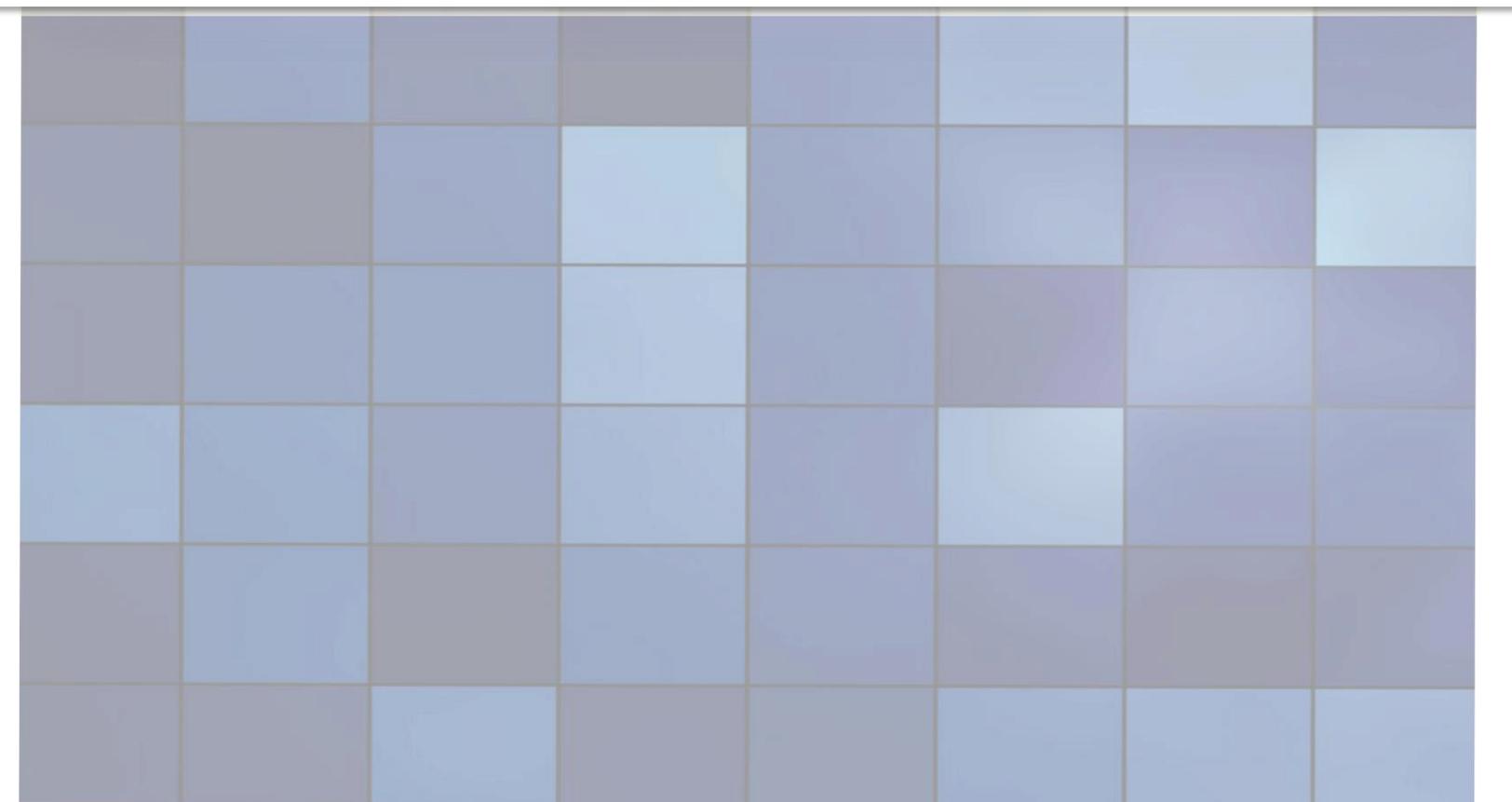


R o d e p h   S h o l o m   R e l i g i o u s   S c h o o l

**Parent Manual**  
2017-2018

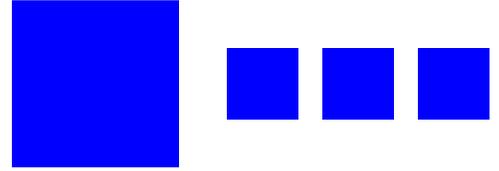




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# Welcome! בְּרוּכִים הַבָּאִים



A Jewish education is one of the most precious gifts you will give your child. From Judaism they will gain faith to sustain them in times of trouble and they will find a community in which to celebrate life's successes. Judaism will add meaning and depth to their lives and root their actions in values.

The Religious School at Congregation Rodeph Sholom can help you give this great gift to your child. Students in our school build close relationships with gifted teachers, who act as mentors and role models. Our classroom time is filled with lively discussions, creative projects and engaging activities. We continuously explore ways in which our students can be more engaged and active in finding their own path to learning.

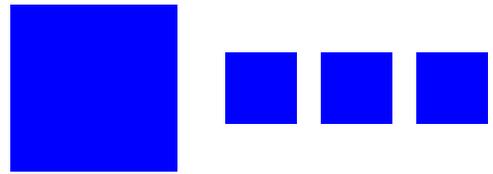
The core of our Judaica curriculum is built around the three pillars of Jewish life – *Torah*, *Avodah* (prayer) and *G'milut Chasadim* (deeds of lovingkindness). Torah is the central text of Judaism—a place to learn about our ancestors and to guide our actions. Prayer is the heart of Jewish life, making up the rhythms and cycles of daily, weekly, holiday and life-cycle observance. *G'milut Chasadim* is the actualization of Jewish values—the way we interact with the world and leave it a better place.

