new nits for 2 weeks)
- Pinworms. Please provide a note from the pediatrician stating your child is no longer contagious;
- Strep throat or other streptococcal infection, until 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and cessation of fever;
- Varicella-Zoster (Chickenpox), until all sores have dried and crusted (usually ~6 days).

Children will be allowed to return to child care:

- When they are symptom-free, including fever free for 48 hours without the use of fever reducers. This means that if a child goes home with fever they return 2 days later (e.g. leave on Monday, return Wednesday).
- Diarrhea is considered resolved when the child has not had a watery stool in 24 hours.
- Vomiting is considered resolved when the child has not vomited within the past 24 hours, or until a health care provider determines that the cause of the vomiting is not contagious and the child is not in danger of dehydration.
- For all infectious diseases for which treatment has been initiated, continuing to include the child in care after treatment has been initiated will be conditional on completing the prescribed course of therapy and clinical improvement of the child's illness.
- During the course of an identified outbreak of any communicable illness at the child care center, a child shall be excluded if a health provider determines that the child is contributing to the transmission of the illness at the program. The child shall be readmitted when the local health official or health care provider who made the initial determination decides that the risk of transmission is no longer present.

The Director/staff have the right to ask for a doctor's note to return to the program.

Specific conditions that do not require exclusion:

- Children who are carriers of an infectious disease agent in their bowel movement or urine that can cause illness, but who have no symptoms of illness themselves. (Exceptions include E.coli 0157:H7, Shingella or Salmonella typhi)
- Children with discharge from the eye (after wiped first and not related to irritation/allergies) with redness and discomfort must be evaluated by their Primary Care Provider with a note to return and if indicated, must be on eye medication for 24 hours prior to their return and comfortable enough to participate in the program.
- Children with a rash, but no fever or change in behavior.
- Children with cytomegalovirus infection, parvovirus B19, HIV or carrier of hepatitis B.

Possible exclusion of children with immunization exemptions:

In the case of an outbreak of a communicable disease (e.g, measles, varicella, pertussis), a child with religious and/or medical exemptions for immunizations may be excluded for up 21 days based on the State Department (Epidemiology) of Public Health's final decision for exclusion.



## Weather Emergencies

### Snow Days

In the event of a school cancellation or delayed opening, we aim to inform you as soon as possible. We also know many families rely on Gan and so we try to remain open when conditions are safe for children and staff. You will receive a notification on Remini and a text on the WhatsApp parent group chat by 6:45 am (earlier notification for early bird families).



- Published openings on the Storm Center announcements on Channel 12 (or on their website). Note that we do not necessarily follow the decisions of the Stamford Public Schools so it is necessary to get specific information about Gan.

**Early Closings:** If school must close early due to developing weather conditions, we will call parents to pick up their children.



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## Policies

Gan Yeladim policies are not completely covered in this handbook.

There are no refunds for absences, vacations, early dismissals or withdrawal from the school (unless the withdrawal is for medical reasons.) The registration fee is required to ensure your child has a spot reserved and is non-refundable.



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## Security

The Gan reserves the right to **contact 911** in case of potential emergency without speaking to a parent or guardian beforehand. We have internal security policies in place and by the nature of the topic we cannot make these public. In the event that there is (G-d forbid) a security emergency affecting the Stamford area, please know that 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 any resources available (phone and Internet) to be in touch. 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 and so it is important to ensure these forms are always kept current.





# Social and Emotional Development



## Conscious Discipline

Gan Yeladim follows the guidelines of Positive and Conscious Discipline. This is an emotional intelligence philosophy where children learn to express their emotions, resolve problems with words, and work with others. It was developed by Dr. Becky Bailey, an author and early childhood educator. It is designed to create an environment where the motivation to behave comes from the nature of the relationships a child has with others. The best way to discipline a child is something all parents think about. What is the best way to show your child the correct way to behave, without ordering them around? How can you teach your child to behave properly because they know it's right?

One of the main messages at Gan is that when people feel loved and valued, cooperation flourishes. Whether it's used in a classroom or home environment, the goal is to help your child connect with those around them and develop caring relationships. Instead of using punishment and rewards, Gan encourages problem-solving, cooperation, and acceptance. In doing this, your child can learn how to problem-solve, become more accountable for their own behavior, and gain self-control.

