

VBS ECC NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY, 2014



A MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTORS

The Torah tells us:

"Don't put a stumbling block before the blind."

"It is every father's duty to teach his child to swim."

"Teach every child according to his way and he will never part from it."

For those who were able to attend the VBS parent speaker series this week and hear from Dr. Wendy Mogul, author of the internationally renowned, *Blessing of a Skinned Knee*, there were many moments of laughter, wisdom, and poignant insights for parents wrangling with the challenges of raising resilient children in a changing world. Dr. Mogul offered reflections steeped in Jewish values, tradition and Torah teachings that can support each of us today where ever we are in our parenting journey.

We are offering two opportunities to discuss how we can practically integrate these ideas into our lives. Please join us on 2/6 @ 7pm and/or 2/26 @ 9:15am. Both of these discussions will be led ECC Preschool Director Brenda Harari and are open to everyone, whether or not you were able to attend Wendy Mogel's presentation. We hope you'll join us.



ECC UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER

- 2/6 Bringing Home the Blessings
Wendy Mogel follow-up discussion
led by Brenda Harari 7pm
- 2/7 ECC Community Shabbat
Sprig classes # 102 & 103 featured
- 2/8 Tot Shabbat 10:00am
- 2/14 ECC Closed-Staff In-Service
- 2/18 Parent Assn Meeting 7:30pm
- 2/17 ECC Closed- President's Day
- 2/22 Tot Shabbat 10:00 am
- 2/26 Director's Chat 9:15am
focussed on follow-up from Wendy
Mogel's presentation

ECC SCHOOL TOURS

TAKE AN ECC PRESCHOOL TOUR!
Call Marilyn @ 788-0567 to book
your tour.

Applications are now being accepted
for the 2014-15 school year.

It takes generosity to discover the whole through others. If you realize you are only a violin, you can open yourself up to the world by playing your role in the concert.

-- Jacques Yves Cousteau

A MESSAGE FROM RABBI PAUL STEINBERG

It is now a powerful time of the year for parents looking to transition their child from our ECC to our Day School or to another school. Of course, I am a supporter of our own VBS Day School – my own children are students there! That being said, I absolutely understand the value of both public and secular private school education – each is a valid option. I want to also note that if a child does not enter our Day School, they should enter our Etz Chaim Learning Center (a.k.a. “Hebrew School”).

For those who are not entering the Day School there are a couple things you should know:

1) We have the best Hebrew School in the country. I can say that in a biased manner or I can say it objectively. We can boast that nearly 100% of our students continue their participation once they’ve completed their Bar or Bat Mitzvah, and approximately 85% continue onto an 8th grade Jewish educational program (e.g., VBS Teen Tuesdays or Los Angeles Hebrew High School). Please come take a tour with me personally: 818-530-4040.

2) Know that you are an absolutely critical part of our community. We certainly preach the merits of a Jewish day school education here at VBS, yet we also know that our Etz Chaim families are extremely committed and an integral force in our community. Hebrew School families are adored, valued, and have a support system of rabbis, teachers, and lay leaders.

Ultimately, this period of time in our child’s development is wonderfully critical and we are all blessed with the options available to us; our ancestors could have only dreamed of what is possible for us. Our VBS community has a wealth of resources to help you to construct the best Jewish reality for your child and family – a reality of love of community and friends, of tradition, of evolving values of which we all have a voice.



DIRECTOR’S CHAT- WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 26TH @ 9:15AM



Every month, our ECC Directors host an hour of information and inspiration open to all ECC parents and grandparents. Please stop in after drop off on **2/26** to continue a discussion on Wendy Mogel’s presentation. So much to learn, contemplate and share.

It is not how much we have, but how much we enjoy,
that makes happiness.

- Charles H. Spurgeon

PARENT ASSOCIATION NEWS



On January 28th, the VBS parking lot was magically transformed into a winter wonderland. HUGE hugs to Snow Day chair Michelle Douek and all the parent volunteers. We couldn't have this special day without your help!

And...**MAY 3RD** is the biggest Fun-raiser of the year: EPIC! We encourage you to get involved in the following ways: *Decorations * Auction Donations * Food * Event Set-Up * Music* Entertainment.

There are many ways to help, regardless of your work/life schedule. Please contact either of us to sign up to be an EPIC volunteer HUGE Thanks in advance from everyone at the ECC.

Our next PA meeting is an evening get together for all parents to attend. Please join us on 2/18 @ 7:30pm.

Next Parent Association meeting is Tuesday, 2/18 @ 7:30pm

Your ECC PA Co-Chairs: Marcy Tajkef (MarcyT48@hotmail.com)
Hilary Zalon (hilaryzalon@gmail.com)

ECC COMMUNITY POT LUCK SHABBAT

The best way to welcome Shabbat is surrounding yourselves with friends and family. And the best place to do that is the ECC Community Shabbat services and Pot Luck Dinners held each month at VBS. Every month ECC families gather together, sharing favorite family dishes (dairy please). We'll also have pizza for the children. Please look for sign-up sheets in your classrooms and plan to join us for this special evening. Family-friendly services begin at 5:30 and pot luck dinner immediately follows. Our next ECC Community Shabbat Pot Luck is **FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7TH @ 5:30PM**. **Children from Sprig/Rooms#102 &103 classes will be featured and everyone is invited!**



Tot Shabbat family services are filled with joyful singing, story telling and family friendly prayers. Join fellow ECC families Feb. 8th and 22nd @10:00am in Burdoff Hall.

