



ישיבה
עץ חיים
the
skill building
center

Bnos Bracha
a Bais Yisroel elementary school

Yeshiva Eitz Chaim • Bnos Bracha • The Skill Building Center
15 Widman Court • Spring Valley, NY 10977 • www.skillbuildingcenter.org
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OurGreatestSelves

HELPING OUR CHILDREN ACTUALIZE THEIR TRUE POTENTIAL

Language and Life

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What It Means for Your Child

Middos and the Mind

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A school that develops every child's individual strengths and talents

An Individualized Curriculum

Small Classes

A Track for Gifted Children

Creative Programming

A Focus on Ahavas Hashem and Yiras Shamayim

Professional, Dedicated, Loving Staff

Bnos Bracha
a Bais Yaakov elementary school

Girls' Division
Grades K-7
bnosbrachasv@gmail.com

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ישיבה
עץ חיים

Boys' Division
Grades K-7
yeshivaeitzchaim@gmail.com

With the Guidance of Rav Shmuel Kaminetsky, Shlita

Message from:

Rabbi Reuven Eidlitz,
Founder, Menahel and Rebbe, The Skill Building Center, Yeshiva Eitz Chaim and Bnos Bracha

Mrs. Sarah Eidlitz, MS, Special Education,
Founder and Director, The Skill Building Center, Yeshiva Eitz Chaim and Bnos Bracha

Chazal tell us that although a father is required to teach his son Torah, a Rebbe’s obligation runs deeper. A Rebbe must ensure that his student truly understands Torah, that he grasps it on a deep enough level to become a Ben Torah who can apply Torah to every aspect of his life. This is our goal for all of our students in Yeshiva Eitz Chaim, Bnos Brocha, and The Skill Building Center. 

Publisher’s Note

Latent in every child is infinite potential—and it is our job as teachers and parents to access and direct this potential by building on our children’s strengths.

It was with this in mind that the friends and staff of *Yeshiva Eitz Chaim/Bnos Brocha* created “Our Greatest Selves,” a journal dedicated to the task of bringing out the best in our children. We have included a variety of specialists: Rabbi Mordechai Swiatycki discusses contemporary chinuch challenges. Psychologist and speech and language pathologist Dr. Shoshana Goldman and speech and language pathologist Chavie Genack explain the significance of early language development, and psychologist Dr. Benyamin Goldman explains the importance of developing executive function in children. Finally we will hear an interesting perspective on teaching Shakespeare to the middle school yeshiva boy. We hope you will find the information here as enlightening as we did. 



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THANK YOU, Keren Perles and Chaya Kahn, for your extensive assistance with writing and editing.

Our 2013 Honorees

Kesser Shem Tov Award

Rabbi Jeff and Mrs. Jen Eisenstein



Rabbi and Mrs. Eisenstein truly deserve this honor. As a rebbe at Hillel Yeshiva of Deal, Jeff is known for his dedication to his students; as an accountant, he is known for his integrity and *erlichkeit*. His *hasmada* and his ability to retain complex ideas has led others to approach him for guidance. Jen has a passion for life and yiddishkeit that is truly contagious. A mechaneches at Ateres Bais Yaakov, Jen tailors her lessons so that every subject is both enjoyable and meaningful. Her dedication to guiding her children in the best way possible has enabled her to adapt to each of their needs, *al pi darkeihem*. Jen and Jeff's devotion and patience have helped their daughter Shoshie to grow in leaps and bounds over the past several years. We have therefore chosen Jen and Jeff as honorees due to their tireless devotion to their family, to our school, and to the klal.

Kesser Torah Award

Rabbi Avraham and Mrs. Tzivia Nyer



Rabbi and Mrs. Nyer are true role models. The devotion that they show to their children in general, and to Shamson in particular, is truly inspirational. Avraham, a member of the Ohel Ohr Kollel, has been learning with diligence for the past seven years. As his family's bulwark of strength, he accepts whatever challenge comes his way with bitachon. Tzivia exemplifies the middah of *Ahavas Yisroel*, as someone who truly takes the joys and sorrows of others to heart. In her trademark warm and caring manner, Tzivia is always available to listen; friends and family feel intuitively that she truly cares about them. As parents, Avraham and Tzivia give of themselves tremendously to all of their children, but most notably to Shamshon. They work tirelessly with him, helping him reach each hard-won milestone, and taking great pride in his accomplishments. Shamshon's *simchas hachaim* is truly a testimony to their own ability to meet each challenge *b'simcha*. 

By Rabbi Mordechai Swiatycki

Rabbi Mordechai Swiatycki is a noted lecturer at Ohr Somayach yeshiva in Monsey. Rabbi Swiatycki has worked extensively with couples, families, and teens at risk.

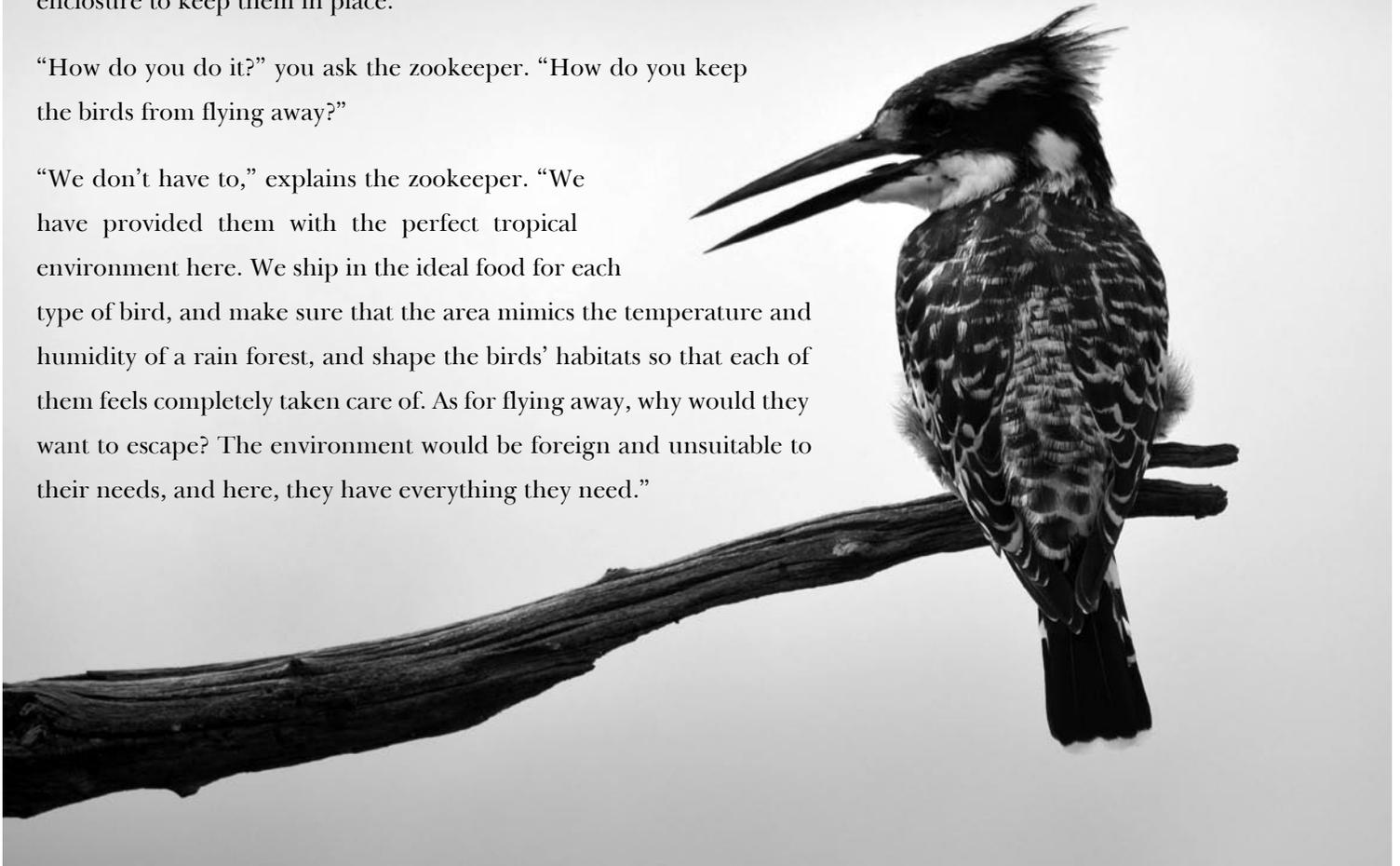


A Bird in Paradise

You visit the bird exhibit at the zoo and marvel at the many different species on display. Most of the exhibits are behind glass, so that the birds won't escape. But one exhibit is different. In it, dozens of tropical birds fly free, with no glass enclosure to keep them in place.

"How do you do it?" you ask the zookeeper. "How do you keep the birds from flying away?"

"We don't have to," explains the zookeeper. "We have provided them with the perfect tropical environment here. We ship in the ideal food for each type of bird, and make sure that the area mimics the temperature and humidity of a rain forest, and shape the birds' habitats so that each of them feels completely taken care of. As for flying away, why would they want to escape? The environment would be foreign and unsuitable to their needs, and here, they have everything they need."



Rabbi Mordechai Swiatycki explains that this *mashal* holds the key to successful chinuch. The job of the home—and by extension, the school—is to give children exactly what they need to thrive. Parents and teachers should strive to nurture every aspect of a child: mind, body, and neshama. This means creating an environment that acknowledges and respects their needs. And when they feel safe and nurtured, why would they want to fly away? 



Growing Happy, Successful Children

Yeshiva Eitz Chaim • Bnos Bracha • The Skill Building Center

Walking into the classrooms of Yeshiva Eitz Chaim, one is reminded of a bygone era; a time when children learned in small groups around a warm, focused rebbe, and each child was known and worked with on his own level.

Yeshiva Eitz Chaim was created with one overriding philosophy: to custom-tailor the chinuch of every child, from the gifted to those who need

*Yeshiva Eitz Chaim
custom-tailors the
chinuch of every child*

help academically or socially. Through its individualized programming, children flourish; they come to love learning and love school, and they are imbued with the skills, self-awareness and core confidence they need to navigate life successfully.

Founded in 2005 by Rabbi Reuven Eidlitz and Mrs. Sarah Eidlitz, M.A. Spec. Ed., with the support of HaRav Shmuel Kamenetsky, Shlita, the program includes three distinct tracks:

Yeshiva Eitz Chaim, a mainstream program where boys of all ages thrive in a small, personalized classroom setting. The staff knows each boy intimately and designs a program to bring out his greatest potential. The mission of Yeshiva Eitz Chaim is to build happy, confident boys whose enthusiasm for life and learning continues into adulthood.

Bnos Bracha, a mainstream girls program, offers small classes and an individualized, cutting-edge curriculum in *Limudei Kodesh* and secular studies, as well as creative programming such as movement and art. The goal is to infuse a love of *yiddishkeit* and of *tefillah*, with a strong emphasis on *middos* and on behavior that is *m'kadesh Shem Shamayim*; as such, teachers instill in the girls a deep *Ahavas Yisrael* at a young age. Ultimately, Bnos Bracha strives to create an environment in which girls enjoy school, and where their elementary years are ones in which they develop positively.



The Skill Building Center, for children with learning, language and social challenges, and those who simply need more time and attention to mature before entering a traditional school environment. The Skill Building Center is a truly inclusive program, meaning that throughout

students learn respect and compassion for all different types of children, as well as how to be a true friend.

the day, most students—from those with Down syndrome to those with mild learning disabilities—are integrated into the mainstream classes of sister schools Yeshiva Eitz Chaim and Bnos Bracha. Students with special needs gain from this mainstreaming arrangement in their skills and in their self-esteem, while students without special needs learn respect and compassion for all different types of children, as well as how to be a true friend.

The school's comprehensive program replaces the need for a resource room; instead of being pulled out of class for an hour a day of remedial tutoring, a child's needs are met throughout the day, without the stigma of feeling different or unable to "keep up." When a child's needs are addressed at an early age, he can often enter a traditional school later and thrive. 



Parents Speak

"My son comes home from school happy, with an understanding and an appreciation of the material, warm feelings about his rebbe, and an eagerness to go to school. He loves learning and davening, and because the class is small, the rebbe has an extremely strong connection with my son, he really knows him. I feel like this is how yeshiva is meant to be."

—*Ayelet Gold, mother of a Yeshiva Eitz Chaim 6th grader.*

"My daughter loves going to school. She finds what she's learning interesting and she's learning quickly, above grade level. And most important, she's internally happy, and she feels great about herself."

—*Aliza Goldberg, mother of a Bnos Bracha 4th grader.*

"The Skill Building Center has had a dramatic effect on my son and on the rest of the family. My son is no longer so frustrated; he's learning beautifully and is becoming more and more expressive. It's taken a big strain off the family."