Our Hebrew program not only prepares students for B'nai Mitzvah, but it is also the foundation for a lifetime of Jewish practice. Students learn to connect with prayers and seek meaning in Jewish practice.

Students pray regularly in services that allow them both to have spiritual experiences and to practice their Hebrew fluency.

Our school could not be the warm, remarkable place that it is without our dedicated parents. You are a role model to your children about how Jewish life is lived. Your participation in school activities and your feedback on your family's experience here helps us to continually refine our program. Open communication is a cornerstone to the Religious School's strength. We look forward to getting to know your family and to working with you throughout the upcoming school year.

# Philosophy & Goals



Inspire Ideas

Instill Values

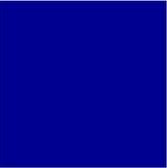
Create Community

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## **MISSION STATEMENT**

**Rodeph Sholom Religious School inspires a community of pre-kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade learners and thinkers to embrace Judaism with joy and to incorporate the teachings of Torah, prayer (avodah), and acts of lovingkindness (gemilut chasadim) in everyday life.**

We educate and shape the next generation of Jews in an inclusive, engaging environment in which students of all abilities develop a strong Jewish identity through an understanding of Biblical texts (the Tanakh), Hebrew language, and Jewish history and culture. Our students learn to do ethical and ritual mitzvot and repair the world (tikkun olam) through participation in age-appropriate experiences with the goal of developing a lifelong connection with our congregation and the broader Jewish community. We nurture faith through prayer, music and creative expression. We encourage our children to form their own relationship with God, Torah and the people of Israel.



# Congregation Rodeph Sholom Religious School Policy on Diversity



The Rodeph Sholom Religious School strives to develop a strong, positive, joyful Jewish identity in all students while deeply respecting them in all their diversity and diverse backgrounds and family structures. It is important to our congregation that families who seek to enroll their children in our Religious School are raising and educating their children exclusively as Jews.

Congregation Rodeph Sholom is a universally welcoming community to all who seek to draw closer to Judaism. We therefore affirm the position of the Central Conference of American Rabbis that “a child of one Jewish parent is under the presumption of Jewish descent. This presumption of the Jewish status of the offspring of any intermarried couple is to be established through appropriate and timely public and formal acts of identification with the Jewish faith and people. “

A family's choosing Judaism exclusively as their children's religious identity, does not preclude a sharing of a non-Jewish partner's religious traditions. In fact, children should not be discouraged from occasionally accompanying non-Jewish family members to their worship services or from participating in extended-family holiday celebrations. All non-Jewish parents should be free to share their cultural traditions and not be made to feel invisible in his or her child's religious life. Participation in cultural and familial traditions should be distinguished from formal religious instruction.

In keeping with the above statements, enrollment in our Religious School is open to:

- Children who are raised and educated exclusively as Jews, and
- Children who are not currently receiving formal education in another religion

We expect that any child registered in our Religious School is being raised exclusively in the Jewish faith and that when there is more than one parent or guardian, this is the decision and commitment on the part of all adults responsible for the child. We understand that for some families, coming to this decision may be a journey that can present challenges. If you are struggling with this decision or uncertain of its implications, we urge you to speak with one of our clergy or the Director of Religious Education before registering your child in Religious School.



## Anti-Bullying Statement

*"What is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow: this is the whole Torah;  
(Shab. 31a) Hillel-the Elder*

### Congregation Rodeph Sholom Religious School is a No-Bullying Zone

At Religious School we have no tolerance for bullying of any kind. We train our staff to identify bullying, and report such incidences immediately to the administration, who will address those on a case by case basis. We also talk to our students about bullying, what to do when they feel they are being bullied, what to do when they witness bullying, and how bullying has no place at the Religious School.

We also teach our students how to respond to unpleasant situations that may not be classified as "bullying", and how to differentiate between the two.

### **What is bullying?**

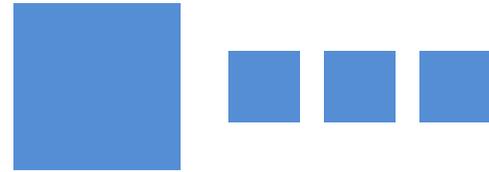
Bullying is when one person deliberately and repeatedly intimidates or harms another. Bullying can appear in many different ways:

- Physical**      hitting, kicking, shoving, mean hand gestures
- Verbal**        teasing, taunting, name calling, threatening remarks, spreading rumors
- Indirect**      excluding or intentionally leaving a person out, getting someone else to bully another person, gossiping
- Cyber**         using technology to threaten, insult or harass

### **What is not bullying?**

Sometimes students confuse other behaviors with bullying. No doubt, students will say things to one another which can be mean or hurtful, and whether these things are said intentionally or unintentionally, they still hurt. No doubt students will push one another in play or shove to be first in line. Here too, whether these behaviors are intentional or unintentional, they still hurt. However, sometimes children use poor judgment and say mean things, and sometimes they push one another, but these actions don't make them bullies. Only when these behaviors are repeated again and again, and targeted at the same child, is it bullying.

# Religious Education and Youth Staff



## Director of Religious Education and Youth

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## Religious Education and Youth Office Coordinator

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## Family B'nai Mitzvah Program Administrator

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# Education Theme for 2017 – 2018

Israel at 70: Am, Eretz, & Medina-People, Land and State

עַם אֶרֶץ מְדִינָה

This is a special year as we will celebrate the State of Israel's 70<sup>th</sup> birthday. It's amazing to think that just last year we celebrated Rodeph Sholom's illustrious 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and that the modern State of Israel is only turning 70.