**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. Incorporating logical consequences, particularly as children get older, and especially with groups, helps a child internalize responsibility. For example; "If we don't clean up, we won't have time to hear the end of the story today".

**Setting appropriate expectations:** We believe that most of the common discipline problems with young children can be avoided by properly structuring the environment and the activities. Appropriate, and consistent, expectations are crucial to promoting appropriate behavior.

**Understanding the basic needs of a child:** We seek to understand if a child is hungry, tired, thirsty, do they feel well?



## Unpredictable Behaviors

(Biting, Hitting, Scratching, Pulling Hair, Pushing)

We wish we could guarantee that there would never be any unpredictable behaviors that could hurt a friend, but we know there can be no such guarantee. There are many reasons toddlers may demonstrate these behaviors: sometimes these behaviors are related to expressing feelings they cannot yet express with words, when they are frustrated or even to express excitement. We work to prevent these behaviors by planning the day so frustration levels are kept to a minimum by providing a calm and cheerful atmosphere, stimulating and soothing age-appropriate activities and multiple of favorite toys. Our Morahs model acceptable and appropriate behavior for the children.

### How we respond:

- If a behavior does occur, we help the child who is hurt. We reassure him or her and care for the injury. If your child is hurt, we contact the parents and complete and incident report form. As a policy, we do not share the names of the children involved.
- We also respond to the child who demonstrated the behavior. Our specific response varies depending on the circumstances, but our basic message is that hurting is the wrong thing to do. We also help the child who hurt learn different, more appropriate behavior. The teachers and Morah Hillary Isaacs try to analyze the cause of the consistent pattern of this behavior and develop a plan.

## One-to-one Aide

Our goal at Gan Yeladim for all students is to maximize independence. A recommendation for a one-to

-one aide is a significant decision that will only be made after a comprehensive discussion alongside clear documentation. If a One-to-One aide is recommended the families are responsible for the additional payment to compensate the aide.

Some of the reasons why an aide might be recommended for a child:

- Requires non-medical health care support (ex. Feeding)
- Requires personalized and direct assistance with most basic personal care (ex, washing hands, going to the bathroom)
- Serious behavior challenges with incidents of both injuring oneself or others
- Running away
- Needs an adult in close proximity to supervise all social interactions with peers to both maximize positive learning experiences and preclude extreme negative interactions
- Needs constant physical or verbal prompting



## Toileting and Diapering

Your child is taking a personal leap of faith, every time they start something new. We work with you to help your child feel safe and confident.

The Gan does not require a child to be toilet trained in order to enroll and the timing for toilet training is up to the individual child (with the support of an adult).

Certain guidelines must be followed in order to fulfill our mandate to provide a sanitary and quality program for all children.

- A child is considered to be trained when they initiate trips to the bathroom and go almost every time. After two weeks of wearing underwear at home with less than 3 accidents, it's probably a good time to try underwear in school.
- Pull-ups should only be worn by children who are completing toilet training.
- Each child is considered an individual, and Morah Hillary will facilitate the process on an individual basis.

### Accidents

At Gan, children are busy and distracted. Of course, even after a child is trained, occasional accidents do happen, and when they do we treat them in a calm, matter-of-fact manner that preserves the child's self-respect. Please note that for bowel movement accidents that are particularly messy, parents may need to pick up their child for a bath. During potty training we also recommend keeping a spare pair of shoes at school in case they get wet. If a child wearing underwear has 3 or more accidents within a 2 week period, they will need to come to school in diapers until they go for 2 weeks with less than 3 accidents at home.

## Superheroes

Children are fascinated by the powers of the super hero. By pretending, it can make them feel powerful like they have no weaknesses and are in control of the world. 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.

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 featuring heroes with moral strength (often including great "special effects" e.g. Moshe at the Burning Bush) and at the same time, we do not allow weapon play or pretend fighting play. If teachers observe this type of play they suggest other options to the children.

We prefer to keep the cultural fads 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.





# Getting Involved in the Gan Community

## Events and Family Involvement

**Join a Family Shabbat:** We have Shabbat celebrations that include the whole family and take place on either Friday night or Shabbat afternoon. Please check the Gan events calendar for dates.

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

**For Younger Children:** "Tiny Treasures" is a delightful introduction to Gan for infants/young toddlers and their caregivers. The program runs on Friday mornings from 9:30-10:30.