—*Basya Keller, mother of a Skill Building Center 1st grader.*

Student Showcase

Language Enrichment

We encourage students to use strong descriptions in their writing, with figures of speech such as personification and simile.



A shiny, muscular lynx sprinted after its prey in the jungle like a man in an Olympic race.

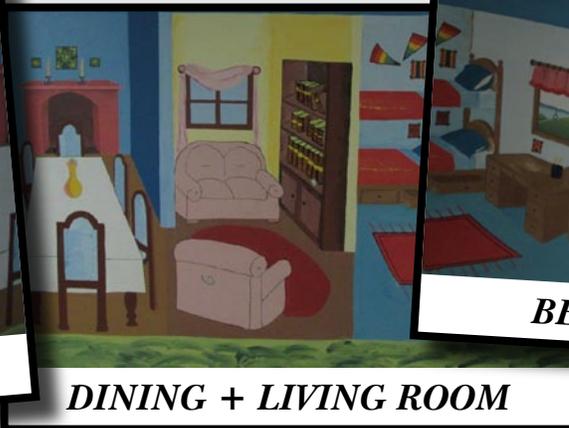
The frightened deer runs from the breath of the hunter like a chassid running for Kugel.

The cowardly lion, the strong Thompson gazelle, and other strange deer play tag on the Savanna plains.

Magnet Mural



KITCHEN



DINING + LIVING ROOM



BEDROOM



FARM/YARD

Students use the large multi-scene mural painted in the hallway to create unique scenes, practice language and math skills, and communicate their thoughts and feelings. Special magnetic paint behind the mural allows objects, animals and people to be moved with ease, and to stick an infinite amount of times.

Thriving at The Skill Building Center: One Child's Success Story

Living in Monsey, it's easy to take our children's education for granted. After all, there are so many schools that can provide a solid, Torah'dik education for both girls and boys.

And yet when Dovid Epstein* was five years old, his parents feared that no local yeshiva could give him what he needed, and that, even if he managed, he would never thrive.

In kindergarten and even before, Dovid had difficulty focusing and sitting still, to the point that he could barely learn or retain anything. His challenges were very stressful on the family, and his parents anticipated even more stress, both on Dovid and on them, as he was about to enter yeshiva. Would he be labeled as a child with "behavior problems" or "learning problems"? They wanted school to be a positive experience for Dovid, yet they couldn't imagine how or where this would be the case. And yet, with no other options, they enrolled him in yeshiva. And, as they feared, despite Dovid's capabilities, it was a disaster.

It was at this point that a friend suggested that Dovid's parents speak to Mrs. Sarah Eidlitz. Yeshivas Eitz Chaim was founded to fill a very real void in our community. There are many children who manifest learning, social or emotional challenges, great or small, in kindergarten, or even earlier. Like Dovid, many of these children are bright, and many wind up in the regular yeshiva system, where their needs cannot be met. Fast forward a few years, and they have become the very "children at risk" we all hear so much about. That was the great fear that Dovid's parents were dealing with.

Yeshivas Eitz Chaim addresses the needs of these students before their issues become completely debilitating, before their self-esteem is destroyed, before they fall completely out-of-sync with their peers. At Eitz Chaim, classes are very small, and each student is given his or her own individualized program, incorporating the latest therapeutic and educational research. The goal is to teach these kids to move beyond their deficits, and to give them a solid foundation which will ultimately enable them to thrive within a more traditional yeshiva setting – and in life.

After interviewing Dovid, Mrs. Eidlitz recognized his potential and felt her program would, indeed, meet his needs. Just three years later, Dovid's parents were continually amazed at Dovid's progress. When Dovid started at Eitz Chaim, he had only been able to learn one-on-one with a teacher, but three years later he could successfully learn in a group and complete his work independently. Dovid's social skills had developed to the point where he not only had many friends but he was actually popular. His self esteem, which had suffered so much when he was younger, was now healthy and thriving. Dovid's parents saw that their son would now be truly able to reach his potential. 

* Not his real name



Language & LIFE

In order for children to grow into responsible adults, they need to be able to express their needs and ideas and to communicate with those around them—their family members, peers, and co-workers. As a parent, you are laying the groundwork of your children’s speech from the moment they are born. Chavie Genack works with parents who are concerned about how they can help their children build these skills from a very young age.

By Chavie Genack, SLP

As a speech and language pathologist (SLP), I get asked a lot of questions from friends, family and clients. Here are two of the most common questions that I hear from concerned parents, as well as a brief response to each of them.

Question: “What can I do to help my baby speak? I see that she wants to talk but just doesn’t have the words.”

Answer: Before you can tackle your child’s speech issue, it’s important to understand the basic stages of your baby’s language development. Once you know what your child is capable of, you will better understand how to help her progress.



Stage 1: Birth to 6 Months

This stage is known as the “prelinguistic stage,” as your baby’s communication is not yet dependent on actual spoken language. She doesn’t yet use or comprehend specific words, but still participates in “dialogue” by cooing, and later by babbling. At this stage, your baby also communicates by smiling, crying, vocalizing using varying intonations, laughing, grunting, and making facial, hand or body movements. At this stage, you want to show your baby that you can understand her, and you can connect with her by talking to her and interpreting her responses.

For example, this is a good age to start what I call “vocal volleys”: Baby coos. You coo. She coos. You coo. You’ll both get such pleasure from it. This simple activity can engage a baby even from the age of six weeks! Another example: blow into Baby’s stomach. Did she laugh? Then offer more and do it again. Did she wince? Try to make her more comfortable. The more you react to her sounds and movements—whether she meant to make them or not—the more she will learn that it pays to try to communicate.

Don’t underestimate the importance of talking to your infant, whether in normal speech or in “motherese,” a “babified” version of language (Baby want botty?). Although your baby will not yet understand specific words in your message, she will get a feel for the sounds and rhythm of the language and the emotions expressed in the underlying intonations of your speech (e.g., your enthusiastic “Good morning!” when you take her out of her crib, your nervous “uh oh!” when you run out of wipes).

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Stage 2: 6 to 12 Months

During this stage, a baby becomes more aware of her listeners and their reactions to her. She starts to notice whether you are looking at her or not. Her sounds become more purposeful, and



Stage 3: 12 to 18 Months

Most babies will have spoken their first words by 12 months. A baby's first words are usually very practical and functional. Thus, helping your baby learn words depends very much on noticing which words are important for her in her environment. Early words usually include favorite foods or objects (cookie, bottle), or words that refer to actions (up—meaning “pick me up,” open—meaning “open the door”), or attributes (wet, hot). Try to use these types of

her babbling begins to resemble the language that is spoken in her environment. Interestingly, in this stage, you'll notice a difference in the babbling of a baby being raised in the US and a baby being raised in a foreign country such as China, where the intonation and sounds are very different from those in English.

Babies in this stage begin to imitate hand, lip, and tongue movements. This is a great time for finger plays such as “This Little Piggy,” “Where Is Thumbkin,” and “Open Shut Them.” You can also teach your baby to play “Peek a Boo!” and to wave “bye bye.”

words a lot around her, when you see her looking at or pointing to an object, or when you are performing an action or responding to a certain condition. In addition, common early words convey greetings (hi, bye-bye), requests (more) or rejection (no). Your frequent modeling of these words will likely help your child learn to use them sooner.

Bear in mind that six months is a very long time for a baby, so within each six month interval, you'll notice a wide variation in your child's abilities. The ideas above are meant to be general and flexible. Also, every baby reaches her milestones at her own rate, so the key is to observe her, and base your interaction on where she's at, not where the chart is at. Of course, if you are concerned with the quality or timing of your baby's communication development, you can always consult an SLP.

Question: “My two year old understands everything and speaks a lot but his speech is so unclear. Should he be getting therapy?”

The answer to this question lies in degree. Baby talk is infamous for its lack of intelligibility. Children naturally simplify words in order to make them easier to pronounce. They often take “shortcuts,” known as phonological processes, such as dropping word endings (“cu” for cup) or reducing consonant clusters (“cean” for clean). These changes make the words easier to say, but harder for us to understand. Most of these shortcuts are appropriate until two and a half to three years of age and a few can persist until much later.

Occasionally, a child’s word forms deviate so significantly from conventional forms that they are unrecognizable. For example, one of my daughter’s first words was her label for pacifier. She desperately needed to find a name for it but she was not yet capable of producing the complex, multisyllabic word “pacifier.” She came up with her own word: “kara,” and used it consistently to refer to her pacifier. It took us a while, but eventually, we caught on. Indeed, for a two year old, occasionally unintelligible speech is acceptable—frustrating, but acceptable. If, however, a child’s vocabulary consists largely of these altered word forms, making most of his speech attempts incomprehensible, then yes, it may be time to intervene.

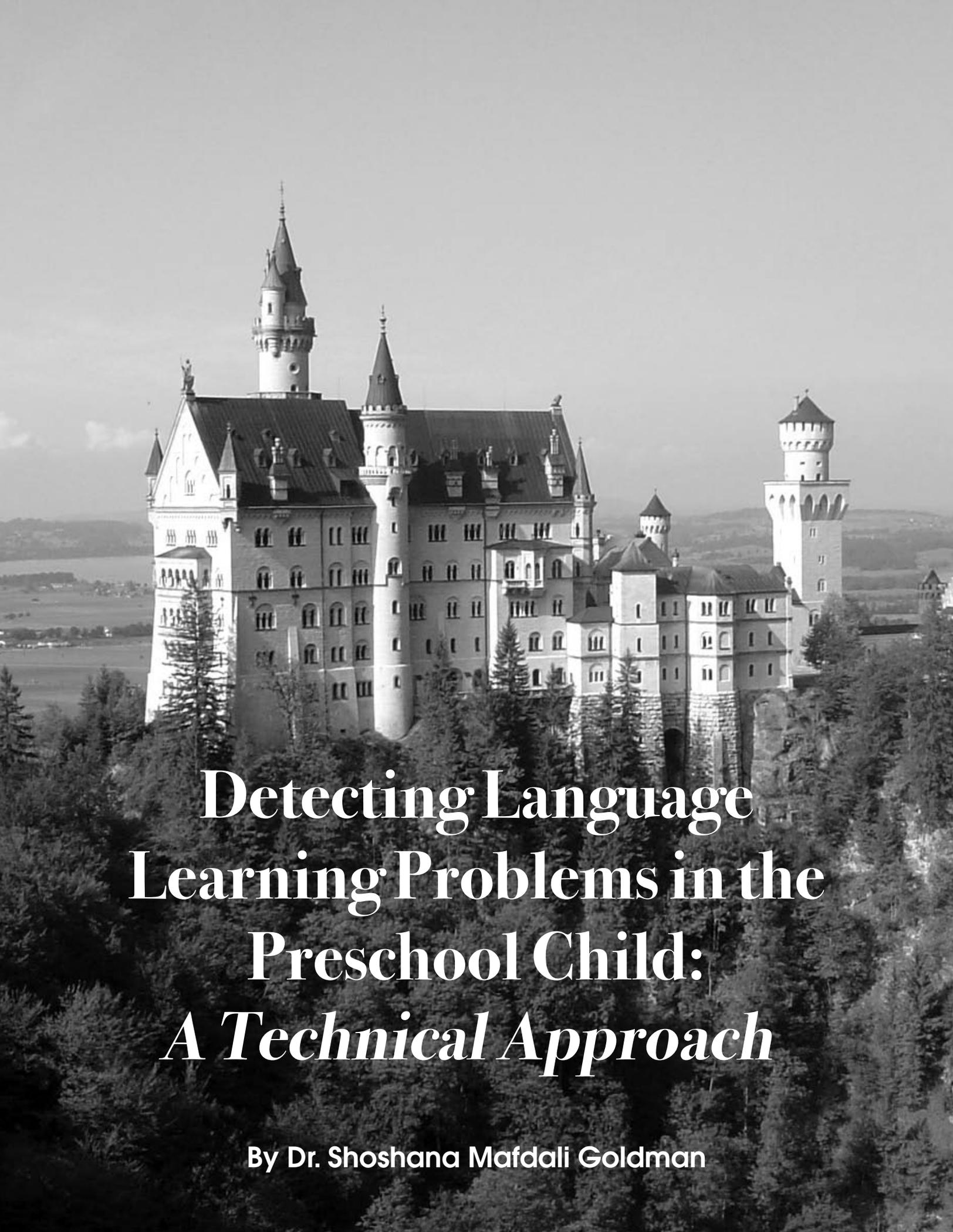
Some general guidelines can be taken from research. The average two year old’s speech is 50% intelligible, meaning that about 50% of his utterances can be understood by unfamiliar listeners. The average three-year old can be understood about 75% of the time, and only at the age of four years old is a child expected to be 100% intelligible. An SLP can evaluate your child’s linguistic abilities and his overall intelligibility and tell you whether he’s still at an age-appropriate level or not. Therapy can help a child get his

sounds system straightened out and lessen frustration all around. In addition, studies have shown that children whose speech is delayed often struggle with reading later on, so getting their speech systems straightened out early on can prevent later challenges.