The word *Israel* itself is fascinating and enigmatic unless defined further. Israel can be "Am Yisrael," the people of Israel, not just those who live in Israel, but all Jews around the world. It can mean "Eretz Yisrael," the physical land of Israel as promised to the Israelites in the Torah if they accepted God's covenant and obeyed God's laws. Then, there is "Medinat Yisrael," which is the modern State of Israel that became a state on May 14, 1948, 70 years ago come this Spring.

Each year in Religious School, we choose an overall theme for the school. It does not change our regular curriculum, rather it provides a lens through which we explore our content. Celebrating Israel's 70<sup>th</sup> and these three aspects of the word affords us the opportunity to discuss important topics with our students, such as the diversity of Am Yisrael, recognizing that Jews come in all different colors and backgrounds from all over the world, teaching important lessons such as accepting the other, those who are different from us, and exposing our students to the varying beliefs held by Jews. We'll also learn about the land itself, Eretz Yisrael, its geography, how Israel maximizes its resources, its hotly contested physical borders, and why it's described as a land flowing with milk and honey in the Torah. Reflecting on Medinat Yisrael, the modern State of Israel, we'll focus on its history, the advances it shares with the world, the different narratives of its inception and the challenges it faces due to its diverse population.

David Ben Gurion, Israel's first Prime Minister, said it best, "In Israel, in order to be a realist you must believe in miracles." While the State of Israel isn't perfect, no state or country is, it is our Jewish homeland and as its national anthem states, "Then our hope, the two thousand year old hope, will not be lost: to be a free people in our land, the land of Zion and Jerusalem." We express our hope and vision for the miracle that Israel is now and all that we hope she will become.

We are looking forward to another exciting year in Religious School and wish you Shanah Tovah, a year full of blessings, renewal of faith, spirit and soul.

!שְׁנָה טוֹבָה

Kerith

## B'nai Mitzvah @ CRS

In order for our families to have a meaningful B'nai Mitzvah experience it is important that they are part of our community for a number of years leading up to this milestone. We want to have time to get to know your family and for you to get to know us...our clergy, services, educators and programs. We also view the B'nai Mitzvah as a family experience, one during which families need the time to learn together, reflect, and communicate open and honestly with each other. Through our Family B'nai Mitzvah Program sessions (FBMP) families spanning the 4<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> grades are afforded this opportunity.

### B'nai Mitzvah Eligibility

Students are required to complete a minimum of three consecutive years of Religious School beginning in 4<sup>th</sup> grade immediately prior to and including the entire B'nai Mitzvah year. Families whose children enter the Religious School after the fourth grade must make special arrangements with the Director of Religious Education to meet grade-level requirements and the B'nai Mitzvah date may be delayed. Students who have attended another accredited Religious School prior to arriving at Congregation Rodeph Sholom are eligible for B'nai Mitzvah, provided all requirements have been satisfied. Students leaving the Rodeph Sholom School before the date of their B'nai Mitzvah must join the Religious School program.

Any questions relating to B'nai Mitzvah should be directed to Rachel Dulitz, our Family B'nai Mitzvah Program Administrator. She can be reached at [bnaimitzvah@crsnyc.org](mailto:bnaimitzvah@crsnyc.org) or at 646-454-3197. B'nai Mitzvah dates are coordinated by Gail Becker, the B'nai Mitzvah Coordinator, at 646-454-3022.

**Students must be enrolled in and attending a Congregation Rodeph Sholom School to keep their B'nai Mitzvah date on the calendar.**

### Family B'nai Mitzvah Program (FBMP)

We are excited for our families to participate in this program spanning the 4<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> grade years that represents an essential part of the B'nai Mitzvah process. The program is designed to help families deepen their understanding of the B'nai Mitzvah experience, forge relationships with other CRS families, and develop close connections with our clergy. In addition, students engage in mitzvah work within Rodeph Sholom and the larger community and families study their child's Torah portion in depth with our clergy members. To become B'nai Mitzvah means to join the Jewish community with all the responsibility and commitment it entails. These Family B'nai Mitzvah sessions are a part of this commitment and are required for each family (student and at least one parent).

# Religious School Requirements

The school committee, along with the rabbinic and educational staff agrees that the Rodeph Sholom Religious School needs to be a **two-day a week** program in the **4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> grade** in order to be one of substance and meaning, one in which students truly feel a part of the CRS community. Therefore, it is very important that your child make every attempt to attend regularly.

## Congregation Rodeph Sholom Requirements of B'nai Mitzvah

1. All B'nai Mitzvah students must be registered in either the Religious School or Rodeph Sholom School for the academic year during which their B'nai Mitzvah occurs.
2. Students must be enrolled in Religious School by the fourth grade. Rodeph Sholom School students must enroll in the Religious School upon leaving RSS.
3. Satisfactory attendance and efforts are expected throughout the student's enrollment in Religious School or at the Rodeph Sholom School.
4. Attending several services at Rodeph Sholom on both Friday night and Saturday morning will ensure that all members of your family are comfortable with the rituals that surround the B'nai Mitzvah ceremony and the particular practices of our congregation.
5. Students and parents are required to attend all Family B'nai Mitzvah Program sessions that span the 4<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> grade years leading up to the B'nai Mitzvah date.
6. Students are required to be involved in community service/Mitzvah project leading up to B'nai Mitzvah. The value of "living what we learn" is very important to the synagogue, the school and Jewish tradition.
7. The B'nai Mitzvah fee and any financial obligation to Congregation Rodeph Sholom must be fulfilled before the day of the B'nai Mitzvah service.
8. B'nai Mitzvah is not the end of a student's Jewish education. Students are expected to continue through their Confirmation in 10<sup>th</sup> grade and Graduation in 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

**Exceptions to any of the above specified requirements must be approved by the Rabbi and Director of the school.**

# STUDENT AND PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

"Make your study of Torah a fixed habit, say little and do much and greet all people with a cheerful smile" -Shammai

## Parent/Student Visits

**Parent visitation** Parents are encouraged to visit our classrooms at any time. All you need to do is call the Religious School office in advance to let us know that you are coming.