ECC '14-15 PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION

2014-15 ECC registration packets have been mailed to you. Please remember **registration is required for new and returning families**. Please take a moment to review everything in your packet, complete the registration forms and return them to Claire as soon as possible. You will not be guaranteed a spot next fall without these completed forms and classes will be filled on a first come, first registered basis.

We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children. -- Chief Seattle

ECC SLOGAN CONTEST & THE WINNER IS....?



Thank you to all the families who entered the ECC New Slogan contest. We appreciate everyone who came up with so many great suggestions. Please let us know your favorite when we post the finalists on our Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Valley-Beth-Shalom-ECC-Preschool>

The family who wrote the winning ECC slogan wins 4 TICKETS TO DISNEYLAND thanks to a generous donation from the Feit Family.

ART DOOR ADOPTION UPDATE

You may have noticed that our doors are turning into magnificent works of art. Each door has become an artistic installation, hand-painted in the style of famous artists. These spectacular works of art will introduce your children to many artistic styles and inspire them to create classroom art projects based on these doors. Each door is available for a \$500 donation to the ECC. Individuals, families or entire classrooms can 'adopt' any portion of a door. Many doors have been adopted but there are still opportunities to make a valuable donation towards this beautiful addition to our school. Please stop by Claire's office for more information.



ECC TZEDAKAH PROJECT

The ECC is collecting Tzedakah for an organization called Save a Child's Heart, an Israeli-based international organization that provides lifesaving cardiac surgery for children in third world developing countries. Since 1995, SACH has provided care to over 3,300 children from Africa, South America, Europe, Asia and throughout the Middle East. For more information, please visit:

www.saveachildsheart.org



There are two ways to live: You can live as if nothing is a miracle; or, you can live as if everything is a miracle.
-Albert Einstein

KIDTALK



When Room 105 was visiting the library recently, the librarian read them a book about George Washington. When she asked the children why they thought George Washington wasn't smiling in this picture, Talia shot her hand up and replied, "Maybe he's having a bad hair day."



INFANT-TODDLER CLASSES FOR SPRING

What? Babies at preschool? Absolutely! In fact, our Infant-Toddler classes are as important for new parents as they are for your babies. By joining these classes, you'll gain confidence, support and new friendships with other parents who are as thrilled as you to get out of the house.

Here are the Spring Infant-Toddler classes:

For Babies born 1/2013-9/2013- Wednesdays @ 9:30am -10:45am

For Babies born 10/2012- 12/2012-Thursdays @ 9:30am -11:00am

For Babies born 10/2013-12/2013 - Thursdays @ 11:30am -12:45pm

To register, please contact Rita Orenstein, Director of ECC Infant-Toddler programs. Rita's phone number is 818-788-4667 and her email is rorenstein@vbs.org.



ROOM 104 LEARNS ALL ABOUT KINDNESS



As a means of enriching our social/emotional curriculum, Room 104 recently read the book, *How Full is Your Bucket?* by Tom Rath and Mary Reckmeyer. The book teaches the importance of using kind words and doing acts of kindness everyday. The idea is that when you use kind words you fill up another person's bucket. The more full the bucket, the better someone feels inside. Teachers Julie, Ella and Orit decided to make our own special bucket in the classroom and the children are already adding drops to the bucket with their kindness. Please feel free to extend this idea outside of the classroom and into your home. If you see your child helping his her/siblings, using kind words, helping you or others, or doing any other kind acts, fill a family bucket and reinforce Room 104's beautiful lesson in kindness.

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

Margaret Mead

VBS DAY SCHOOL SPOTLIGHT

The VBS Day School Learning Garden

The VBS Day School garden is a magical place where children explore nature and take an active role in planting, cultivating and harvesting vegetables. Each week, third graders and their parents work in the garden, guided by green thumb Nancy Herbst, Director of General Studies, the science teacher and Lev Metz, Judaic studies teacher. The students are responsible for caring for all aspects of the garden. They take great pride knowing that the vegetables they harvest are donated to the SOVA food bank. While planting, the students explore the garden with the task of measuring the growth of plants, discovering the ecosystem, and analyzing the importance of water, sun and fertile soil to make the plants grow. All of this is documented in a Garden Journal and shared with the entire school during school assemblies. One section of the garden is the Shevat Haminim Garden- 7 species of Israel - making a connection with the Land of Israel. ECC students often come to the garden to also learn and explore. It was a popular destination during the recent Tu B'Shevat Celebration where 3rd graders planted wheat and barley in anticipation of Shavuot in Spring. The garden is a highlight for children as they learn and celebrate nature. Stop by and see what's growing!



3rd graders planting new vegetables in the Day School Garden

Join the Day School at the Prospective Parent Animal Adventures Event on Sunday, February 9th at 1:30pm. For more information, contact Cindy Goodman, Director of Admissions, at (818)788-2199.

Follow ECC on INSTAGRAM
We'll post loads of pics of your adorable children every week on Instagram.



<http://instagram.com/vbsecc>

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.



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 contributions.



Learn to say no, so your yes has some oomph. Spend time with the friends who lift you up, and cut loose the ones who bring you down. Stop giving your power away. Be more concerned with being interested than being interesting. Be old enough to appreciate your freedom, and young enough to enjoy it. Finally know who you are.
-Kristin Armstrong