No article on early speech development would be complete without a mention of hearing acuity. Under normal circumstances, a child must hear sounds in order to imitate them. Thus, when a hearing impaired infant reaches about six months of age, he will stop his progression of babbling and start to sound very different from his hearing peers. At this age and thereafter, he will need to hear his own sounds as well as the words in his environment in order to shape his sounds to resemble them. Even in a case where a child has only mild hearing impairment, he may miss some of the more subtle nuances of speech and his production may suffer as a result. It is for this reason, that when you voice concerns about your child’s speech and language development, an SLP will always ask you whether the child’s hearing has been checked. Many parents are unaware that a few months of chronic middle ear fluid—even in the absence of ear infections—can set a child back in terms of both language development and speech clarity.

In conclusion, knowledge of the general guidelines of what babies do at each age will answer most questions regarding your baby’s speech language development. No matter what level your baby is on, though, keep talking to him and responding to his attempts to communicate. As always, when in doubt, consulting an SLP can either catch a brewing problem or give you the peace of mind that your child is at a normal developmental stage. 



**Detecting Language
Learning Problems in the
Preschool Child:
*A Technical Approach***

By Dr. Shoshana Mafдали Goldman

Between the third and fourth years of a child's life, language comes into its own as a conventional system. Variation in age, rate and style of acquisition exists, but familiarity with normal development and particularly its sequence of stages can help parents, teachers, pediatricians, and other professionals to detect early language impairment. The expert diagnostician of language learning disorders uses many factors (particularly the cognitive, social and affective underpinnings of language) for a confident assessment. I will only explore a few issues in early language development that can help the non-specialist to recognize children at risk for language learning disorders.

Early detection of language learning difficulties can prevent undue frustration and anxiety of child and parent that can lead to emotional problems. There are also critical periods during which new behaviors readily emerge, suggesting optimal readiness for learning such behavior. It appears that some behaviors are less amenable to learning (or teaching or facilitation) much before or after each critical phase. Parents and teachers should be helped to take advantage of these optimal growth periods especially when a child seems unable to do so on his own.

The Emergence of Language

Between birth and three years of age, the child develops a remarkable set of cognitive abilities. In action, thought, language and identity, the child achieves an independence from concrete stimuli and a capacity to represent and symbolize reality that is essential for all subsequent knowledge (Mahler, et al., 1978; Piaget, 1962; Werner & Kaplan, 1963; Vygotsky, 1964). This capacity is manifested in symbolic play, in differentiation of a self that can be represented in words and actions, and in the acquisition of language.

Dr. Shoshana Goldman is truly a “Jack of all trades” in the field of special needs evaluations. After receiving her M.A. in Language and Learning Disabilities over fifty years ago, she realized that a child's language issues are often only a piece of the puzzle. A decade later, she had successfully obtained two more degrees, an M.A. in Speech and a PhD in Developmental Psychology and Psycholinguistics. With this knowledge and experience, Goldman is able to help many children whose language issues revolve around more than just the language component.

“The thrust of it all is that I believe in seeing the whole child—not just saying it, but living it professionally,” says Goldman. When she evaluates a child, she looks at many aspects of the child, including cognitive ability, memory and learning, academic skill, and, in particular, emotional well-being. Goldman has seen that treating a child's language disabilities in a vacuum may be unproductive if the child also has emotional issues, stemming from anxiety, depression, or relationship problems, and her recommendations address all of these concerns as a whole. Goldman currently works as an Assistant in Medical Psychology at St. Luke's-Roosevelt, and as an Assistant Professor of Psychology in Psychiatry at Columbia University. She is also in private practice in the Upper West Side at 451 West End Ave.

These symbolic abilities enable the child to construct an extended reality around an explicit awareness of self and others, to become a participant in a wider world of people, and to perform tasks with intentionality and planfulness that are unique to human behavior. In fact, the entire course of sensorimotor development has been described as “aimed at getting the child ready for symbols and language” (Anisfeld, 1984, p. 245).

As a result of the cognitive, social and affective accomplishments of the first three years of life, the three- to four-year-old child is no longer tied to the here and now. He thinks internally and uses symbols to represent thoughts, feelings and events (past, present and future), and he knows that he is an autonomous, separate person with a particular gender identity: an “I.” In the normally developing child these accomplishments are reflected in the child’s spoken language.

The Social Side of Language

A child’s use of language reflects his developing social relations. At age two or two-and-a-half, children talk more to themselves or to very familiar adults than to other children. Moreover, language for the two year old is primarily self-initiated rather than in response to adult verbalizations. The three to four year old, on the other hand, is a budding conversationalist. He or she speaks as freely to children as to adults and is beginning to converse. However, the three year old still cannot make explicit to a listener what is not shared knowledge, though he can answer questions from an adult that will make knowledge explicit.

The three to four year old’s language is often a running commentary on what he is doing, about to do or would like to do. For example, while building a block structure, he or she might comment, “I’m making a castle.

It’s gonna be big

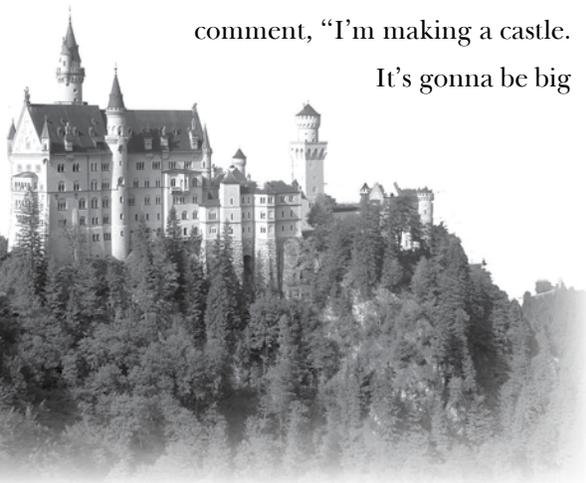
and a king can live in it. Wanna help me?” Language also accompanies imaginary play more than it did a year earlier. For example, during doll play, figures are made to act and carry on conversations that usually reflect domestic scenes. During socio-dramatic play, roles are taken on with playful dialogue and discourse, such as “I’m the daddy. You be the baby. I need some blocks for my boat. Let’s pretend this is a boat.”

Sometime between age three and four the child becomes sensitive to the person to whom he is speaking, and to context, and can make subtle shifts in his specific style accordingly. For example, his voice, quality of intonation, choice of words, and syntactic construction are different when he speaks to an 18-month-old toddler than when he speaks to his parent. The three to four year old shows awareness of extended relationships with such comments as “My teacher lets me play with...” or “Grandpa sent me a bike.”

Approaching Adult-like Grammar

Almost from his first attempts at stringing even two words together, a child’s behavior exhibits some kind of pattern or rule that directs his effort. At first these rules are not based on convention, but between ages three and four, rule-based syntax becomes more and more established. The early strategies for combining words in order to express meanings-in-relation-ship pay off as the child comes closer to an adult-like grammar. No longer do we hear “Daddy-go. Go work. Daddy work.” We simply hear “Daddy go” (or “goes work”), and then “Daddy goes to work.”

Adults now no longer need to guess what a child may be referring to because of his increased ability to con-



vey meaning through syntax and other grammatical units called morphological markers. These include /ing/, /ed/, and the future aspect, especially the form “gonna” (reflecting a maturing sense of time). The /s/ has already been around for some time marking plural and possession. More refined thoughts (also reflecting a growing sense of time) can be expressed with modals and auxiliary verbs such as “can,” “may,” “would” and “could.” As thought becomes more complex, so does the sentence structure. The use of conjunctions “and,” “but” and qualifiers “if,” “so” and the causal connection “because” are also used by most three- to four-year-old children.

The use of negation (which first appeared as a single word utterance) is combined in two word utterances in the form of “no” and an object, as in “no cookie.” By age three and a half, auxiliary verbs are employed in statements such as “I don’t want it,” “I won’t,” or “I can’t do that.” Moreover, simple sentences are transformed in question forms, such as “Why can’t I go?”

Of course, grammatical usage is not yet fully developed but the child is actively working on matching his constructions with those of the adult. Active thinking is notable in a child’s common overgeneralizations during this period: “feets,” “branged,” “buyed.”

The child’s growing understanding of complex grammatical relationships exceeds his ability to produce these structures. Nowhere is this more evident than in the three to four year old’s ability to listen to stories read aloud—often to up to twenty or thirty minutes—and to elaborate on the text read aloud—often up to 20 or 30 minutes—and to elaborate on the text read, to ask relevant questions or to answer questions about the story. Such stories as Hogan’s Bread and Jam for Francis include complex structures such as

embedded clauses, transposed negative statements (“ ‘Aren’t you worried that maybe I will get sick and all my teeth will fall out from eating so much bread and jam?’ asked Frances”). The demands for attention, verbal memory, word meaning, verbal comprehension and integration of ideas is great. Yet most three to four year olds do it effortlessly.

Words and Meanings

Speaking in sentences requires that a child attain the principle of word order, the knowledge that relational meanings are expressed by composing words in a conventional order. An additional prerequisite is the attainment of the lexical principle: that things can be referred to by words. These two principles are normally fully attained by the end of the third year of life. The dawning of the lexical principal is initially reflected in the burst in vocabulary usually seen sometime between 18-24 months. By age three it is already firmly established as reflected in the average vocabulary of 900-1000 words. By age four, a child’s vocabulary increases to approximately 1,500 words.

Words as tools for communication and learning are so solidly established that many three to four year olds love playing with word meanings, using words imaginatively and even creating their own words. (This becomes particularly noticeable with four year olds.) The audi-



tory perceptual apparatus is fine-tuned enough by now for children to begin creating their own rhymes, like “icky, picky, licky, sticky.” (However, when asked “What rhymes with sticky?” the child may not come up with a rhyming word). Words have begun to assume such a magical quality for some children, that an adult may be able to get a child to cooperate by using a word that captures his or her fancy. For example describing a pair of shoes that a child is reluctant to put on as “clipity-clops” may interest her in wearing them.

It is around age three that nonverbal thought and language are said to join. This inextricable relationship makes the role of language a critical one in the development of reasoning, socialization and affect.

Three years of age is an age of curiosity. But the child’s curiosity is both qualitatively and quantitatively different from the infant’s or toddler’s, whose explorations and experimentations were directed by their senses. For the three year old, words increasingly mediate experience, and language becomes a major vehicle for discovering the world. This is seen in the increasing use of “how,” “why” and “when” questions, which, by age four, may become incessant.

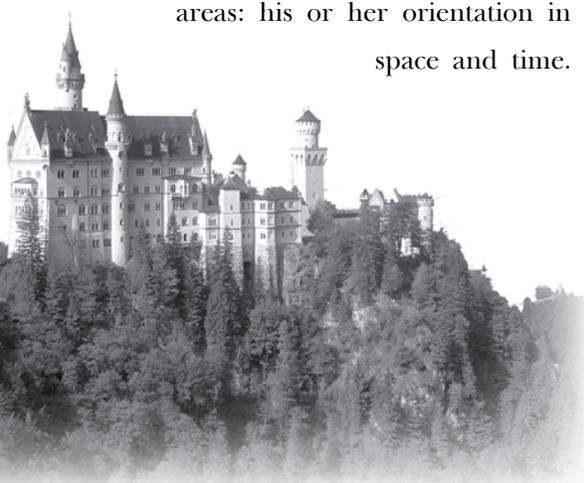
The expanding world of the three- to four-year-old child and his expanding mental capacity to understand this world are reflected in two basic cognitive areas: his or her orientation in space and time.

The two year old’s repeated exploration of containers and the contained, reflected in comments about things being “in” and “on,” becomes greatly differentiated a year later. The three to four year old explores and speaks about things being “on top of,” “over,” “near,” “back” and “outside.” Children of this age may tell you that their bedroom is “near the bathroom” or that the kitchen is “downstairs.” They have an internal cognitive map of their immediate spatial environment with the vocabulary to go along with it.

An even greater expansion of vocabulary is noted in the area of time orientation. Whereas at age two the child still lives primarily in the here and now, the three to four year old’s sense of time is much more expanded and detailed. Past, present and future are understood and words such as the following are acquired and used appropriately: “this day,” “yesterday,” “in two days,” “tonight” and “when I’m older.” The three to four year old is also beginning to generalize notions of time indicating classification and categorization of such concepts. For example, one hears “everyday,” “on Sundays,” “sometimes” and “winter-time.” Expressions of the sequential nature of time are evident, such as “Before I go to sleep, I say *shema* (my prayers). Then mommy gives me a goodnight kiss.” Though they cannot tell time, children of this age are beginning to show an interest in the clock, using “clock words” such as “in ten minutes” or “at 8 o’clock.”

