

B'NAI AMOONA

EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

PARENT HANDBOOK

2009-2010

5770



B'NIYAT KEHILLA: BUILDING COMMUNITY

Congregation B'nai Amoona Early Childhood Center

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SHALOM

Welcome to the B'nai Amoona Early Childhood Center! Our creative, loving, dedicated staff and our involved, supportive parents have earned us an excellent reputation. We are deeply committed to providing experiences that simultaneously nurture and challenge your child. The messages and memories of these years provide the foundation for future learning, not only in the skills that are acquired, but also in the esteem that is supported. True esteem, we feel, comes from competency. Our goal is to understand each child and to provide opportunities to develop cognitive and social skills that are appropriate and challenging in an atmosphere rich with Judaic values and tradition. Equally important, we believe, is character education. Because of the profound influence of early learning experiences, we take our responsibility very seriously. We provide opportunities for discussion and modeling of positive behaviors in hopes of helping our children become kind, diligent and moral members of our community.

Ultimately, our success relies on developing mutual respect and trust between school and home. Open communication is the key to assuring that we work together to accomplish our shared mission of providing the finest experiences possible.

May the year ahead bring us much "nachas" as we share in the growth, enlightenment and enjoyment of your child! Thank you for choosing us to share this journey.

Fondly,

Sue Boxer
Director
B'nai Amoona Early Childhood Center



July 2009

Dear Early Childhood Center Families:

On behalf of the B'nai Amoona Early Childhood Center Board, we want to welcome you to the 2009-2010 school year. We are so excited to have you as part of our Early Childhood Center (ECC) family.

We are truly fortunate to have our children enrolled in this very special place. We have knowledgeable, energetic, and caring teachers and administrators and our children flourish in this nurturing environment. We are also very lucky to have active and involved parents who give many hours of their precious time to enhance the ECC environment.

We have chosen to continue our theme from the past few years, **B'NIYAT KEHILLA**, which translates into **BUILDING COMMUNITY**. This year, we will be continuing with our Shalom group and monthly coffee get-togethers, as well as our *chavurot* (groups) for any interested families. We're introducing a new board position that will focus specifically on nurturing and enhancing our community. Our ultimate goal is to make the ECC a warm and welcoming environment for all who pass through its doors.

We look forward to serving as your ECC Board Co-Chairs and to fostering your involvement in this part of your child's life-long journey. Please feel free to call or e-mail us at anytime. We look forward to a fantastic year together!

B'shalom,

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Early Childhood Specialists

As part of our comprehensive curriculum, the B'nai Amoona Early Childhood Center is pleased to provide specialists in many areas to enhance the learning experiences of our children. In addition, each class visits the Early Childhood Center library regularly to begin to acquire library skills and a love of reading.

- ***Music/Music in Prayer***

Cantor Sharon Nathanson provides a loving, weekly music class for our children to develop familiarity and competency in the songs and prayers of our Family Services. Emphasis is placed on songs dealing with the holidays and the units of study being taught in the classrooms. Children become comfortable with Hebrew as it is introduced in many of the songs we sing.

- ***Israeli Dance***

We are pleased to provide this activity as an integral part of all of our programs! Children learn Hebrew, culture, and much more through dance with Morah Rachel Armoza.

- ***Judaics/Focus On Israel***

The Klei Kodesh (Rabbis and Cantor) share loving time with the children to foster understanding and appreciation of our Jewish holidays, heritage, and the foundation of the values that guide our lives.

- ***Chalav u'Dvash***

Special time during the school day with Morah Ziva Adler, our children have the privilege of being among a small, but growing group of preschoolers nationwide who are learning conversational Hebrew. True to the name of the curriculum, Chalav u'Dvash, the children experience “milk and honey” – the nourishment and sustenance of learning a new language and the sweetness of the accomplishment. Our hope, the goal of the program, is that these children will simultaneously acquire a beginning skill in speaking Hebrew and a love for our heritage and for Eretz Yisrael – the land of milk and honey.