**Student visitation** For security reasons we cannot allow children who are not registered in Religious School to visit in our classrooms. Guests who do arrive at our school will be asked to be picked up immediately.

## Regular attendance

Your child's regular attendance is the largest indicator of his or her success in Religious School. We understand the time constraints that busy families face, however we ask that you make school a priority. The time we are given to teach is so limited, that we must ask you to be certain that your child attends regularly. If a student is absent for more than 25% of all classes in a year, that year will not be able to count toward the requirement of completing three full years of school prior to B'nai Mitzvah.

## Dress code

Students are expected to dress appropriately for Religious School. Good taste, with the consideration that they are entering a religious institution - their synagogue - is vital for the promotion of respect and decorum.

## Student behavior

The attitude that your child brings to Religious School is of consummate importance. Respect for fellow students, as well as teachers, is a central element in the educational process in our Religious School. Disruptive behavior and lack of respect will not be tolerated.

## Respect for property

Respect for property should be an unspoken understanding of all of our students. Although we do not expect such occurrences to take place, parents will be responsible for any damage done to the synagogue by their children.

## No food or drink

No food or drink will be allowed into the classroom areas. Snacks are provided to students before school in Kif Kef and during school. **Remember - we are a NUT-SENSITIVE SCHOOL**

We are a peanut/tree nut sensitive school.



No peanuts/nut products please.

We are a peanut/tree nut sensitive school.



No peanuts/nut products please.

We are a peanut/tree nut sensitive school.



No peanuts/nut products please.

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No peanuts/nut products please.

### **The safety of your children**

The safety of your children during Religious School dismissal is of utmost importance to us. If a student needs to leave before regular dismissal time, a parent or caregiver needs to sign them out in the Religious School office. No student will be permitted to leave the premises on their own before dismissal. Also, students arriving early to school are expected to enter the building and proceed straight to the supervised "Before School" Kif-Kef location.

### **Behavior**

The teachers and students write a class brit, covenant, with the behavioral expectations for their classroom community. If a student chooses to display unacceptable behavior, they will be sent to the Director for a conference. If unacceptable behavior occurs again, the parent(s) will be informed and asked for cooperation in solving the problem. *Inappropriate behavior shall be defined as any behavior that disrupts either the teacher's right to teach or any other student's right to learn.*

### **Communication**

We encourage an open flow of communication between home and school. Toward the beginning of each school year you will receive a roster of the students in your child's class. Also, feel free to contact the school Director or Associate Director, if you have any questions about your child's education. You can expect to get a weekly e-mail update from your child's Jewish Studies teacher detailing class projects, what children are learning and upcoming events.

# Lewis Steinman

## Educating Jewish Children with Special Needs

**“Educate Every Child According to his Way”  
(Proverbs 22:6)**

All children are capable of receiving a Jewish education according to their capabilities and deserve to learn about their Jewish heritage and share our rich history and lifestyle.

The Rodeph Sholom Religious School is in the unique position to offer Jewish Education in a synagogue setting for students with special needs.

This is made possible through a generous grant from the Steinman family and the Rudin Foundation in memory of Lewis Steinman.

### **The Lewis Steinman Center**

The Steinman program provides a supportive environment for our learners with special needs. By providing multiple classroom scenarios with slightly different identities, we are able to accommodate children of diverse learning needs.

Our self-contained classes are taught by teachers with special education training and provide a smaller class size as well as a lower student to teacher ratio than our typical classes.

In addition, for children who need one on one attention, we are able to provide some or all of their class time in a one on one setting. One on one attention can be in the form of tutoring outside of the classroom, as well as "push in" support for a student to have an adult working one on one with them inside the classroom.

For more information please contact the Religious School Office at 646-454-3085.

# Kif Kef Before-School Program

Ever wonder what your child should do during the hour between school and Religious School? We have a solution:

**The “Kif Kef” program at the Rodeph Sholom Religious School!  
Join us for an hour of theme-based, informal, fun and educational programming.**



## Who:

This program is open to all students in grades K-12 who arrive early

## When:

From 3:00pm-4:00pm on the days your child attends Religious School  
(4:00pm-5:00pm for grades 7-12)

## Where:

Grades K-1 meet in the Music Room, 84th Street building  
Grades 2-6 meet in the 6th floor Eisner Auditorium, 83rd Street building  
Grades 7-12 meet in our Pop-Up Lounge in the Kitchen, 5th floor, 83<sup>rd</sup> street building

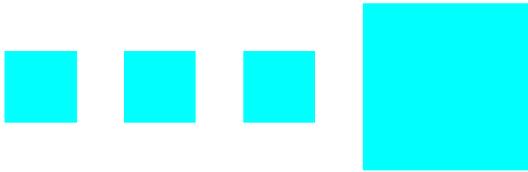
## What:

A fun and thought provoking array of informal educational programming based on a weekly theme. Students are introduced to the theme and then there is a follow up game, craft, or mitzvah project. Students may choose to work on homework or participate in the follow up activity, while eating snacks\*.

## Cost:

**FREE!!!** \*A complimentary snack is provided. Students in grades 2-6 have the option of purchasing additional inexpensive snacks.

**Questions?** Contact the Religious School office at 645-454-3085



# Nitzanim Kindergarten & First Grade Program

Participating in the unique Rodeph Sholom Nitzanim\* Learning Center Program, your child will embark on a journey into the world of Jewish learning and discovery, wonder and excitement, spiritual growth and social development within the nurturing environment of our congregation.