The Child at Risk

The child whose language development has diverged significantly from the preceding description by the fourth year of life is likely to be at risk for language and language-related learning disorders in later life



and may benefit from early treatment or at least periodic monitoring with parental consultation. An important factor in determining whether language development is impaired or merely different is to look at the rate of change. A child not talking at age three, who shows spurts in vocabulary and word combinations within three to six months, is less at risk than one whose language development continues at a slower pace. If the developmental tasks which are typically achieved by the middle of the fourth year of life have not been achieved by the end of the fifth

year (despite normal hearing and intelligence and adequate stimulation), that usually constitutes a basis for diagnosis and possible treatment of a specific language disorder.

Some other risk factors are described below. As should be obvious, this is only a partial list of issues which can alert us to problems in language development, and none of them can be weighed separately from a particular child's general development and cultural norms.

Warning Signs

Not any one of the symptoms listed below is sufficient to indicate a language disorder. Factors that are predictive of a language disorder would include:

- 1) A cluster of problems, including additional nonverbal problems (e.g., motor incoordination, social immaturity)
- 2) Severe manifestations of one of those below
- 3) Moderate to severe comprehension problems in addition to any of those below
- 4) A family history of speech, language and/or learning disorders

By age four to four-and-a-half, however, the following symptoms should be seen as warning signs and should be looked into accordingly:

1. Language Enjoyment

The child gains no pleasure from either speaking or listening to spoken language.

2. Language Discrepancy

The child shows obvious significant discrepancies between her nonverbal intellectual and cognitive abilities and her capacity to communicate such knowledge through words. The child may show frustration or become angry due to an inability to relate ideas.

3. Hearing Discrepancy

The child seems to comprehend spoken language under normal circumstances but has difficulty understanding language in a noisy, crowded environment.

4. Necessary Accommodations

The child understands oral language better if it's spoken unusually slowly or in a louder than normal voice (despite normal hearing acuity).

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5. Difficulty With Question Format

The child does not ask questions and becomes frustrated when he is asked questions. The child misunderstands the intent of question forms. For example, when you ask, “When did you eat breakfast?” he answers, “Ate cereal.”

6. Story Comprehension

The child dislikes listening to stories and does not seem to follow and retain them. Vivid and explicit pictures are necessary to sustain the child’s attention. Simplification of the language structure seems to help the child process the language, as does reading small portions at a time.

7. Auditory Processing Issues

The child frequently says “What?” despite normal hearing acuity. The child may misperceive words such as “gum” for “dumb” or “tame” for “came.”

8. Memory Difficulties

The child cannot retain very familiar rote verbal information such as songs or nursery rhymes. Other verbal memory difficulties may be evident, such as a difficulty in retrieving the names of persons, places or objects.

9. Lack of Language Spontaneity

The child uses very little spontaneous language while playing or interacting with others. He or she tends to respond to the verbalizations of others with “yes” or “no” answers and offers little or no elaboration on a speaker’s comments.

10. Verbal Focusing

The child cannot stick to a topic or relate an event in a logical order.

11. Word Choice

The child frequently misuses words, e.g., substituting semantically related words such as “chair” for “couch” or “wall” for “ceiling.”

12. Simplistic Grammar

The child’s grammar and syntax are unusually immature in comparison to the concepts he comprehends.

13. Social Awareness

The child has difficulty learning and generalizing rules of speech for different social contexts.

14. Intelligibility

The child is unintelligible most of the time.



15. Excessive Self-Talk

The child does not relate to others' needs but seems to be speaking primarily to herself most of the time.

16. Imitative Speech

The child uses an unusual amount of echoing and imitation language.”

A child's abilities to communicate his desires and feelings, to respond to the verbal requests of others, and to use words in thought (inner and interpersonal) and reasoning are prerequisite skills for the formal language training that will take place during the school years. Detecting difficulties in language learning in the preschool years, as well as knowing how to modify the environment to meet the child's language learning needs, may avoid later learning disabilities—or at least make the inevitable less painful for all concerned. ♀



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MIDDOS

& the

MINID

**Executive Functioning
and Personal Growth**

by Rabbi Binyamin Goldman, PsyD

Leah is in third grade. She is a bright, capable young girl who loves playing jump rope, reading stories about girls just like her, and drawing elaborate pictures. But that's not what people know about her. Most people think that Leah is lazy and disorganized, and that she doesn't take her responsibilities seriously. Her room is always covered in a layer of old drawings, books, and clothing. She can't seem to get her homework done, and the other kids make fun of her for crying in school every time she gets frustrated. But the teasing makes her lash out, and her teachers worry that the other girls in her class will begin to shun her because of her impulsive behavior.

Leah's parents are at their wit's end. They know that Leah has so much to offer the world. But what can they do to help Leah reach her potential?

We all want our kids to do well in school. But what parents want most for their kids is that they should grow up to be mentches. Middos and menschlichkeit, of course, depend largely on good chinuch from parents, teachers, and rebbeim. But you may be surprised to learn that a child's ability to put that chinuch into action and actually develop those qualities has a lot to do with his or her brain and its ability to perform a specific set of processes. Not every child's brain is equal when it comes to these abilities, called executive functions, but with some support any child can be helped to succeed.

What are Executive Functions?

Don't get confused by their name; executive functions are not just for running a business. They are called that because they are the brain-based skills that

every one of us uses to execute, or carry out, tasks. We all come into this world with rudimentary tools to help us survive, possessing little more than the basic senses and a few reflexes. Over the first few months of life, our brains develop further and we acquire skills like attention, spatial and motor functions, memory, and basic emotion. However, as babies, we see and interact with the world in a narrow way that is characterized by two major limitations: we can only see out and we can only see what's right in front of us. Young children act on the world around them to get now what they need now. We don't have the tools at that stage of development to reach for something in the future, and we can't act by ourselves to help get what we want. For that we need executive skills. And that's why they're called executive: because they are the brain-based skills that we use to execute, or carry out, tasks.

The first sign of executive functioning appears when a child takes those neuro-psychological skills he has already developed and used for externally-driven actions toward immediate goals, and begins to turn them inward and look ahead to the future. Our emerging executive abilities allow us to apply our skills to ourselves in order to manage our own behavior and help bridge the gap in time and space between a behavior and consequences. We become self-aware and conscious of our own actions, feelings, wants and drives, and we develop the ability to imagine and think about the future, as well as to visualize tasks and events. We also start being able to use self-speech to bring that self-awareness and sense of both the future and the past into our consciousness, to guide our actions and to help us learn. In addition, we start being able to inhibit our automatic impulse to become distracted by things that don't have to do with getting us toward our goal. Similarly, we are

able to control our emotions, especially the ones that are in conflict with the goal that we are working for, to help with motivation and making choices. We also begin to problem-solve, first through action during play and eventually in our heads.

Executive functions are carried out by a specific part of the brain, called the prefrontal cortex. As that region continues to develop, through adolescence

and into young adulthood, so do our executive skills, and we become able to reach for more abstract goals farther in the future. We start organizing our environments to fit our goals, and keeping track of a variety of materials, rules, and commitments. We are able to handle more intense emotions and to suppress our immediate needs even for goals that benefit others. We also become more aware of ourselves in time and

What Parents Can Do

Here are a few things you can do to help your children improve their executive functioning and self-regulation:

Teach your children to delay gratification. Encourage your kids to wait for or earn specific things that they want. You can provide them with a visible way to mark their progress. Help them to slowly build this skill by gradually increasing the delay.

Be proactive. Before a challenging situation comes up, talk to your children about how they will cope with it. This will help them to control their impulses and make more thought-out decisions about how to act.

Make plans together. Sit down with your children and make plans about ordinary events. Start with small things that your children are interested in or enjoy, like putting together a Lego set; break down the task into smaller parts; and write them down as a checklist. Checklists can also be very helpful for morning routines.

Help your child deal with negative emotions. To teach your child emotional regulation and problem solving skills, follow these five steps:

1. Notice your child's emotions.
2. Understand the emotional expression as an opportunity for connecting with and teaching your child.
3. Listen empathetically and validate your child's feelings.
4. Label emotions in words a child can understand.
5. Help your child come up with appropriate ways to solve the problem or deal with the upsetting situation.

Help your child develop time awareness. You can do this by working with your child to divide their homework into parts, estimate how long each part will take, and use a timer to keep track and see if the child was right.

Reinforce your child for seeing things through to the end. This will help your child to develop goal orientation and persistence. Start with short, enjoyable tasks, like finishing a game, help your child along with tips and encouragement, and then give praise for sticking with it. When your child is ready, increase the size of the goal and the time it takes to get there.

can more closely monitor ourselves as we perform tasks.

Executive Skills Applications

Executive functions form the basis for practical skills that are crucial for children to succeed in school. Students need to be able to start and finish schoolwork, to anticipate how long an assignment is going to take, to break up long assignments into smaller pieces, and to budget time to complete them. They have to keep track of their “stuff”—whether it is coming from, going to, or staying in school—and they need to pay attention in class and control their impulses to talk or disrupt. Any parent who is afraid to look into a child’s backpack, has bought a child more than two new notebooks in a month, or has stayed up late with a child to finish an assignment the night before it is due knows that without strong executive skills school can be a difficult process for kids and for their parents.

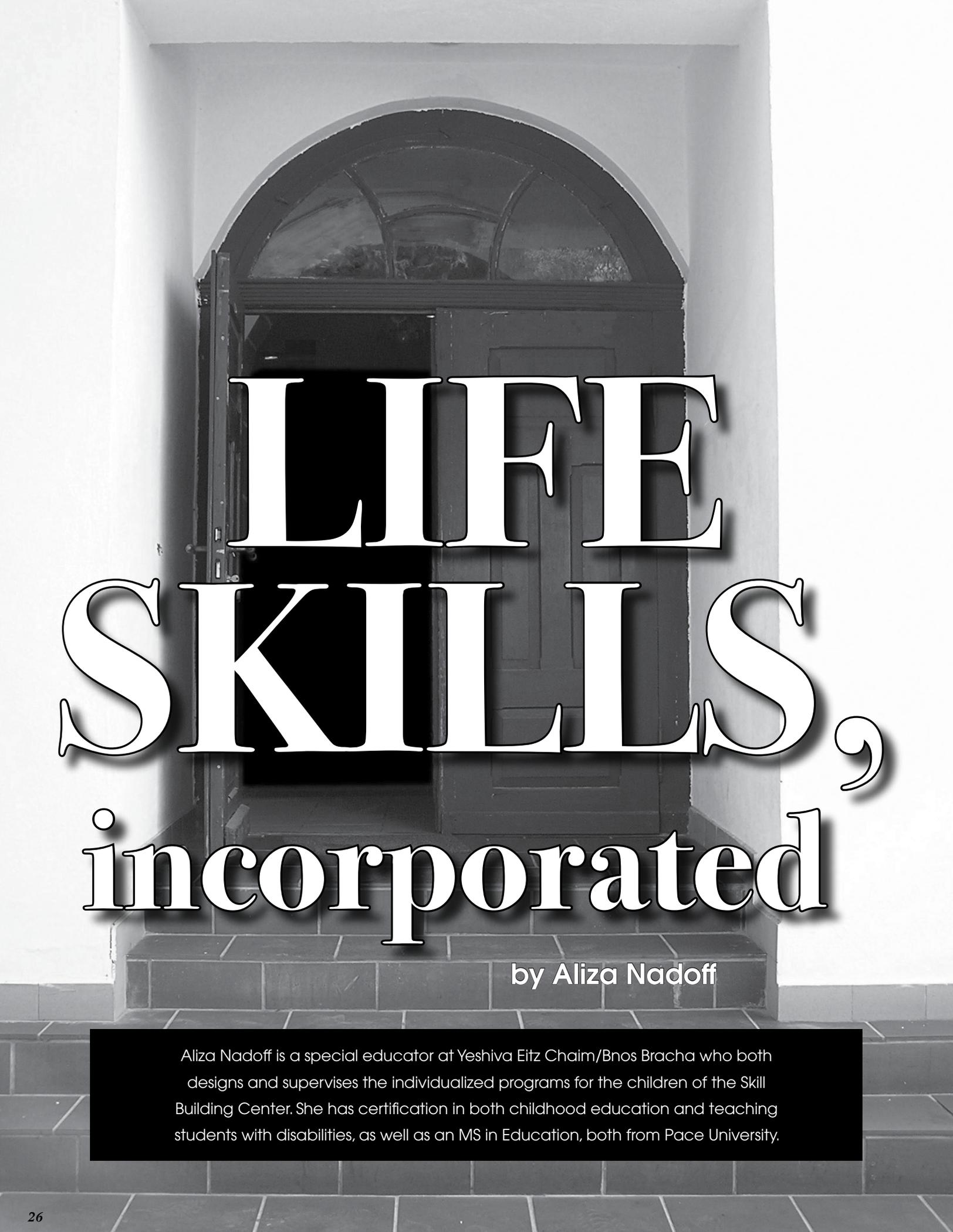
But executive functions are important for a lot more than just school. We learn in Avos D’rabbi Nosson (16:2) that a child comes into this world with only a yetzer harah and does not develop a yetzer tov until the age of 13. That progression from self-interest to self-control is made possible by the executive skills we develop during that time. If you consider what unites all of the executive functions we have discussed, you will find that they all allow us to look beyond and control our automatic, instinctual drives and to focus on what’s really important to us. They also enable us to suppress our own self-interest in order to do for others, work with a partner, and participate in a community. In other words, executive functions are our basic tools for self-regulation, and self-regulation is our basic tool for building middos and keeping mitzvos.

