

VBS ECC NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER, 2015



A MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTORS

Gratitude is a central theme in Judaism. When we wake up in the morning, the first thing we do is express gratitude for our existence. When we come together as a community, or in celebration, we say a prayer of gratitude for the opportunity.

We feel better about ourselves and others when we know that we were appreciated, and expressing gratitude to those around us enhances our relationships. Perhaps it is not so surprising then, that modern science has demonstrated that practicing and experiencing gratitude actually makes us better learners as well. Areas of our brain that are activated in the presence of gratitude – either expressed gratitude or received gratitude – are those areas of the brain that perform higher-level thinking skills, such as reasoning and analysis. In contrast, in the presence of fear or anger, the opposite of gratitude, our “higher brain” shuts down, and the “lower brain,” sometimes known as our reptilian brain, is activated.

Gratitude as a core Jewish value is more than just a “warm fuzzy”. By opening our hearts, we open our brains, and learning and relating to others is enhanced. By incorporating a daily practice of gratitude in our daily lives, we train our brains to remain in this open state. There are many ways to do this in our families that build on Jewish traditions. There are lots of fun gratitude games that you can incorporate on a daily basis. Try sharing gratitudes at meal times, before bedtime, at bath time, or in the car on the way to school. Create your own funny little song for your family, to express different gratitudes each day. Create a family gratitude jar to keep on your kitchen counter. Let everyone help decorate it, and fill it too!

Let this month of gratitude mark the beginning of new family traditions that will improve relationships, happiness, and learning.

ECC NOVEMBER DATES TO REMEMBER

- 11/1 Mitzvah Day
- 11/6 ECC Community Shabbat- TK Classes featured 5:30PM
- 11/10 Preschool Parent Conferences 1PM DISMISSAL
- 11/11 Preschool Parent Conferences ECC CLOSED
- 11/14 Tot Shabbat 10AM
- 11/16 SifriyatPijama Event in Hebrew 3:30PM
- 11/17 PA Meeting 9:15AM
- 11/17 Kindergarten Readiness 7:30PM
- 11/18 ECC Sisterhood Holiday Boutique
- 11/24 Thanksgiving Feasts - Rooms 102-108
- 11/25 Thanksgiving Feasts - Rooms 111-115
- 11/25 Thanksgiving Break -1PM Dismissal
- 11/26 Thanksgiving ECC CLOSED
- 11/27 Thanksgiving ECC CLOSED



HARVEST FESTIVAL ROUND-UP

The ECC Harvest Festival was a joyful romp through Autumn for our entire ECC community. A HUGE THANK YOU to Harvest Festival Chair-parents Leah Grossman, Emily Feit, Elina Donay, Dawn Cohen, Shirin Brokheim and EVERY parent who volunteered to make this day an extra-special one for our children. Here are a few photo highlights. For more captured moments, please visit VBS ECC Facebook and Instagram.



MITZVAH DAY REPORT

Sunday, November 1st was a day filled with social action and extraordinary community spirit. Many synagogues and Jewish organizations worked together on 11/1 to write letters to the Israeli Military, create art to bring an end to genocide, donate blood and provide service for the needy.

ECC parents Nikki Eigler, Dalit Shtevy and Sharon Obsatz organized a school wide drive to collect essential items for "I care" packages for homeless individuals. ECC children assisted in purchasing, collection, designing and stuffing the bags and gained a new perspective about the lives of those less fortunate.

Our heartfelt thanks goes to everyone who participated in Mitzvah Day. You set a very important example for your children.

ONE LITTLE PERSON MAKES A BIG DIFFERENCE!
Get your family involved in social action. Contact VBS Social Action Chair Brooke Wirtschafter (bwirtschafter@vbs.org) for family-friendly opportunities to make a positive difference in the world.



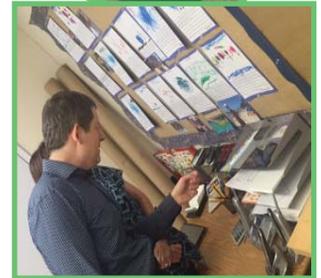
We have enough stuff in the world -- it's just not in the right places.