## \*Nitzanim-Hebrew for flower buds

**1<sup>st</sup> Grade begins our formalized Hebrew program** which is taught through a systematic decoding program called PHD (Phonetic Hebrew Decoding) and the development of basic vocabulary.

Timing: Classes meet on **WEDNESDAYS** from 4:00PM-6:00PM



The *learning center program* is designed to engage your child with interactive experiences as teachers guide them through a variety of activities and materials in the centers that target multiple learning styles (visual, oral, auditory, and kinesthetic).

### **The structure of the program includes:**

[Mifgash - Group Meeting:](#) weekly rituals including weather, Alef-Bet Yoga, tefillah (prayer), songs, and an introduction of concepts and learning centers for the day.

[Mercazim - Center Time:](#) Rotation through various centers: Hebrew each week with others (examples include bible, spirituality, holidays, games & tikkun olam- repairing the world - centers) alternating throughout the year

[Chatif:](#) Snack

[Musika:](#) Music with our song leader

[Aruchat Erev- Dinner:](#) Students learn the blessings and enjoy a meal with friends.

[Mishpachah-Family Connections:](#) Take home bags with learning activities for families

### **Questions?**

Contact Marcia Stein at: [mstein@crsnyc.org](mailto:mstein@crsnyc.org) or 646-454-3086

# 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Highlights

Timing: Classes meet on MONDAYS from 4:00PM-6:00PM

Daily Schedule: T'fillah(Prayer)/Storytelling/Music

Snack – Question of the Day

Jewish Studies

Dinner

Hebrew

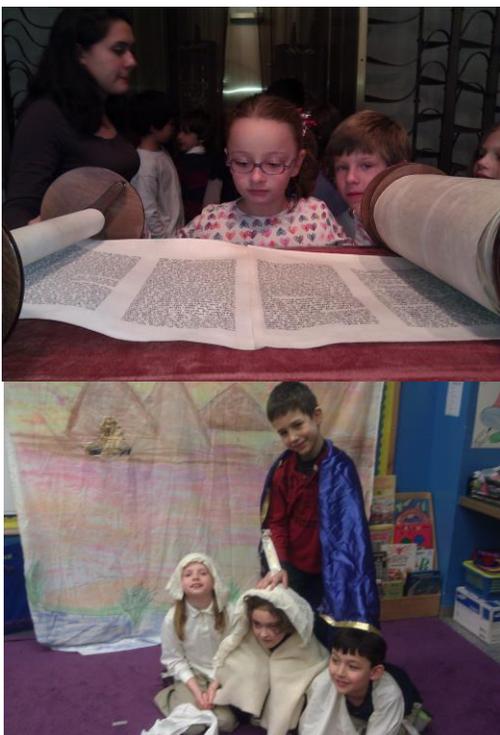
## **PHD Hebrew Study in 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade**

The Hebrew language is taught through a systematic and individualized decoding program called PHD (Phonetic Hebrew Decoding) and the development of basic vocabulary.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade

Students study selections from the Torah and begin to learn the various values taught by the Biblical personalities while exploring connections to their own lives today. A conceptual and experiential approach is used in order to teach and experience the Jewish holidays.

### Special Projects:



☆ My Torah Commentary: Students create a personal Torah commentary through response opportunities to stories in the first book of the Torah, Genesis, which they read throughout the year.

☆ 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Community Haggadah Project: All classes work on a few steps of the seder through photo, written, and artistic expression which is then compiled with at-home experiences to incorporate during a family Passover celebration.

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade

How can Bible and Jewish Holidays be relevant and meaningful to my life as a 3<sup>rd</sup> grader? To answer this question the students will study Bible and Jewish Holidays through the lens of Jewish values and how we can become our best selves, a mensch (Yiddish for a good person). Through group work and individual journaling the students will discover connections between these stories and their own lives. We are called to make choices every day on how to treat ourselves and others and through our study of Jewish tradition, text, and wisdom we will search for the answers to the question, **“How can I be a mensch and act on these values that I learn?”**

### Special Projects:

✧ Bringing Torah into My Life Project:

Our study will be documented throughout the year in our journals. Towards the end of the year we will work in teams to create a presentation of how we, like those in the Torah and in history, can live the values in our world today.



✧ Israel Brochure Project:

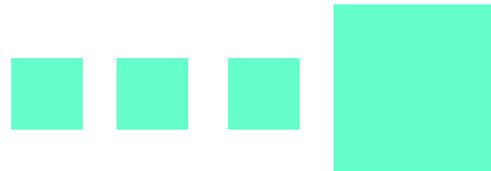
Students explore Israel through answering the questions, Why do we want go there? What will we be seeing? What has happened there in history? Research and discussion will culminate in the creation of their own travel brochures.



## Questions?

Contact Marcia Stein at: [mstein@crsnyc.org](mailto:mstein@crsnyc.org) or 646-454-3086

# 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Grade Highlights



Timing: Classes meet on MONDAYS & WEDNESDAYS from 4:00PM-6:15PM

Daily Schedule: Hebrew  
Jewish Studies  
Music on Mondays  
Tefillah (Prayer) on Wednesdays



## **Tefillah (Prayer)/Hebrew Study in 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Grade**

In 4<sup>th</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> Grade students engage in the study of the prayers used in the synagogue and establish fluency in Hebrew reading. These skills will enrich their synagogue experience and further develop their connection to the Jewish people through prayer. Students who successfully complete the Hebrew Contract program, an individualized program that teaches students a general understanding of the Shabbat and holiday prayers and blessings and how to read them fluently, will enter our Ulpan class to study Modern Hebrew.