So much of what we do as frum Jews involves putting aside the things that we want in the short term so that we can work toward an abstract goal. To take just a small, routine example: whenever I am hungry and I refrain from eating food—whether for a long time or just to make a bracha—I am using executive skills. I need to be self-aware and conscious of my actions and my hunger, I need to make room in my attention to think about the long-term goal of keeping mitzvos, and I need to suppress my hunger drive in order to perform whatever action my long-term goal requires (e.g., checking a hechsher, making a bracha, waiting until after davening, etc.).

Some children develop these skills without much direct instruction. Others, including but not limited to most children with ADHD and many with learning disabilities, need more active support. (See sidebar.) Helping your children develop executive skills and self-regulation is one effective way that you can encourage them to reach their potential.

Leah’s parents found a therapist who explained to them that their daughter needed help in developing executive skills and self-regulation. They learned how to break down the process of cleaning up a room into smaller steps, steps that Leah found manageable. They encouraged Leah to finish what she started, and played problem-solving games with her in which they discussed how to deal with certain problematic situations that they knew she would encounter.

It’s now several years later, and Leah finally feels that she can be successful. “I always thought I was dumb or lazy,” she says. “But I wasn’t. I just didn’t know how to do things the right way, and when I couldn’t figure it out, I felt like such a failure. Now I know that if I plan ahead and take small steps towards my goal, I can do anything.” 



LIFE SKILLS, incorporated

by Aliza Nadoff

Aliza Nadoff is a special educator at Yeshiva Eitz Chaim/Bnos Bracha who both designs and supervises the individualized programs for the children of the Skill Building Center. She has certification in both childhood education and teaching students with disabilities, as well as an MS in Education, both from Pace University.

We hold high expectations for our children. Throughout the course of their formal education, we expect them to learn how to read, write, and understand text. They need to master math concepts and procedures, as well as absorb enormous amounts of information and ideas in science and social studies. With the additional expectation of mastering the Judaic subjects, we are indeed expecting a lot.

We are aware that without mastering the basic concepts and skills taught in school, our children are left at a great disadvantage. But is academic success really the grand finish line, ultimately paving the way for personal conquest beyond the classroom?

The Value of Life Skills

Aside from succeeding in learning, parents and educators hope that their children and students acquire the fundamental life skills necessary to effectively navigate all of their environments.

What are some of the key characteristics and skills of individuals whom we perceive to be competent and successful in their lives? Among other traits, these people are capable of doing the following:

- ~ Identifying a problem and planning several viable solutions
- ~ Exercising flexibility in thinking and action
- ~ Thinking about other people
- ~ Interacting with others using strong communication skills
- ~ Reading between the lines of conversation and scenarios
- ~ Working as part of a group

Children and adults who have not acquired these skills and perceptions do not know how to respond to the inevitable challenges they are faced with each day. When met with a dilemma, they tend to feel helpless and respond inappropriately and unproductively. They often miss important social cues and have difficulty navigating a conversation. It is very challenging for such people to play, work and learn with others, and they are often left alone, wondering why they have been rejected by their peers and colleagues.

Clearly, it is well worth our investment of time and effort to develop these highly important characteristics within our children. The acquisition of basic academic skills and personal/social skills play a large part in preparing a child to grow into a competent adult.

The School's Responsibility

Still, with the consuming demands of the academic curriculum, it just doesn't seem feasible to include additional instruction for our students in the area of life skills. As a realistic alternative to discrete instruction, schools can systematically and consistently weave these ideas throughout the regular curriculum.

The benefits of integrating instruction in this way are manifold. First, there is no loss of valuable time spent on the academic subjects. Perhaps even more important is the message our students will receive about



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the relevance and diversity of said traits and skills. Instead of viewing the instruction as just another subject that they need to learn in school, students will see these as overarching characteristics that define a person and how he or she responds and interacts with his or her surroundings. Also, the core subjects through which these will be integrated will no doubt be strengthened and expanded with the support of such practical and relatable themes and topics.

An entire school can be following the same theme-based learning continuum that changes each month, with the specific materials varying to suit each level range. Creating a school wide theme enables a broad approach to the topics at hand, while allowing different students to gain what is appropriate at their individual levels. Hallway bulletin boards and displays can be utilized to represent key concepts from the monthly theme, providing further opportunity for informal discussion, elaboration and practice among students and teachers. The older students in the school will read grade level texts to support and expand the theme, submit writing assignments and participate in various content area projects and activities related to the theme. Middle grade students will participate in much the same work and activities, but on their respective grade levels. The youngest students will focus more on dramatic play, fine and

gross motor activities and literacy building to reinforce theme ideas in their classrooms. The level of sophistication and depth of exploring the theme will increase with the students' cognitive and emotional maturity.

Life Skills at Home

In addition to working intensively on these skills in the school setting, students will gain tremendously from generalizing the themes to a home setting as well. A strong collaborative approach between the school and parent body will greatly enhance the mastery of these goals.

One way to build a bridge between school and home will be through regular updates and newsletters on the current theme, as well as teacher- provided suggestions on how to reinforce it at home. When parents and teachers present the same ideas, we are giving our students the opportunity to absorb what they have learned in various environments.

Also, every adult has a unique way of sharing ideas and modeling characteristics, which is a great way for students to observe many different facets of a characteristic and its manifestations. 

Morah Aliza's Hallway Bulletin Board



Taming Anger

Mrs. Sarah Eidlitz,
MS Spec. ed



How can I help my child control his anger?

Try to catch your child when you notice that he's starting to become a little bit wild, and before he loses it completely.

At this point he will likely be responsive to firm instructions; take advantage of that moment. Figure out what he needs to calm down, and direct him to do it. He may need to read a book, ride a bike, play

Legos, come sit next to Mommy, or go to sleep. Don't expect him to agree with you about your assessment of his mood, just tell him what you need him to do.

Afterward, when he is calm and no longer upset, you can have a discussion about what he did and what was really bothering him, but at this time just calm him down.

Educate him about himself, and teach him techniques for calming down.

One way to teach your child to get in touch with his body is through a computer program called emWave; it monitors heart rate and can teach children (and adults) to deal with stress and to calm themselves down.

The child may be absorbing the way the parents speak to each other—with a lack of respect—and this needs to be addressed. 

1

Build up your child's self esteem. A child who is angry often may be lashing out because of his low self-confidence.

2

Help your child get in touch with his body. Help him become aware of both how he feels internally when he's getting upset—his head hurts, his stomach turns into a knot—as well as his posture, how he moves or holds his arms when angry, the look on his face—and point it out to him before he gets out of control. Then redirect him. Also point out what his body is like when he is very calm.

3

If you weren't able to catch him in that short period of time before he's lost it completely, don't respond to his anger, don't try to negotiate, don't try to control him when he's not controllable, and don't give in; when he sees that his anger is ineffective, he'll give up. Don't allow yourself to be embarrassed in public, let him tantrum and get nowhere. If you're at home, remove dangerous objects from the room, remove siblings who he might hurt—but don't try to extinguish the fire, let it extinguish itself.

4

5

Teacher Feature: Mrs. Bonnie Stone

What Yeshiva Boys Can Gain from Studying the Classics (...and Public Speaking!)

Bonnie Stone loves working with her students in Yeshiva Eitz Chaim. “They’ve been such a delightful, well-mannered group of boys!” she crows. In fact, she’s always loved working with middle-school-aged children: they’re old enough and mature enough to discuss interesting subjects, and yet they’re not overly self-conscious teenagers yet. And as a public school English teacher for more than 30 years, some of those spent in the inner city, the petite and fiery Mrs. Stone is particularly appreciative of her Eitz Chaim boys.

The feelings go both ways. Mrs. Stone’s students love both their teacher and English class, and they have worked hard to live up to Mrs. Stone’s very high expectations. On Chanukah, they made up an album for her, thanking her for all that she did for them, and they all wrote notes of appreciation to her as well, which she found touching and meaningful.

“I really liked learning how to give a presentation; now I can stand in front of people and speak and not be nervous,” said eleven-year-old Zev Tzvi Arons. “It’s also fun to be able to quote Shakespeare.” Added twelve-year-old Yaakov Meir Kahn: “Mrs. Stone gave me confidence in public speaking. And she makes literature come alive.”

So what is Mrs. Stone’s secret? She says that it can be distilled into one word: respect.

“I think that some teachers and parents still think of these children as young kids, and so they don’t respect them as thinking individuals,” she says. “But kids at this age—and at all ages—have a need to be taken seriously. Everyone deserves that respect; everyone has a voice that needs to be heard.

“I truly believe that the responses I get from these eleven- to fourteen-year-olds are no different than they would be if I were teaching this material to college kids. Their minds, their brains are in a wonderful place. You can really speak to them as though they’re adults. And I think they appreciate that. When students see that a teacher is serious, they respond with seriousness as well.”

Who Cares About English Class?

Mrs. Stone is passionate about teaching, and she fully believes that she is helping to prepare her students in all areas of learning and interpreting text. So does English class do that? In her opinion, the answer is an undeniable “yes.”

English class teaches students...

...to communicate.

Public speaking makes up a large part of Mrs. Stone’s English class, and in her opinion, it’s a necessity. “Look at how many adults we know who won’t stand up to give a short speech,” she says. “These kids, I think, are not going to be afraid to get up before a group, because they’ve already practiced this skill in a safe setting. Often, we’ll begin with ‘choral readings,’ where speaking aloud is not with emphasis on the individual, but is more of a commitment to the chorus with whom he is speaking a part, and everyone wants to fulfill his own responsibility for the good of the group.”

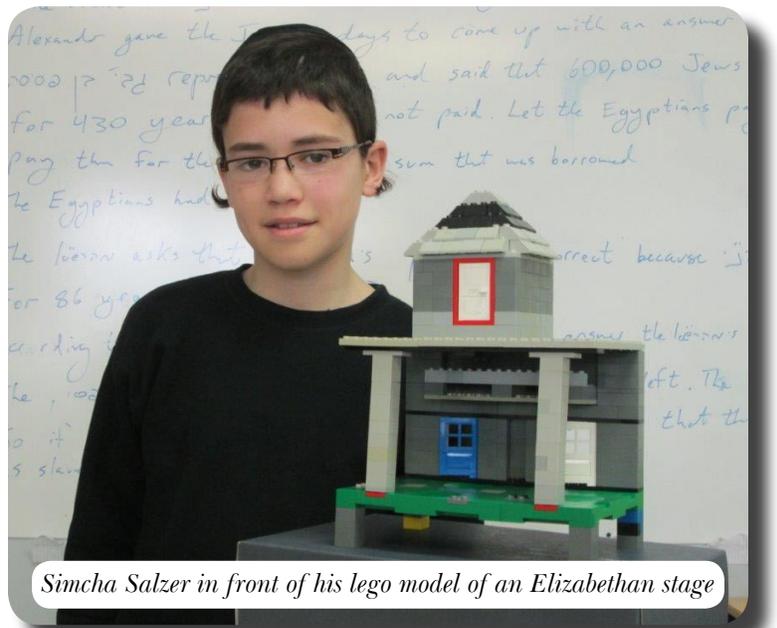
Mrs. Stone teaches her students how to project their voices, create eye contact, understand the importance of body language, and the powerful effect of using pauses. These public speaking skills can help students become dynamic orators who can communicate their thoughts and opinions in a convincing way.

...to listen.

Both literature and public speaking can improve students’ listening skills. “Since, in life, we probably spend more time listening than we do reading or even speaking, it is vital to the growth of an individual to be able to ‘hear’ even that which we may not agree with,” says Mrs. Stone. They also exercise patience and respect when they listen to other students recite.

...to feel more self-confident.

Although they may feel nervous at first, students feel empowered when they successfully read or recite in front of a group. “Watching others as they listen to you builds self-assurance and self-esteem,” explains



Simcha Salzer in front of his lego model of an Elizabethan stage

Mrs. Stone. “And that will carry over, enhancing your ability to perform confidently in life’s challenging events when all eyes are on you.” The students know that their teacher is cheering them on, and that she truly cares for them, so they put in the effort to live up to her expectations.