- Becky Morrison

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES - 11/10 & 11

Our ECC Parent-Teacher Conference, offers you an invaluable insight into your child's day-to-day growth and development. Be sure to sign up in your classroom for either an evening or day time conference on November 10th or 11th.

Please note: We'll be offering complimentary childcare for ECC children only in the courtyard on 11/11 during your Parent-Teacher conference time.



Tot Shabbat Family services are filled with joyful singing, story telling and family friendly prayers. Join fellow ECC families November 14th @10:00am in Burdoff Hall.

VBS ECC SISTERHOOD HOLIDAY FUN

VBS SISTERHOOD AND VBS EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

HANUKKAH BOUTIQUE

NEW AND EXCITING VENDORS FOR 2015
EASY ACCESS, FREE PARKING, FOOD & OPEN 8 HOURS.

WED, NOVEMBER 18, 2015 : 8AM - 4PM
HANDBAGS, JEWELRY, CLOTHING, KIDS CLOTHING, ACCESSORIES, GIFTS, STATIONERY, SCARVES, WRAPS AND MORE
FOOD AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE

Questions about the boutique?
Email: sisterhood@vbs.org or vbsacca@gmail.com
Phone: 818-530-4087

20% of all proceeds will go to support Sisterhood and the ECC.

Valley Beth Shalom
EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER
32739 Ventura Boulevard, Encino CA 91436 • 818-530-4087

The VBS Sisterhood has great ideas for Hanukkah shopping this year. Stop by the Gift Shop for a gingerbread Menorah kit and roam around the Hanukkah Boutique, which will be filled with fantastic vendors this year.

VBS SISTERHOOD
A PLACE FOR WOMEN OF ALL AGES AND STAGES

SWEET MENORAH

BUILD A SWEET TRADITION FOR HANUKKAH.
SALE OF GINGERBREAD MENORAH CRAFT KIT FOR KIDS

GIFT STORE FUNDRAISER BENEFITTING OUR VBS SCHOOLS.

COST IS \$30.00 PER KIT
\$5 GIVEN TO YOUR CHOICE OF:
VBS Early Childhood Center (ECC), VBS Day School, or the Etz Chaim Learning Center (ECLC).
Orders can be picked up at the Holiday Boutique or at the Gift Shop starting on November 18th.

TWO WAYS TO ORDER BY NOV 10TH:
online at www.vbs.org/sweetmenorah or by filling out form below.
Credit cards and checks are accepted, please send to address below:

NAME _____ QUANTITY _____
ADDRESS _____ CREDIT CARD NUMBER _____
EMAIL ADDRESS _____ CVV NUMBER _____
PHONE NUMBER _____ EXPIRATION DATE _____

VBS Early Childhood Center (ECC) VBS Day School Etz Chaim Learning Center (ECLC)

Valley Beth Shalom | 32739 Ventura Boulevard, Encino CA 91436 • 818-530-4087

Some people are always grumbling because roses have thorns; I am thankful that thorns have roses.

- Alphonse Karr

KINDERGARTEN READINESS- 11/17 @ 7:30pm



It's never too soon to get ready for kindergarten! Our directors, Pre-k and TK teachers will guide you on this exciting journey November 17th, at 7:30pm.

Plan to attend!

- * *Will my child be ready for Kindergarten?*
- * *How is TK and Pre-K preparing my child for Kindergarten?*
- * *How do I choose a Kindergarten?*

These questions and many more will be answered during this informative evening.

SIMCHAT TORAH CELEBRATION AT THE ECC

ECC preschoolers had a rare opportunity to view the Torah fully unrolled, up close and were treated to a story from Rabbi Josh about how a Torah is made, read and preserved for generations of Jewish families. Our Simchat Torah celebration inspired many questions from your children as they learned about their connection to the Torah. Biblical characters came to life, including Noah, Abraham, Moses and Miriam as children were surrounded by the sacred scroll.



Follow us on Instagram!

<http://instagram.com/vbsecc>



We've got a great page on Pinterest! Check out fun-filled activities, crafts, recipes and inspirational ideas specially selected for preschool parents. Search **VBS ECC Preschool** and join the fun.