Registration/Tuition Payment and Registration Fees

Registration is open to children ages 1-5. Spaces are reserved for the school year (August-May) and parents assume responsibility for the full year's tuition.

The registration/specialist fee is \$50.00 for Parent/Infant Program and \$125.00 per child for all other programs. The registration fee **and** the first month's tuition is due with the registration form.

Tuition payments are due by the 5th day of each month unless otherwise arranged with the Director. There are NO REFUNDS for days missed (applies to ALL programs). This includes when the child is away on vacation, when the child misses because of illness, when the school is closed due to weather, and when the school is closed for holidays.

Monthly payments due September – May. The tuition schedule is below:

	<i>Member of Synagogue</i>	<i>Non-Member of Synagogue</i>
5 Day Program	\$280.00 per month \$2520.00 per year	\$325.00 per month \$2925.00 per year
3 Day Program	\$210.00 per month \$1890.00 per year	\$245.00 per month \$2205.00 per year
Parent/Infant Program- Tuesday	\$ 55.00 per month \$495.00 per year	\$ 65.00 per month \$585.00 per year

Early Drop Off

Early drop off is available five mornings per week from 7:00-9:00 am. The fee is \$2.50 per half hour. Payment cards must be purchased in advance. Each card is \$25.00. Increments of ½ hour @ \$2.50/half hour will be marked off as used. You will be notified to purchase an additional card as hours when needed.

Late Pick Up

Late pick-up is available five afternoons per week from 3:30 – 6:00 pm. The fee is \$2.50 per half hour. Payment cards must be purchased in advance. Each card is \$25.00. Increments of ½ hour @ \$2.50/half hour will be marked off as used. You will be notified to purchase an additional card when needed.

Extended Day Programs

Sign-up forms to be completed before the first day of class.

— Lunch Bunch is offered daily from 11:45 am - 12:45 pm. The fee is \$6.75 per day. This program is offered to all children. Children should bring a DAIRY lunch with a drink. To assure a space, sign-up is requested in advance. Day-to-day sign up is acceptable as space is available by calling the Early Childhood Center office. Lunches will be refrigerated. Children will not share food in their lunches.

— Afternoon Options, Monday-Friday, 11:45 am - 3:30 pm (Something for everyone!)

- **Afternoon Enrichment Classes** are offered to children who are **3-5 years old**. Children bring a DAIRY lunch with a drink. Snacks are provided. They enjoy an enrichment activity and supervised play until pick-up. Parents are informed of specific classes and days prior to the beginning of each session (August-December and January-May). To assure appropriate staffing, spaces are reserved for the entire session, and no refunds or make-up classes are possible.
- **Nap Option** is offered to children **3 years of age and under who still need naps**. Children bring a DAIRY lunch with a drink. Snacks are provided. Children will nap/rest after lunch and then enjoy loving, supervised play. Children will bring mat sheets that will be sent home weekly for laundering.



Discipline Policy

At B'nai Amoona Early Childhood Center children are encouraged to solve their problems independently. With the assistance of their teachers, they learn to use their words rather than their bodies in settling disputes. We set high standards of behavior and expect the children to act accordingly. We allow a lot of freedom of movement and offer a lot of choices, but it is clear that we have rules. We are consistent in our expectations and use "time-outs" when behavior is not acceptable. We give verbal praise and "pats on the back" to the group and to individuals to reinforce appropriate behavior.

In the event that a child attending B'nai Amoona Early Childhood Center exhibits behavior not modified by interventions, appropriate action will be taken. Effort to work closely with the parents is a top priority. Corporal punishment is prohibited.

Snacks

All children enjoy KOSHER snacks each day. Children in the Bet, Gimel and Dalet classes participate in our snack helper program. One time each month the child brings snack for the class and enjoys being the host for the group. Children eagerly anticipate

their turn while learning important lessons regarding kashrut, nutrition and being a gracious host. ALL FOODS SERVED ARE STRICTLY KOSHER.