Students may enter Mrs. Stone’s class with no desire at all to analyze a poem, perform a choral reading, or read a Shakespearean play. But they’ll leave with an appreciation for the English language, and will have become more appreciative of the lifetime importance of listening and speaking in the process.

...to make inferences.

Many children—and unfortunately, many adults—struggle to understand deep concepts. Often, this occurs because they have never successfully learned the skill of inferring.

Mrs. Stone views literature class as a partial solution to this problem. By asking the right questions, encouraging children to read slowly and carefully, and initiating complex discussions, she helps her students

learn how to “read between the lines.” Shakespeare, especially, lends itself to making inferences about the plot and characters. (According to Mrs. Stone, her yeshiva students seem less fearful to take on the challenge of learning Shakespeare than a typical public school student. She chalks this up to their experience of having already learned a second language fluently, so that the “third language” of Shakespearean English is not as intimidating.)

...to grow past stereotyping.

Mrs. Stone does not like stereotypes—and that’s putting it mildly. In order for children (and adults) to work successfully with others, it’s important for them to recognize that the concept of “good guys” and “bad guys” is more complicated than it looks. “I want my students to understand that most people have a lot of good in them,” explains Mrs. Stone. “At the same time, they should realize that people are not perfect, and that they do have some ‘not good’ parts to them as well.”

Learning literature in general, and Shakespeare in particular, entails being able to understand the characters in each story—“good parts” and “bad parts” alike. Students need to learn how to weigh both sides of any story and to recognize that statements like “All boys are...” or “All elderly people are...” are actually inaccurate, and cheat us out of understanding the complexity of human nature.

Perhaps even more important, Mrs. Stone focuses on stopping students from stereotyping themselves. For example, one child called himself a “poor student,” and also mentioned that he plays on a basketball team. When asked how he learned to play basketball, the boy responded that he learned from watching other people playing. “You were able to learn just from

watching?” asked Mrs. Stone, in amazement. “Then you’re a very good student. Don’t put yourself in the category of ‘poor student’—that’s allowing yourself to fit into a stereotype that could alter your ability to perform difficult tasks. Instead, talk about what you did: ‘I did poorly in math.’ It’s not as confining that way and does not damage your self-worth.”

A Day in the Life of an English Teacher

Mrs. Stone’s classroom looks much like any other classroom—an array of desks, chairs, and books. But the feel of her classroom is one of comrades in arms who are on an adventure together.

How does Mrs. Stone create this kind of atmosphere? She grabs hold of each teachable moment with two hands. For example, when she once admitted to her students that she had “gone off on a tangent,” she realized that her students had no idea what a “tangent” was. So right smack in the middle of English class, she started up a math-based conversation about the relationship of a tangent to a circle. She doesn’t shy away from teaching her students words like “denotation” and “connotation,” and she even has them keep a vocabulary list consisting of the various high-level words that she uses unintentionally while teaching, and then holds the boys responsible for learning these words.

Her goal, she says, is for her students to love learning. “I feel like there will be a carryover,” she explains. “If they love learning in my class, they’re going to love it in the next class. In that way, a teacher can have a long-range effect on her students.” 

In Sight, Out of Reach

By Yael Eisenberg

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from Spirit Magazine

Imagine that we are on a great sea voyage. My husband and I work feverishly with our eight-year-old daughter Miri to stay the course. Our destination is in sight, just over the horizon. It is the Land of Normal. On some days we find our ship staying right on course, getting closer, hugging the coast—if we could only maintain our heading we'd make it. And on other days it seems as if the winds just aren't in our favor and we drift further out into the great big ocean of Developmental Disability. But at all times, Normal remains visible. Even if it's only a shimmer in the sunlight, we know it is there—seemingly reachable, but thus far out of reach.

Having a higher functioning special needs child comes with unique challenges. Early on, my firstborn daughter was delayed in all aspects of development. Family and friends all assured me that she was just taking her time. “My kid didn't walk until he was almost two!” “She's just taking it all in, she'll be talking in no time.” They were well meaning, but just as clueless as we were. By the time Miri was receiving OT, PT, Speech, special ed and play therapy, we were downright worried, but we still had no idea what we were dealing with. Her PT suggested seeing a neurologist. This marked a turning point as we finally had some clarity (though not much) some solid advice (get her into a center based program) and validation (there really was something wrong). The neurologist claimed that although Miri displayed autistic features, she was not truly autistic. Initially, this was a relief. But as time went on we discovered that this diagnosis but lack thereof left us adrift, neither here nor there—in a no man's land of developmental disability.

With each year, Baruch Hashem, we have seen our Miri make huge strides. With intense support she learned to color in the lines, to read, to pump on a swing. Some of those “autistic features” faded away. She was more open to trying new things like amusement park rides and swimming pools. There have been times of immense hope for normalcy. But there have also been times of disappointment and frustration. Every so often we get harsh reality checks

continues on next page

that remind us that Miri is not there yet. Carefully arranged play dates go wrong, IQ testing comes in low, impulsive or immature behaviors come to the surface. I am left feeling confused, unsure of where to place my expectations.

We thought we could fix her. After all, she was so close. We went to as many doctors, therapists and alternative medicine practitioners as our finances would allow. Some were helpful, others not. But through the process we have cut through some of the confusion regarding Miri's condition.

I have come to understand that Autism Spectrum Disorder is more a set of symptoms than a specific diagnosis. Miri has some of these symptoms but not others. This places her squarely on the higher functioning end of the spectrum. Accepting the spectrum label has played a large part in clearing away some of the fogginess surrounding Miri's problems. It also made us part of a community and enabled us to connect to others in the ASD universe to find understanding and support, as well as new ideas.

Attempting to predict what a child will be like as an adult is a fool's errand. There are so many variables and twists in the road that can change the course of any life. When I find my mind drifting into that unknown territory of Miri's future, I stop myself. It is possible that she will be able to compensate for her difficulties and lead a successful, independent life. It is also possible that some of her issues will stand in the way of full independence. At this point, it can go either way.

At a recent Yedei Chesed weekend retreat, I asked Rabbi Baruch Rabinowitz for any advice he might have for those with high functioning special needs kids. He said that I should picture myself climbing a ladder. Every so often I have to glance upward to make sure I am headed to the right place. But my focus needs to remain on the rung right in front of me or I risk falling down. We need to keep our mental energies attuned to today's challenges, not our picture of tomorrow. He added that once in a while, it is also a good idea to glance downward, to feel good about how far we've already climbed.

So for now, we will keep on sailing. Fortunately, we are not alone. There are other ships sailing all around us, some closer to the land of Normal, others way out in the expansive sea. We are all bonded by our knowledge of these waters, be they rough and stormy or calm and serene. We are also keenly aware that even though we have many responsibilities on deck, Hashem is the true captain of our ship, and His navigation never fails. 

Yeshiva Eitz Chaim • Bnos Bracha • The Skill Building Center

would like to express our gratitude to
the advertisers and sponsors of this magazine.

Your donation allows us to
help our children actualize their full potential,
so that they can become

their Greatest Selves.

Thank You!

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Bnos Bracha
a Bais Yaakov elementary school

In honor of our dear cousins

Avraham and Tzivia Nyer, Kesser Torah Awardees

Your commitment to Torah, your genuine warmth,
and your empathy and caring for others
are an inspiration to us all.

מה הבריאות אומרות... פלוני שלמד תורה ראו כמה נאים דרכיו כמה מתוקנים מעשיו

May you continue to see much nachas from your beautiful children.

With love,

Avishai and Sarah Bina Barnett, Tsvi and Aliza Barnett, Raphi and Huvi Bondi, Moishy and Batya Botnick, Yakov Meir and Suri Botuck, Leiby and Sarah Basya Brodt, Avi and Yael Genack, Dani and Esti Genack, Elie and Yedidah Genack, Dov and Rochel Gertler, Yoseph and Aviva Gross, Aharon and Goldie Grossman, Dovy and Laeya Grossman, Noach and Kaila Hirschman, Lazer and Yaelle Kopciel, Yitzchak and Ahuva Reichman, Leiby and Aliza Rubinstein, Yitzy and Sarah Schwadel, Nachum and Rivky Schwartz, Eliav and Henny Shoshana, Elisheva Spitz, Gavriel and Rochella Spitz, Nechemiah and Hindy Spitz, Sarah Spitz, Shaya and Yaellie Spitz, Yakov Eliezer and Faige Spitz, Moishy and Malka Stein, Shmuly and Yaffa Stein, Abba Beinish and Vichna Swiatycki, Yakov Meir Swiatycki, Yehoshua and Tzivi Witty

Chai



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In honor of

Yocheved Friedman

May you continue to grow in your studies.

Rothman Family

Chai

To Reuven and Sarah

We are so proud of all you have accomplished
and for the movement you have developed
in our community.

To Avrohom and Tzivi

who are always there for us
in so many ways,

...and to **SHAMSHON**
who lights up our lives!

Love,

Ozzie and Shevy

Gold



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עץ חיים
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Bras Bracha
a Basia Yaakov elementary school

Mazal Tov to

Jen and Jeff Eisenstein

Sruly and Melanie Dahan

Gold



Bnos Bracha
a Bas Yisakov elementary school

In honor of
Rabbi Jeff and Jen Eisenstein

Scott and Sandy Selnick

Gold

To **Dr. Sandy Rappaport**

Thank you for loving each and every student at our school.
Thank you for your wisdom and guidance.
Thank you for your unconditional love.
May you be blessed with health and nachas!

To **Mrs. Kathy Perles**

Thank you for devoting yourself to our school.
Thank you for the hours of hard work
and for paying attention to all the details that can be forgotten.

To **Esther Swiatycki**

Whose hard work, talents and determination made this journal possible! Thank you!

To **Vichna Belsky, Keren Perles, Malka Arons and Chaya Kahn:**

Thank you for your patience, talents and creativity.

To our East Ramapo Therapists:

Miriam Berger, School Psychologist

Michele Lazerwitz, Speech Therapist

Grace Ortiz-Fattizzi, Occupational Therapist

Gitty Edelstein, Physical Therapist

Yael Genack – CAPS Psychologist

Thank you for your dedication to our students and your professionalism.

To **Bubby Perles** and **Solange DeFrancesco:**

Thank you for the loving presence you provide for the children at our school.

כל העוסק בצרכי ציבור ... הקבה ישלם שכרם

Reuven and Sarah Eidlitz



Bnos Bracha
a Bas Yisakov elementary school

To Reuven and Sarah

Wishing you continued Siyata Dishmaya
in your Avodas HaKodesh.

May Eitz Chaim and Bnos Bracha
continue to flourish and grow.

May you go from Machayil el Chayil.

Your proud Parents

In honor of
our wonderful niece and nephew
Tzivia and Avraham Nyer

May you continue to be a source of
pride and joy to the entire family.

With Love,
Binyomin and Naomi Botuck



Bnos Bracha
a Bas Yisakov elementary school

Kol Hakavod
to our nephew and niece

Rabbi and Mrs. Avraham and Tzivia Nyer

Kenneth and Esther Nyer

Dear Jen and Jeff,

Mazel tov on this incredible honor.
They couldn't have offered it to a more deserving couple.

You have put so much time and effort into helping
each of your children, and it shows.
We're so glad that we had you to show us the way,
to blaze a trail in the wilderness of raising kids.
(Now when our boys go through one of their phases,
we take a deep breath and remember
that you've been there, and gotten through it!)

Love,

Eli and Keren

In honor of our dear friends and neighbors

Jeff and Jen Eisenstein

for this most appropriate award.

You are models of integrity, modesty,
goodness and commitment to Torah ideals.
Your dedication to your children's Chinuch
and to their individual success is inspiring.

May Hashem bless you with the strength
to continue to inspire all of us with your teachings,
your interactions with others
and by being true examples of Avdei Hashem.

Much Nachas from your beautiful family,

In admiration,

**Aron and Sarah Saperstein, Naftoli and Sarah Salvay, Tummy and
Elana Yeger, Rabbi Avi and Temima Feldman, Shmuel and Sori
Schiller, Dovid and Esti Lowinger, Avraham and Alia Akkerman,
Avraham and Svetlana Zelikovych, Meir and Osnat Bishko, Rachel
and Yaakov Geis, Yossi and Shoshana Sheinfil, Boruch and Batsheva
Sheps, Tzivia Goldring, Ilan and Debbie Richland, Moshe and
Shaina Gutman, Mordy and Cynthia Koslovsky, David and Tzivie
Zidell, Shalom and Devorah Mintz, Noach and Michal Sheinbaum,
Trevor and Shlomit Resnick, Raphi and Rivky Levine, Chaim
and Tzippy Rappaport, Hillel and Elecia Gross, Meir and Bracha
Newhouse, Alan and Eleanor Portnoy, Shmuel and Leah Backenroth**



Yeshiva Eitz Chaim

In honor of

Avrohom and Tzivie Nyer

You are truly role model cousins for us all.