Please join our Facebook community!

"Like" the Valley Beth Shalom ECC Preschool page.

Get a joyful glimpse into your child's day. This is a great way for you to share your child's preschool experience with loved ones across the world. We often post great candid shots that you can share friends and family. Remember, for security reasons, please don't tag any children with their names.

Great things are done by a series of small things brought together.
- Vincent Van Gogh

ECC PLAY YARD SECRET SURPRISE!!!

We have exciting news!

Be sure to read the December ECC Newsletter to find out what the surprise will be.



LINKS WE LOVE: THINK BEYOND THE CHAIR

There are 4.1 million disabled parents living in the U.S right now. This is precisely why 16 year old Alden Kane's wheelchair stroller attachment is so significant—not just because of how it has helped one mom, but how it's raising awareness about a serious need for more baby products geared to parents with disabilities.

Read more about this extraordinary parent who turned her disability into an inspirational foundation called **THINK BEYOND THE CHAIR** and read more about this talented teenager here: <http://www.kveller.com/16-year-old-creates-stroller-attachment-for-disabled-mom-in-wheelchair/>



KIDTALK

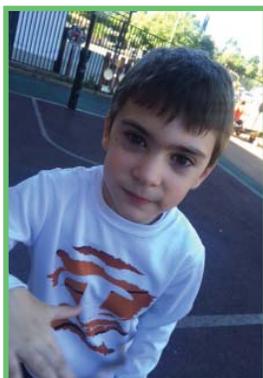
Whenever we can, we eavesdrop on your adorable, funny, smart children and share their wacky wisdom. If you ever wondered if your children are listening, watching and wondering, check out these gems:



"Why do I love you so much?" asked teacher Jenny to Eli. "I don't know." replied Eli. "Why don't you Google it?"



Lia reported to teacher Pnina; "I want to have 5 kids because it's so easy to have 5 kids. I'm going to be the best mamma!"



Teacher Sara was watching Matan out on the playground as he played with Carly and Delaney. Suddenly he stopped playing and started staring back and forth at the twins. Sara said "Do you know why they look alike Matan? They are twin sisters." "Yes! He screamed. "They doubled them up!"



Growing old is mandatory; growing up is optional.

- Chili Davis

VBS DAY SCHOOL NEWS

This year, the ECC is offering an enrichment class taught by our very own VBS Day School coaching staff. We are so excited to be able to partner with the ECC and have the preschool children play, learn and have fun on our Day School outdoor field. The Day School athletics program is led by Coach Sam, director of athletics and our dean of students at VBS Day School. He has 5 coaches on staff that - along with teaching the ECC enrichment class - spend their time coaching 30 sports teams, in over 240 games with 95% participation from our students. Coach Sam's team has led VBS Day School to 17 total athletic championships. This year, we are honoring Coach Sam at our VIVA VBS fundraising gala in February. We are so proud of our Lions and we hope you enjoy getting to know our athletic department.



ECLC NEWS

ECLC Tefillah Family Education Program

Sunday, November 15
from 9:30am - 11:45pm

Join teacher's, family, and friends! Participate and learn with your child through interactive and experiential stations.

The program will be in place of regular religious school. **Parents must attend the program with their child.**

For more information or questions please contact ECLC Director, Keri Loventhal, by phone 818-530-4046 or email kloventhal@vbs.org



VALLEY BETH SHOLOM
EITZ CHAIM

15739 Venture Boulevard
Encino, CA 91436
www.vbs.org
info@vbs.org



ECC ART ATTACK



Paint brushes are fine,
but painting with trucks?
Devine!



Happy Thanksgiving!

Make some delicious memories
with treasured family and friends.

Gobble! Gobble!

LET US HEAR FROM YOU!

Please contribute to the ECC Newsletter!
Email your thoughts, suggestions, interesting links and adorable pictures to me, Claire Berger, your ECC News Gatherer. My email is: cberger@vbs.org
We value all your contributions.

Cultures don't just change when you cross a border.
They cross when you enter someone's home.

- Polly Letofsky