## 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

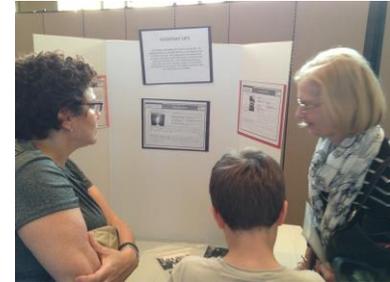


## **Special Projects:**

- ✧ **Jewish Holiday Fair:** Students analyze Jewish folklore, texts, laws, customs, and rituals of the holidays as they reflect on their own holiday experiences as well as specific Jewish values that they can learn from each holiday. Their year of study culminates in a Holiday Siyum (conclusion), a celebration during which students share the knowledge that they learned throughout the year. Students become experts in their holidays and create innovative visual displays to reflect their newfound knowledge.
- ✧ **Food Justice Unit:** This curriculum promotes awareness of contemporary food issues through the lens of Jewish values and traditions, integrating both secular and Jewish sources. It is intended to increase the knowledge that we have about healthy eating and creating a Jewish framework for food choices.

# 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Highlights

Specialized Content Units: Students rotate to different teachers for each Jewish Studies unit and will create hands-on projects to depict their knowledge and understanding of each subject area.



## 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

- ✧ **History of our Nation and Living Museum:** This unit begins with a study of the history that led our ancestors to become the great nation and civilization that we are today. This look back at our history highlights the important role that each one of our ancestors played in this exceptional journey. Students discover how they fit into the larger picture of the Jewish people by choosing an artifact that describes their family's Jewish story. This project culminates with an in-house and online exhibit of the objects to which parents are invited, a Living Museum.
- ✧ **Modern Israel and Israeli Culture:** An intensive study of what makes Israel so unique. The unit includes Israel's diverse population, booming arts and culture scene, food, and structure of its government.
- ✧ **Prayer:** How is prayer relevant to our lives today? What does it mean to pray to God, and what prayers do each of us connect to? This unit addresses all of these issues, and more.
- ✧ **Stories from Exodus:** Students explore the biblical narratives of our exodus from Egypt, focusing on the unique values that are present within each story in an effort to apply these values to modern life. Our story as a Jewish nation begins in Exodus, so there is no better place to look for inspiration.

## 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

- ✧ **Trope:** Students begin to learn Cantillation from the Cantors themselves in preparation for their B'nai Mitzvah, and the life-long skill of chanting Torah.
- ✧ **Holocaust and the Importance of Memory in Judaism:** Students learn about the important mitzvah of remembering in Judaism and the traditions around memorializing those whom we have lost.
- ✧ **Study and Action:** Students learn about tzedakah (righteous giving), answering questions such as, "Why do we give, Where do we give, and How do we give?" Then, in partnership with Teen Impact Projects (TIP), students will plan a mitzvah project that they implement and then reflect upon. The TIP program builds community leaders through service. Participation in this unit fulfills the community mitzvah project for becoming B'nai Mitzvah at CRS.
- ✧ **The Establishment of the State of Israel:** Students learn about what led to the establishment of the State of Israel, its layers of history, the different narratives of its inception, and the challenges it faces due to its diverse population. Students also explore their own thoughts and impressions

Questions?

Contact Jessica Cohen at: [jcohen@crsnyc.org](mailto:jcohen@crsnyc.org)

# 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grade Highlights

## Teen Experiences @ CRS

### Tuesday Night! (5:00pm – 7:00pm)

Tuesday Nights provide our 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders with an opportunity to be together for social and educational program that inspires them to be involved in Jewish life. They'll have a chance to engage in more intimate learning time with our clergy and outstanding educators. Over the course of our program, teens experience Jewish life in new, exciting and relatable ways.



### 7<sup>th</sup> Grade:

#### Doing Jewish, BEING B'nai Mitzvah YOUR WAY

In this exciting year our 7<sup>th</sup> graders will build on their past learning, preparing for the B'nai Mitzvah process and exploring their status change to an adult in the Jewish community. Students will choose an elective course that will take them outside the box of conventional Jewish studies to model how the Jewish faith they share with generations past can be relevant, engaging and meaningful at this age. Classes employ experiential, hands-on lessons about the meaning of prayer, the laws and rituals of the Jewish people, and the importance of coming of age in various communities of the Jewish world and beyond. All this and more, through the very topic area your teen is most passionate about. This year's electives include: **Entertaining Jewish: TV, Movies & Jews, Shalom Sports, Jewlicious: A Taste of Judaism, and All Natural Judaism: Nature & Photography.**



### Cup of Joe & 5 Books of Mo\*

As part of our 7<sup>th</sup> grade program, once a month, students venture out to local coffee shops and dessert venues for a fun snack and a pop culture infused discussion of the weekly Torah portion. They will experience the Torah like never before and enjoy their first drink or snack on us! To sign your teen up, [click](#) here for more information.

\*inspired by Beit-RJ

## 8<sup>th</sup> Grade: Change the Community, Change the World

Taught by: Jessica Cohen

Coming off of an exciting and extremely powerful year of preparing to become B'nai Mitzvah, 8<sup>th</sup> grade is a year for us to reflect on the tools we have been taught up until now, and how we can apply them to different communities. 8<sup>th</sup> grade is a new journey and a pivotal year here at CRS to take action and “give back,” gain stronger leadership skills, becoming a better you, and begin the process of learning to make change. We even have the opportunity to take our skills and make a real difference on our **8th grade trip to New Orleans March 8 – 11, 2018**. [Click here for more information](#).