May you have Nachas from Shamshon and all of your children.

Love,

Shimon and Elisheva Swiatycki

In honor of our dear sister and brother-in-law

Rabbi Reuven and Sarah Eidlitz

We are honored to have such a sister as Sarah.

We are so proud of all your accomplishments.

You made your vision a reality.

May you have strength and wisdom to continue in your great work.

May you have Nachas from your entire Eitz Chaim family.

Love,

Shimon and Elisheva Swiatycki



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In Honor of
our two exceptional nieces
Sarah and Tzivie

With much love and admiration,

Sarah and Dan



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a Bas Yisakov elementary school

In honor of
All the Honorees

The Weg Family

In honor of

Avraham and Tzivia Nyer

Your determination and perseverance,
uniquely blended with equanimity and good cheer
serve as an example for all of us.

May you be blessed with continued nachas
from your whole family and much success in all aspects.

Eli and Henny Rochwarger

Ruvy and Masha Swiatycki

Aba and Sarah Baila Swiatycki

Moshe and Rochi Gorelick

Shaya and Nechoma Swiatycki

Yosef and Faigy Broyde

Gershon and Frumi Swiatycki

Masha and Reuven Swiatycki

Treating Children with Acupuncture and Other Holistic Modalities

By Dr. Volodymyr Buhayenko, L.Ac., Ph.D., N.D., D.Ay

Acupuncture and many other holistic modalities can be effectively used to help children with various conditions. Acupuncture, according to Oriental medicine, eliminates blockages in the body's energy flow. During an acupuncture session, certain meridian points on the patient's body need to be either needled, manually pressed, or otherwise stimulated in order to unblock stagnant energy and release free flowing "chi" energy, to give vibrancy and good health to the body.

Acupuncture restores circulation, allowing an increase of nutritional supplementation to the cells; stimulates the immune system of the body; aids in detoxification; and balances other vital body functions. These changes in the body help to eliminate toxins from the body, allow the inner organs to function optimally, and have a positive effect on the digestive system, the nervous system, and other parts of the body. Acupuncture, combined with other alternative methods, can be helpful in the treatment of acute and chronic conditions such as the common cold, various infections, the Epstein Barr virus, mononucleosis, ADD, and hyperactivity.

Many young patients have a sensitive nervous system. Because they are usually overly sensitive during times of stress, trauma, or acute infection, they may reject needle-based acupuncture. Even sensitive children who are afraid of needles, however can benefit from acupuncture. Painless techniques, such as acupressure, laser, electro-stimulation, and local application of heat can actually achieve similar results to acupuncture with needles. Therefore, "needle-free" acupuncture helps children alleviate their fears and very often they start to think of their subsequent visits as "fun" experiences.

In my practice I combine acupuncture techniques with other methods of alternative medicine. This synergistic combination helps to speed up the process of

recovery and get more profound results. The inclusion of diet, therapeutic exercise, naturopathy, nutritional supplements, herbs, homeopathy and other different techniques balances the patient's emotional condition (fears, anxiety, anger, etc.) and behavior.

Some techniques can work effectively to balance the emotional condition of children. These techniques can eliminate stress, anxiety, various fears and phobias, bringing emotional balance to the patient. Other treatments can target specific problems by supporting weak organs and systems with decreased functional activity. One of the techniques that has proven very effective for me is called NAET (Nambudripad's Allergy Elimination Technique), which was developed in the last few decades in the USA. This technique reduces or eliminates allergic reactions to pollen, dust, mold, chemicals, foods and other allergens.

My experience has shown me the importance of always paying attention to the health and emotional condition of the patient's parents, since their relationship with their child plays a critically important role in their child's health and emotional well-being. Very often I find that after parents see their own child's condition is improving, they make an appointment to take care of their own health issues.

In conclusion, I have found that acupuncture (with or without needles), especially when combined with other alternative modalities, is an effective treatment for a multitude of conditions for the entire family.

Dr. Volodymyr (Vlad) Buhayenko, L.Ac., Ph.D. (medicine), N.D., D.Ay.

Medical Director of The Healing Clinic, 7 South Myrtle Ave., Spring Valley, NY 10977

Tel: (845) 371 - 2740

With sincere gratitude to
Rabbi Reuven and Mrs. Sarah Eidlitz

and all of the
outstanding teachers
at Yeshiva Eitz Chaim and Bnos Bracha

For creating, maintaining and continually evolving
a school that is so much more than a school.

For providing a nurturing, loving environment
in which caring attention is paid to the whole child.

For giving our child the setting and the tools to be her very best.

Jen and Jeff Eisenstein



Bnos Bracha
a Bas Yisakov elementary school

Happy to contribute to

Shoshie's

success

Your aunt and uncle,

Sarah and Yossi Remer

To all the distinguished honorees
and particularly to the

Kesser Torah Award recipients,
our dear cousins,

Avraham and Tzivia Nyer,
May you have much nachas from all your children!

And, to our dear sister and brother-in-law,

Sarah and Reuven,
May you continue to have much success in building these wonderful mosdos.

Tzvi Yaakov and Henya Chaya Weinstien



Bnos Bracha
a Bas Yisakov elementary school

With deep appreciation to
Dr. Sandy Rappaport, PhD,

for everything she has done, and continues to do,
for our boys and for our school:
the schmoozing, the love, the legos!

We can never thank you enough
for your devotion and dedication.

The Arons family

The Bamberger family

The Eidlitz Family

The Gongola Family

The Kahn family

The Salzer family

Mazal Tov to
Rabbi Jeff and Jen Eisenstein

on this well deserved honor.

You truly have a Shem Tov
among all those who know you.

Dave and Sarah Leah Markowitz



Yeshiva Eitz Chaim

Mazel Tov to

Yakov Y. Cohn
Yaakov Meir Kahn
Simcha Salzer
Zev Tzvi Arons
Zorach Eidlitz

on their excellence in learning!

Bonnie Stone

With much admiration for

Tatty and Mommy Nyer and Shamshon:

Fortunate is the child born to parents who are lovingly devoted and selflessly eager and determined to help their precious child engage in activities that will promote his potential and expand his individual horizons.

Fortunate is the child who is privileged to receive a custom-made education specialized for his level throughout each growing stage in surroundings that are spiritually healthy.

We are grateful to הקב"ה for the wonderful שלוחים who are blessed with the will-power and capabilities to redefine limitations, replacing them with appropriate building blocks.

בברכת ברכה והצלחה

Uncle R' Yisroel and Tanta Feigy

Uncle R' Boruch Ber and Tanta Zissy

Uncle R' Shimshon and Tanta Sarah Aidel

Uncle R' Chaim Elazar and Tanta Brocha

Mrs. Sarah Eidlitz

You are the best!

Love,

Chaim Shamshon



Bnos Bracha
a Bas Yisakov elementary school

In honor of

Sandy Rappaport

for your incredible devotion and
Mesiras Nefesh for the school and each child.

We are so grateful.

The Arons Family

To the

Eidlitz's

No words can express our **הכרת הטוב**
for the skill, dedication and love
you have given our children.

Thank you.

The Arons Family

In honor of our children,

Jen and Jeff Eisenstein

We wish to express our love and pride in you
for the manner in which you handle life's challenges
and for the love and patience you show
in your efforts to allow Shoshie to blossom and
strive to reach her full potential!

In honor of our beautiful granddaughter,

Shoshie

You have come so far in the past 3 years at The Skill Building Center.
With the love of Hashem , your parents and all of your teachers,
we know you will continue to happily grow and learn.

הכרת הטוב to all involved in this achievement:

Mrs. Sarah Eidlitz and all of the staff

at The Skill Building Center.

We are grateful that there is a place that exists in our community
that gives Shoshie the love and nurturing she needs
along with the opportunities to make these strides,
and assists her parents in her continued development and maturity.

Kathy and Stuey Perles



Bnos Bracha
a Bas Yisakov elementary school

To the distinguished honorees,

Our dear cousins

Avraham and Tzivia Nyer

Our neighbors and friends

Jeff and Jen Eisenstein

And, of course, to

Rabbi Reuven and Mrs. Sarah Eidlitz

May you continue to go *מחיל אל חיל* go.

We would also like to wish good health and happiness
to a staunch supporter of the school:

Dr. Sandra Rappaport

Aba and Esther Swiatycki

Dear Jen and Jeff,

Over the years we have seen how devoted you have been to getting Shoshie on the right path. We are so proud of you for the patience, time and energy you have put forth as parents and the role you have played in the community at large. We have heard such wonderful things about the education and environment at the Skill Building Center and hope it continues to make a difference in the lives of the children it impacts each day.

Mazel tov on a well-deserved honor.

Aviva and Chaim Huss



Bnos Bracha
a Bas Yisakov elementary school

In honor of

Rabbi and Mrs. Jeff Eisenstein

Warren and Aliza Cinamon and Family

Congratulations

Jen and Jeff

on your Kesser Shem Tov award.

Love,

Aunt Reta and Uncle Bernie

In honor of
The Excellent Teachers and Staff

From the
**Parents and Grandparents
of Binyomin and Naftali Martin**



Yeshiva Eitz Chaim

In honor of my great-granddaughter

Shoshie

who continues to give me much nachas each and every day.

Bubby Perles



Bnos Brocha

In honor of

Rabbi Jeff and Jen Eisenstein

and

Rabbi Reuven and Mrs. Sarah Eidlitz

Aliza and Bruce Klein

Jen and Jeff,

Mazel Tov on receiving the much deserved Kesser Shem Tov award.

We are continuously inspired and in awe of
your dedication and passion toward Shosh's education and well being.

May you continue to have hatzlacha in all your efforts
and receive much nachas from her and all your children.

Love,

Deena and Golan



Bnos Bracha
a Bas Yisakov elementary school

In honor of

Jeff and Jen Eisenstein

The Sobel Family

In honor of

All The Teachers and Staff, Rabbi and Mrs. Eidlitz

and in honor of

The Zucker family,

we would like to thank you for all that you do
and for the great chinuch and education
you provide to the students on a daily basis.



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Congratulations to the Honorees

**Daniel and Rochel Martin,
Far Rockaway, NY**

In honor of

Rabbi Reuven and Mrs. Sarah Eidlitz

and

Rabbi Avraham and Tzivia Nyer

Chaim and Jen Kaweblum



Bnos Bracha
a Bas Yisakov elementary school

In Honor Of

Mrs. Kathy Perles

You are the heartbeat of the school,
and the heart of our family.

With love and tremendous appreciation,

Jen and Jeff

With Hakoras HaTov to

Rabbi and Mrs. Eidlitz

and all the wonderful

Rebbeim, Moros, Teachers and Staff

of Yeshiva Eitz Chaim

Rabbi Reuven and Mrs. Sarah Eidlitz

Menachem and Gitty Gongola

In memory of
Pinchas Goldner, A”H

Solomon and Gabriella Goldner



In honor of our cousins,

The Nyers
and
The Eidlitzes

With much admiration,

Sarah and Tzvi Leifer

לכבוד ידידנו

הר"ר אברהם יצחק נויער שליט"א
ומשפחתו הכבודה

באנו בזה להביע ולהוקיר את כל מיטב
פעולותיכם בעד מצוה רמה ונשגבה זו של
"גמילות חסדים"
שאתם עסוקים בה כעת.

ישלם ה' פעלכם ותהי משכורתכם שלימה מעם
ה' מתוך רב בריאות ואושר ונחת מכל
צאצאיכם הברוכים והיקרים כל הימים.

כברכת ידידיך
חברי כולל אהל אור

In honor of

Mrs. Sarah Eidlitz

A special person and an amazing Mechaneches.

Shoshana Goldman, Ph.D.

In Honor Of

Bubby Perles

For being a Bubby to all with your unparalleled warmth,
love and devotion to the students.

But most of all for being OUR beloved Bubby.

With love and respect,

Jen and Jeff

In honor of

**Jen and Jeff
Eisenstein**

Dr. and Mrs. David Simons

In honor of

**Reuven and Sarah
Eidlitz**

“Hashem yishaleim secharam...”

We wish you continued bracha v’hatzlacha.

Eliezer and Miryam Vilinsky

To a teacher so wonderful
Her students all thrive
As lessons, once boring
Become fun and alive
Steady, unwavering, loyal and true
So let’s take this moment to say

Jen, WE LOVE YOU!