Birthdays and Birthday Snacks

We invite parents to visit the Early Childhood Center on their child's birthday. Any child who wishes to bring a special snack for his/her birthday can do so. Please note the procedure:

- **Choose a day on or close to your child's birthday.** No birthdays will be celebrated on Friday. We reserve Fridays for Shabbat celebration.
- **Confirm the date and time with the classroom teacher** (as much in advance as possible to assure first choice of date).
- **Choose a treat that is Kosher and, when possible, acceptable for children with severe food allergies in the classroom. Avoid products with peanuts.** Please **do not** bring candies or popcorn to serve as treats. If you wish to bring some type of cookie, cupcake or other pastry, these items may be purchased at Dierbergs West Oak Bakery or Schnucks Bakeries (at Olive and Mason or Olive and Spoeede only). All Entenmann's and Nancy Anne bakery products are also Kosher. Please be sure that there is an acceptable Kosher symbol on the package of any prepared items before buying them. No home-baked cupcakes or cookies are permitted. **Items which are not Kosher will not be served under any circumstances.**
- **Balloons can be dangerous in large groups of children. Please do not bring them to school. Also, we discourage party favors at school parties.**
- **Teachers cannot distribute birthday invitations at school.**
- **We encourage you not to plan birthday parties on Shabbat or other Jewish holidays.**
- **It has been recommended that a day in May be chosen to recognize all the children who will be celebrating summer birthdays.** The parents of these children would share the cost of the snack and help make the arrangements. Please let the teacher know if this is acceptable for your child.

To strengthen our Early Childhood Center library, a book donated in honor of your child's birthday would be greatly appreciated. The book will be labeled with a book plate with your child's name and birth date on it. CD's of Jewish music are also greatly appreciated.

Currently Recognized Kosher Symbols

Carpools are arranged among the parents. Please feel free to contact the Director if you need assistance. When a carpool is established, the names of the drivers and the children must be completed on the carpool form and returned to the ECC office before the first day of school. Each driver will receive a card with their carpool number. **Please place the card on the passenger side front window for pick-up.**

Each driver is responsible for making sure that children arrive on time and are picked up on time. If your child is to be picked up from school by someone other than the carpool driver, please send us a note. **YOUR CHILD WILL NOT BE RELEASED TO ANYONE ELSE WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION FROM YOU. ANYONE PICKING UP YOUR CHILD OTHER THAN THE CARPOOL DRIVER WILL BE ASKED TO PRESENT SOME FORM OF IDENTIFICATION BEFORE YOUR CHILD WILL BE RELEASED.**

According to Missouri law, all children must be strapped in seat belts or car seats in the back seat. Children must ride in the back seat of cars with a passenger-side airbag. Each driver must have enough insurance to cover each child in the car.

Safety Tips

When dropping children off, please pull up to the sidewalk outside the school entrance. Please wait for a teacher to let the children out on the sidewalk side of the car and help them into the building. During pick-up time, teachers will bring your child to you. Please stay in your car. Teachers can assist in unbuckling your child, however, cannot assist in buckling your child.

Because the safety of our children is first and foremost at B'nai Amoona Early Childhood Center, we would like to remind you of **very important rules to be followed at carpool time:**

1. **Please wait your turn in the carpool line. Pulling ahead of others can cause serious accidents.**
2. **Please keep your child buckled until a teacher comes to your car to assist your child.**
3. There is **NO PARKING in the circular driveway**. If you plan to come into the building, please park your car in the parking lot – even if you are planning to stay only a short time. Cars parked in the circular driveway create a very unsafe situation at carpool time.
4. We discourage your talking on cell phones when your child is being assisted into or out of the car. This helps assure your undivided attention for safety reasons and facilitates loving “goodbyes” on departure and “hellos” on reunion.

PLEASE BE PROMPT IN YOUR ARRIVAL AND PICK-UP.