## 9<sup>th</sup> Grade: Speak Your Truth – A Year of Seeking and Searching

Taught by: Rabbi Ben Spratt

It's a wild world, and we need leaders. This will be a year of experiences intended to help you discover the truths of others and find the truths you carry. Judaism will be our lens, and the world will be our subject. We will learn with leaders of other faiths and denominations to find the heart of various religions and Judaism. We will study with scientists and explore with artists, searching to see how truth inspires meaningful action in the world. We will travel to Washington D.C. and learn about our political process in the United States and our call to action as Reform Jews, and then craft lobbying speeches with legislative assistants before speaking our truth to our congressional representatives.

**For more information about the 9<sup>th</sup> grade trip to the Religious Action Center (RAC) in Washington DC, January 26-29, 2018, please [click here](#).**

## 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Confirmation: Big Questions, Big Answers

Taught by: Rabbi Greg Weitzman and Rabbi Ben Spratt

This year is especially exciting and meaningful as it is your Confirmation year, the next major milestone in Jewish life after B'nai Mitzvah. Working with our clergy, you will experience a year of exploration where you will wrestle with some of life's big questions, such as “Who am I? Where do I fit in? What do I stand for?” Discover your own answers as you experience a trip to Berlin, the birthplace of Reform Judaism and Rodeph Sholom's roots, and in study sessions where three tracks are offered and you pick the one that suits you best. Your year culminates at the Friday night May 18<sup>th</sup> Confirmation service and celebration. **For more information about the overall Confirmation Program, its different study tracks, and the trip to Berlin February 15 – 20, 2018, please [click here](#).**

## 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Grade: If Not Now When? Your Jewish Future!

Taught by: Juliana Karol, Rabbinic Intern

During the years leading up to the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade, we guide you on how to ask important questions on topics like social justice, God, Judaism, your belief system, etc. Confirmation provides you with the tools to start seeking those answers for yourself. It's your turn to ask the questions as you prepare for how you want to live a Jewish life away from your family and your CRS family. During these two years we will equip you with the best skills possible as you begin your journey. We will dissect Israel and its many complexities in addition to discussing important teen issues and life post-High School.

## Post B'nai Mitzvah Paid CRS Internship (7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Grade)

7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> graders earn money through our PAID internship program while strengthening their resume and connection to the Jewish community! Students attend weekly meetings and complete 20 hours of hands on work in one of the departments at CRS. This work teaches students about networking and leadership skills that are essential for their future success. The internship is open to both pre- and post-B'nai Mitzvah students, however work hours towards the stipend are counted in half increments for those students who have not yet become B'nai Mitzvah. \*Optional\*: Students may choose to work on an interest based initiative of their choice to engage them and their peers in 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades. **For more information and for an application [click here!](#)**

## Madrachim Program (School Assistants) (8<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade) Mondays and/or Wednesdays from 4:00-6:00 pm

8<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> graders have an opportunity to build community by working and helping in the Religious School. These years are the most impactful for our Kindergartners through 6<sup>th</sup> graders, and our teens make a positive impact upon the children with whom they work. The program is a perfect way to contribute to CRS, allowing our teens to act as Jewish role models and leaders for our younger youth community. Madrichim can support teachers in the classroom, help in the front office, teach Hebrew, plan for future Tefillot (prayer services), and song lead in music class. Madrichim also meet throughout the year to reflect upon their experiences, develop leadership skills, and learn from guest speakers. Teens may choose to receive compensation or community service hours for their participation in the program. **[Click here](#) for the application to participate.**

## Questions?

Contact:

Dina Newman at 646-454-3083 or [dnewman@crsnyc.org](mailto:dnewman@crsnyc.org) for 2<sup>nd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> grades

Dan Strauss at 646-454-3081 or [dstrauss@crsnyc.org](mailto:dstrauss@crsnyc.org) for 8<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grades

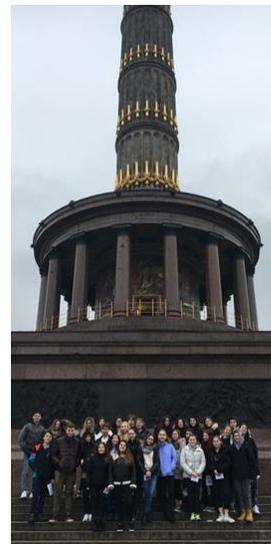
# Weekend Trips Your Child(ren) Won't Want to Miss!

☆ 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade Fall Conclave at Camp Kutz  
November 3 – 5, 2017

☆ 8<sup>th</sup> grade trip to New Orleans  
March 8 – 11, 2018

☆ 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade trip to Religious Action  
Center in Washington, DC  
January 26 – 29, 2018

☆ 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Confirmation trip to BERLIN  
February 15 – 20, 2018



## Youth Groups 2<sup>nd</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> Grade (CRuSTY)

Through fun events and thoughtful planning, youth and teens will have many opportunities to interact and engage in social and educational programs. CRS' Youth Groups (CRuSTY) are safe places where social, emotional, and spiritual needs are nurtured. Groups are divided by grade and provide a natural setting for learning about Jewish identity in innovative and creative ways. At its heart, this program is a community builder. Children will deepen already existing relationships and create new friendships in a cool and exciting atmosphere. As participants mature and grow over the years, there are leadership opportunities within the teen Youth Group. We look forward to meeting you and your children at upcoming events this year!

### CRuSTY Groups and Calendars

CRuSTY 23 – 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade

CRuSTY 45 – 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

CRuSTY 67 – 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> Grade

Senior CRuSTY 8<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade

Check out this year's  
[Jr. Youth Group  
Calendar here!](#)



# Family Experiences

Rodeph Sholom is committed to supporting families on their Jewish journey. Judaism enriches our lives with learning, ritual, values, community, connections with Israel, our heritage and so much more. At Rodeph Sholom, families have the opportunity to study, do mitzvah work, and celebrate Shabbat and holidays together. Children who see their parents attending classes and/ or participating in Jewish experiences recognize the value and importance of Judaism and Jewish living to the entire family.