With admiration,

**Kayla Stimmel, Mindy Lidsky
Sivi Rokowsky, Odelia Schlisser
Alisa Karash, Rabbi Fink
and all your co-teachers at
Ateres Bais Yaakov**

In honor of

**Rabbi and Mrs. Jeff
and Jen Eisenstein**

**Rabbi and Mrs. Jeff and Meryl
Troodler**

In honor of

Rabbi Jeff and Jennifer Eisenstein

Eli and Faigie Mayer

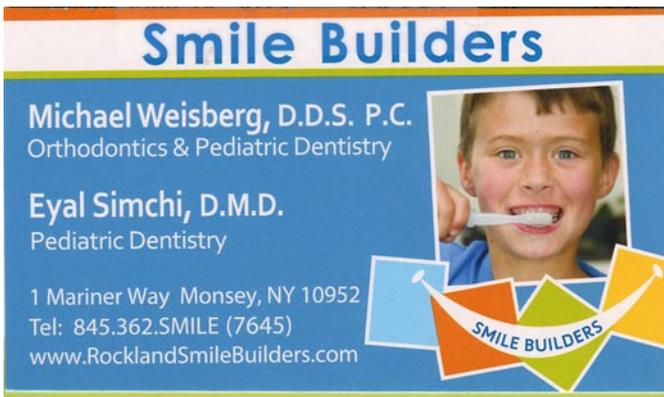
To Rabbi Reuven and Sarah Eidlitz:

Thank you for your hard work, dedication
and the wonderful job you do for our son
Dovid.

Allan and Susan Weissman

Mazel Tov!

The Weisbergs

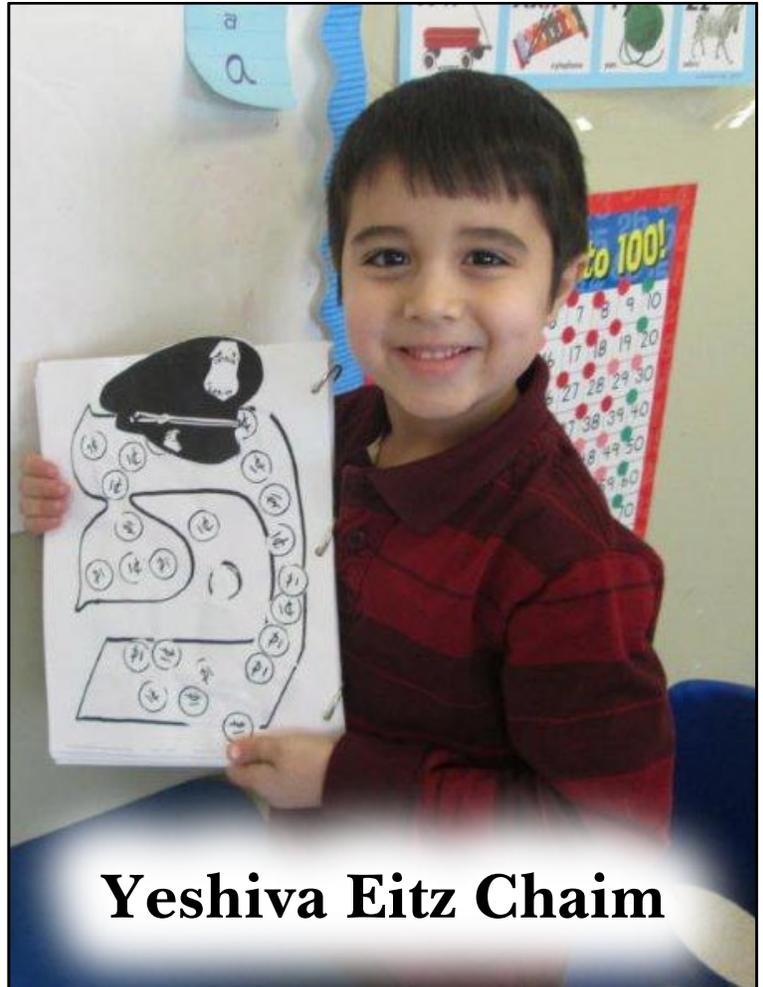


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Yeshiva Eitz Chaim

In honor of

Rabbi Jeff and Jen Eisenstein

Ada and Jimmy Katz

We are very blessed to have Yeshiva Eitz Chaim/The Skill Building Center as a school for our son, Yisroel Yaakov.

It almost seems like it was designed specifically for him! With the help of Mrs. Sarah Eidlitz and her wonderful staff, our son is learning how to learn properly and behave in the classroom setting, and we are learning how to better parent our son. The outstanding teachers and Rebbeim help Yisroel Yaakov to become the best he can be as a Talmid and as a Yiddishe boy.

Thank you!

From The Michelson Family

In honor of

Avraham and Tzivi Nyer

Your dedication and sincerity are an inspiration to us.

Yitzi and Chavie Genack

Yeshiva Eitz Chaim





Yeshiva Eitz Chaim

Bnos Bracha
a Bais Yaakov elementary school



Best Wishes

Ron Miller

Congratulations to

**Jeff and Jen
Eisenstein**

on this well deserved honor

Shaul and Yonina Taub

In honor of

**Rabbi and Mrs.
Avraham and Tzivia
Nyer**

“TRULY DEVOTED PARENTS,
TRULY DEVOTED FRIENDS”

**Avraham and Chana Gittel
Goldstein**

Mazel Tov to

Jen and Jeff Eisenstein

on this well deserved honor

Michael and Yael Zimmerman

In honor of
our wonderful granddaughter

Hadassah Rosen

From,

**Grampy Morris and
Grandma Jan**



Yeshiva Eitz Chaim

Congratulations

Jen and Jeff

on this
well deserved honor!

Lynn and Dov Silverberg

With heartfelt gratitude to
**Bnos Brocha and
The Skill Building
Center**

**Aaron and Ilana
and Hadassah Rosen**

In honor of

Jen and Jeff Eisenstein

Eric and Naomi Rapoport

With love from
the grandfather of
Shoshana Eisenstein

Sam Eisenstein

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Mazel Tov to

**Rabbi Jeff and Jen
Eisenstein**

on this most deserved honor.

Tara and Ilan Schimmel

In honor of

Jen and Jeff Eisenstein

on a well deserved honor

Jeannie and Mark Adler

The Skill Building Center



Mazel Tov to

Jeff and Jen Eisenstein

on this well deserved honor.

Pesach and Shira Chait

Mazel Tov

Avraham, Tzivi and Shamshon

We are so proud of you.

May you be zocheh to continue your excellent work as parents and role models, spreading Torah and doing chessed.

We love you!

**Dovid, Rivki, Moshe Pesach,
Tikvah, and Yisroel Nyer**

Congratulations to
**Rabbi and Mrs. Jeff
Eisenstein**

on this well deserved honor.

May you continue to go
me-chayil el chayil.

Rabbi and Mrs. Saul Zucker

In honor of

**Jen and Jeff
Eisenstein**

Rachel and Dennis Dolnick

In honor of

**Jen and Jeff
Eisenstein**

Mazel Tov on this
well deserved honor!

Fondly,

**Orah and Moshe Menachem
Chait**

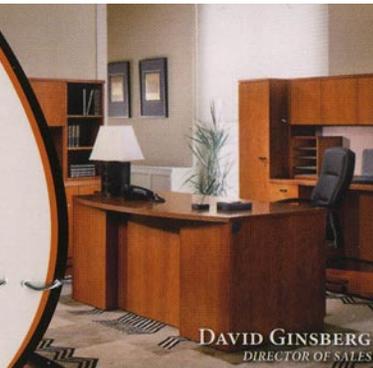
Mazel Tov to

**Jeff and Jen
Eisenstein**

on a well deserved honor

David and Smadar Ginsberg

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DAVID GINSBERG
DIRECTOR OF SALES

In honor of

**Jeff and Jen
Eisenstein**

Courtesy of

the Schuck Family

A big thank you to the Eidlitz's
in honor of our darling grandchildren

**Yaakov Meir,
Basya and Tzivia**

We love you and are so proud of you!

Love,

Grammy and PopPop Heiman

It is with great pleasure that I wish
Mazel tov to my old Chavrusa
and dear friend,

**HaRav Avrohom
Nyer, Shlita**

A most deserving recipient of the
Kesser Torah award

and to his **Ezer Kenegdo.**

Wishing them
much continued nachas
from all their children.

**Yaakov Yosef Willner
and family**



Bnos Brocha

Congratulations to all the honorees!

Carl and Rona Paley

L'chvod the most beloved and "bacheint" kid on the block, **Shamshon, עמו"ש**.

May you see only Nachas from him and the rest of the kinder, **בעז"ה**.

With admiration, Yossi and Yocheved Fischer

With much appreciation to the entire

staff of The Skill Building Center

for the wonderful work they do with Yehuda.

Moshe, Malka and Yehuda Wieder

To my dear cousin **Tzivia Nyer and family**

Your upbeat outlook in life inspires us all.

May you see much nachas from all your children

Love, Cousin Mindy Herskowitz

In honor of **Jeff and Jen Eisenstein.**

Wishing you much continued Hatzlacha:

Ruben and Sarita Gober

לעלוי נשמת בתי-ה מלכה בת ר' יצחק זונדל

Shamshon's Greatest Fan

In honor of **Jeff and Jen Eisenstein.**
Ira and Arlene Schwartz

In honor of **Jeff and Jen Eisenstein**
Mr. and Mrs. Gimpelevich

In honor of **Avraham and Tzivia Nyer**
and **Reuven and Sarah Eidlitz.**
With love, Yaakov Eliezer and Faige Spitz

L'chvod **Avraham and Tzivia Nyer**
This is a truly well deserved honor.
Your dedication to your children is an example for all.
We admire your simchas hachaim and ahavas haTorah.
Your proud brother-in-law and sister,
Shlomo and Sorah Zager

In honor of **the Nyers**
May you merit great success and nachas!
All children are ours!
Go from strength to strength!
David Subin

In honor of **Avraham and Tzivia Nyer**
M B Falk

To a most deserving couple, **Jen and Jeff**
Mazel Tov!

Paula and Gerald From



In honor of **the Nyers and Shamshon**
Wainbrand Family

Dear **Avraham and Tzivi**,
Your parenting and attitude is an inspiration to us, and we all get so much nachas
from seeing your adorable Sham! May you be zocha to see
more and ever-more bracha and nachas from your whole family, עמו"ש.

Love, Peryl and Shlomo Agishtein

Dear **Reuven and Sarah**,
We are so proud of you! May Hakadosh Boruch Hu give you strength to continue.
Mayer and Rivky

In honor of **the Eisensteins**
Rivka Dani and Chaim Pantierer
In honor of **Jeff and Jennifer Eisenstein**
Moshe and Debbie Meisels

In honor of **the Nyers,**
a couple truly worthy of a Kesser Torah

Ezzy and Sarah Stern

Mazel Tov **Jen and Jeff!**
Chana, Andrew, Refael, Michal, Gavriel

Mazel Tov **Jen and Jeff**
on this well deserved honor!
Rabbi Elie and Aliza Feder

To our dear friends **Avraham and Tzivia**
May you have a lot of nachas from Shamshon and the rest of the cutest gang..

Shragi and Shaindy Berkowitz

In honor of **Avraham and Tzivia Nyer**
Chaim and Esther Zelinger

In honor of **Avraham and Tzivia Nyer**
Rabbi and Mrs. Elie Genack

In honor of **Jen and Jeff Eisenstein**
Linda Levin

Mazel Tov!

Avrom Chaim and Chany Greenfeld

In honor of **Avraham and Tzivia Nyer**
Nechemia and Hindy Spitz

In honor of **Jen and Jeff Eisenstein**
Chana and Andrew Zimmerman

Jen and Jeff, Hatzlacha Rabbah!
Rabbi Chaim Ozer and Teiby Chait

In honor of **the Nyers**
Shaindy Berkowitz

Thank you for the wonderful job you do for our son.

Allan and Susan Weissman

With much appreciation to **the entire staff** for the wonderful work you do with Yehuda.

Moshe, Malka and Yehuda Wieder

Mazel Tov!

Yaakov and Naomi Twersky

לכבוד הרב אברהם נייער ומשפחתו שיחיו
הננו בזה מעומקא דליבא
שימלא ה' כל משאלותיכם לטובה
ורב נחת מכל צאצאיכם היקרים
בידידות ויקר
יעקב ש. רוקח ומשפחתו

Mazel Tov to **the Eisensteins!**
Andrew and Robin Fodiman

לכבוד ידידי רב אברהם יצחק נייער ומשפחתו שיחיו
תחזקנה ידיכם בכל פעלכם הברוכים
המאחלים
רפאל פישער ומשפחתו

In honor of **Jen and Jeff Eisenstein**
Wishing you much continued Hatzlacha.
Ruben and Sarita Gober

Mindy and Yitzchok Applegrad

Ellen and Yonah Solomon

Jack Twersky

Goldstein—Mars Foundation

Yisroel and Elisheva Fischer

Menachem and Dena Deutsch

Dovid and Miriam Apter



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