We appreciate your cooperation to make our carpool times as safe as possible.

General Health Policies

Each child must have a physical examination by his or her own doctor before entering school. **The date of the physical examination must be current throughout the year of the child's attendance in preschool. The medical form, signed by the physician, must be sent back to the Early Childhood Center before the first day of school.**

If your child is not well, or seems overtired, please keep him or her at home. Keep your child at home if any of the following symptoms exist:

- Has had a fever within the last 24 hours
- Has a rash (in case of chicken pox, if scabs are still raw)
- Has an upset stomach (vomiting or diarrhea within the last 24 hours)
- Has a communicable disease that has not been treated

You will be notified if children are exposed to a communicable disease at school. We would appreciate your letting us know of any communicable illness your child has been exposed to away from school.

For the safety and well being of all children, if there is any question that your child may have a contagious condition, a letter from your pediatrician may be requested in order to allow your child to attend school.

Please inform the Director and your child's teacher if your child is on medication of any kind. Also, please inform us if your child has had tests or surgery of any kind prior to entering school.

Should your child need to have any medicine administered while at school, a form must be completed. Per the Missouri Department of Health, "prescription medicine shall be in the original container and labeled with the child's name, instructions, including times and amounts for dosages, and the physician's name. All non-prescription medication shall be in the original container and labeled by the parent(s) with the child's name and instructions for administration, including times and amounts for dosages. A separate form (available in ECC office) is needed for each medication."

Please remember to call the Early Childhood Center office when your child will be absent for health reasons.

Emergency First Aid Procedures

Our Early Childhood Center is very much aware that accidents can happen whether children are inside or outside of our building. We follow this procedure:

- Administer first aid (by Director or child's teacher).
- Call parents.
- Call child's physician if neither parent can be reached.
- Take child to the nearest hospital or one requested by parents, if necessary.
- Call 911 if indicated.

Insurance

The Early Childhood Center carries its insurance through the Synagogue. In the unlikely event that injury should occur, staff, children and parents are insured. This includes times when the classes are away on field trips.

Appropriate Clothing

Every child should have proper clothing for both outside activities and indoor play. For safety reasons, children must wear **sturdy closed-toe** shoes. We encourage them to wear sneakers/tennis shoes. Crocs, sandals, and party shoes are unacceptable for active play. When needed, please be sure your child has appropriate clothing for the weather. We try to get outside as much as possible. *Please mark your child's name in all coats, sweaters, boots, etc.*

Please provide a complete change of clothing for your child in a marked shoe box to be kept at school, making sure extra clothes are appropriate for the season. Please include a plastic bag.

School Closings Due To Weather

When snowy or icy weather occurs, closing announcements will be made on KMOV-Channel 4, KTVI-Channel 2, FOX and KMOX 1120-radio.

Emergencies

In the event of any school-wide/building-wide emergencies, appropriate action will be taken to keep the children safe. Should we have to evacuate the building, we have arranged with Whitfield School to come there. In any emergency, if you are unable to reach us, please contact the Creve Coeur Police Department.

Parent Involvement

Since we believe that our school is an extension of the home, parents and teachers need to work together, seeking new ideas and sharing their feelings to help children develop their abilities. Dialogue between teachers and parents takes place informally on a day-to-day basis, and more formally at our Parent/Teacher Conferences.

Visits to the Early Childhood Center by parents not only allows the parents to observe the teachers and ask questions, but it also enables our parents to get the feel of our special environment.

Some of the ways in which parent involvement takes place are:

- The Parent/Teacher Conferences
- Participating on field trips
- Sharing your expertise in some way with the children
- Reading stories to a group of children
- Attending parent meetings at the Early Childhood Center
- Cooking with the children
- Attending parenting classes when offered
- Supporting fund-raising functions at the Early Childhood Center
- Attending all functions during the school year
- Participating on committees to plan programs

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO SHARING THIS JOURNEY
AND WATCHING YOUR CHILDREN GROW.**