**For Grandparents:** We welcome these very important people in your child's life (or other surrogate "special friends") to be part of your child's early years. Speak to your child's teacher about arranging a visit. A program also takes place each spring to celebrate your children's special person!



## Parent Involvement

**Gan Families Connected:** This parent-led organization provides immense benefit to The Gan. The gorgeous playgrounds and indoor gym are just two projects led by the GFC. Please sign up to be involved in leading or volunteering for GFC events which run all year long. Including Pi for Parents, Donuts for Dads, and Teacher Appreciation Week. The GFC is also the liaison for class parents.

**Gan Advisory Board:** These parents and community members meet with the executive director to ensure ongoing fiscal sustainability and success of Gan over the long-term.

## Chabad Happenings

Chabad has many wonderful programs that we hope parents and families will take advantage of during the school year. All times and meeting locations will be shared via our weekly email blasts. In particular, the "Lunch and Learn" and "Torah and Tea" classes are popular with parents.

- **Lunch and Learn:** Classes offered in topic series, sometimes text based. These classes offered by Chabad take place in Gan during school hours. Babysitting is available.
- **Torah and Tea:** Classes offered to explore the weekly Torah portion and Haftarah focusing on the women role models that we can learn from.

## Spread the Word

Many families come to Gan because of what they hear from friends who have children enrolled. The highest compliment we can receive is to have Gan parents serve as our ambassadors. Please tell us if you know of anyone who should be receiving our enrollment information and brochure.

# Jewish Holidays ---

Below is a brief description of the Jewish Holidays that occur during the Gan School Year. For more information, or any questions on the holidays, how to celebrate with your child at home, or to join a celebration at Chabad - please reach out to Morah Leah or Rabbi Moshe. We are delighted to celebrate with your family!

## School Calendar

Rosh Hashanah	Friday, September 15 - Sunday, September 17	Rosh Hashanah, first of the High Holidays, is the Jewish New Year. It is the anniversary of the creation of Adam and Eve, and a day of judgment and coronation of G-d as king.
Yom Kippur	Sunday, September 24 - Monday, September 25	Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement) is the holiest day on the Jewish calendar, when we fast, pray, seek forgiveness from G-d and our fellows, and come closer to G-d. It is the peak of the High Holidays
Sukkot	Friday, September 29 - Friday, October 6	The seven days of Sukkot—celebrated by dwelling in the sukkah, taking the Four Kinds, and rejoicing—is the holiday when we expose ourselves to the elements in covered huts, commemorating G-d's sheltering our ancestors as they traveled from Egypt to the Promised Land.
Shemini Atzeret & Simchat Torah	Friday, October 6- Sunday, October 8	Following the seven joyous days of Sukkot, comes the happy holiday known as Shemini Atzeret/Simchat Torah. The first day is known by its biblical name, Shemini Atzeret, where Jews still dwell in the sukkah, but without a blessing. The second day is known as Simchat Torah, during which we complete and immediately begin the annual Torah reading cycle. This joyous milestone is marked with dancing and celebration.
Chanukah	Thursday, December 7- Friday, December 15	Chanukah commemorates the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem after a group of Jewish warriors defeated the occupying mighty Greek armies.
Tu Bishvat	Thursday, January 25	The 15th of Shevat on the Jewish calendar, commonly known as Tu Bishvat, is the day that marks the beginning of a “new year” for trees. This day marks the season in which the earliest-blooming trees in the Land of Israel emerge from their winter sleep and begin a new fruit-bearing cycle.
Purim	Saturday, March 23- Sunday March 24	Purim celebrates the deliverance of the Jewish people from the wicked Haman in the days of Queen Esther of Persia. It is celebrated with Megillah readings, gifts of food, charity, feasting, and merriment.
Passover	Monday, April 22- Tuesday, April 30	Passover is celebrated by Jews every year, commemorating the anniversary of our miraculous Exodus from Egyptian slavery, as told in the Bible.
Lag B'Omer	Sunday, May 26	Lag BaOmer is a festive day on the Jewish calendar, celebrating the anniversary of the passing of the great sage and mystic Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, author of the Zohar. It also commemorates the end of a plague that raged amongst the disciples of the great sage Rabbi Akiva.
Shavuot	Tuesday, June 11 - Thursday June 13	Shavuot marks the giving of the Torah on Mt. Sinai. The Ten Commandments are read in synagogues, just as they were in the desert on Mt. Sinai over 3,300 years ago.



## CONTACT US

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