## Curriculum Café

### December 4th from 5:00 – 6:00:

Find out all the amazing things that will be going on for your children this year! Review curricular materials and plans for the year and talk to education staff!

## Shabbat Dinners

Join together with your friends (old & new) for a relaxing dinner after Shir Chadash services. No cooking needed...just relax and enjoy some family and adult schmooze time! Singing and activities for all ages!

**October 13<sup>th</sup>**

**June 1<sup>st</sup> after the Youth Service!**

## Shabbat Across CRS

Once a year, we have Shabbat dinners happening in people's homes! Families can either host or attend a dinner.

**February 2<sup>nd</sup>**

## Shir Chadash

2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of the month, 6:00PM

(December Shir Chadash will occur on December 15<sup>th</sup> to coincide with the CRS Chanukah latke party.)

A lively musical song filled service led by our wonderful cantors and clergy/alongside our outstanding instrumentalists on keyboard, drums, guitar, and flute.

## Junior Congregation

1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month, 10:00 – 11:00AM

September 16<sup>th</sup> – June 16<sup>th</sup> (Ages 7 – 13 yrs./2<sup>nd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> grade)

Rock through a Shabbat morning service that's fun and meaningful for the whole family. Kids lead prayers, chant Torah, and find their own voice in the CRS community; parents kvell, pray, chant, and sing.

## Family Supper in the Sukkah!

**Wednesday October 4<sup>th</sup> – after Religious School!**

Celebrate Sukkot with us, enjoy supper in the sukkah, say the blessings, sing and join the annual *Edible Sukkah* competition!

## PJ Library at CRS! ( 6months – 12 year olds)

PJ Library ("PJ" for "pajamas") program offers **FREE** high quality Jewish books and music each month to Jewish families with children **ages 6 months to 8** or **PJ Our Way for children ages 8 ½ - 12**. Click on the age group to sign up!

## PJ and Play Story Time

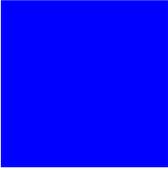
*Ages 0-6 years old, 5:00 – 6:00* on the following Saturday afternoons: 12/16, 1/6, 2/3, and 3/10.

Drop in and join us once a month for stories, activities, playtime on the indoor playground, and snack.

## PJ Challah for Hunger

*Ages 0-7 year olds (Infant – 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade), 10:30 - 11:30* on the following Saturday mornings: 10/28; 11;18; 12/16; 1/20; 2/10; 3/10; 4/14; 5/5

This monthly series of challah baking experiences are designed to offer a unique social action opportunity for little hands. Come and help others who are hungry in our community while making new connections. Your family will braid two challahs – one for you to keep and one to give away to someone in need. Join us for storytelling, snacks and some serious challah braiding!



# Family Experiences Cont.



## Turkey Challenge



After dismissal, walk with us to Gristedes on 86<sup>th</sup> & Broadway, purchase a turkey, drop it off at the West Side Campaign Against Hunger's food pantry on that same block to provide a Thanksgiving meal to families who otherwise could not afford one.

**Monday, November 20th**

## Backpack Buddies

Each 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> grade class and their parents will have the opportunity to participate in this program which provides food insecure children with a backpack full of food for the weekend.

## Mitzvah Day

Religious School families will be preparing for and hosting a Halloween Party for children at the Lincoln Square Neighborhood Center, with the same children who will be receiving the backpacks of food we will be packing this year.

Join us for this special day on **Sunday, October 29<sup>th</sup> 1:30-3:00pm.**

## WANTED: Parent Association Volunteers

We believe that our parents are a wealth of talent, information and intelligence, and that you have something unique to share.

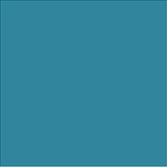
We'd love for you to become involved! Contact Marcia Stein if you'd like to get involved with:

- ✧ Shabbat Dinners
- ✧ Fundraisers
- ✧ Family Programming
- ✧ Backpack Buddies
- ✧ Grade Representative

*We partner with parents to create initiatives that strengthen our community, increase social action, and encourage family study and celebration.*

Questions?

Contact Marcia Stein at: [mstein@crsnyc.org](mailto:mstein@crsnyc.org) or 646-454-3086



## What Our Families Are Saying...



They both enjoyed the Conclave trip and always enjoy the thrill of completing Hebrew packets!



My daughter's favorite experiences are when teachers share personal stories that bring Jewish learning to life.



A very nurturing environment where learning is very comfortable and encouraging

The informative emails from my child's teacher let us know what is being covered each week.

The teachers have been great so every time dropping off and picking up my child was so happy and memorable for me.

My son was happy and safe.

I enjoy the milestone ceremonies; B'nai Mitzvah, Confirmation, Graduation.

Watching our children gain confidence

Our child was able to make so many wonderful new friends while also loving the learning of our religion.

We love the sense of community and all of the activities that support community building.

"In my view, the goals of connecting the kids more deeply to Judaism, their history, the meaning of Confirmation, AND THEMSELVES, were achieved beyond expectation. You gave them a trip they will undoubtedly cherish all their lives. Truly." – A parent of a 10<sup>th</sup> grader on the Berlin trip

"My son had an amazing time on the trip and came home animated and engaged and happy. It sounds like each activity was well thought-out, interesting and meaningful (and fun!)." - Parent of an 8<sup>th</sup> grader on the NOLA trip

Never hearing a complaint about having to go to Religious School and instead seeing my kids looking forward to it!