

Dear families,

I hope you enjoyed the Chanukah show. The show is a wonderful CJDS Chanukah tradition. One holiday tradition that is very popular in our country is gift giving. Over the years I have written different thoughts on gifts for children. Here is some of that advice along with thoughts on holiday traditions.

I believe that the holidays should not focus on material gifts. Gifts like baking with your children, going to the park, having a game night, offering to help at Finlay Park's food service on Sundays, and other such ideas are very valuable. Family traditions are powerful and starting them when children are young can create lifelong social emotional memories.

One general suggestion in choosing toys is to be wary of toys that promote violence and toys that portray body image in an incorrect manner. Often the first group of toys is aimed at boys and taken from movies created for older children. The second groups of toys narrowly focus girls' play on shopping and appearance. These toys teach girls to act older at younger ages and that how they look determines their value. The more open ended and creative a toy the better it is for young children. We should be critical in our toy choices making sure that we do not feed into gender stereotypes or any other negative messages.

Chanukah traditions (which can be used for other holidays) can include:

Encouraging children to ask questions about the holiday. Create a list of questions together and the family can Google the answers. I suggest saving the questions to ask again in a future year to see what new ideas are shared and new questions can be added to the list. Asking questions and researching answers is a great way for families to develop meaningful holiday memories.

Building off the previous example, you can ask each member of your family to reflect on questions such as: "What do you love about lighting the menorah?" "What part of the story resonates with you?" or, "What else do you enjoy about Chanukah?"

Consider adding to the traditions of your holiday celebration. For Chanukah, you might decide to have a tzedakah (charity) box near the candles and have each family member give charity prior to lighting. Perhaps children will want to sing a particular Chanukah song found on YouTube or adapt a Chanukah custom from another country. Choosing a new mitzvah (Jewish directive) is always a great idea.

**Upcoming Events:**

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|---------------------------|--|
| December 12th             | Picture make-up day – if you would like siblings to take a picture together please let Ms. Kelly know. |
| December 15 <sup>th</sup> | Last day before registration is open to the wider community  |
| December 20th             | Passing of the Cans (canned food drive ends)   |
| December 21               | Frist day of winter break  |

## News and Notes:

Registration - Prior to December 15<sup>th</sup> we notify all families not currently enrolled at CJDS that even if they register, we cannot offer them a spot until after December 15<sup>th</sup>. We do this to ensure that all current families always have first option to return to school. I hope that by not registering new families until after December 15<sup>th</sup> all current families have adequate time to register. Please let me know if I can answer any questions about registration or school next year.

Elementary student's first trimester progress reports and report cards will be posted on Monday.

We have a "Lost and found" table up front. Please check it prior to winter break as the items will be donated to charity during break.

## Health Update

Each week I will supply a list of illnesses experienced by children and staff. This list is a compilation of the week as collected on Friday morning. I cannot guarantee that the list is comprehensive but we do our best.

- During this time of the year as illness increases I would like to remind you of some of our health policies that would exclude children from attending school.
  - A child who has not been fever free for twenty-four hours without the aid of a fever reducing medicine such as Tylenol or Advil.
  - Diarrhea in the previous 24 hours
  - Vomiting more than two times in the previous 24 hours
  - Abdominal pain that continues for more than two hours
  - Rash not due to allergies
  - A child cannot participate comfortably in school activities
- Our state supplies guidelines for exclusion at <https://scdhec.gov/sites/default/files/Library/CR-011634.pdf>

Infants	Four have fever.
Ones	All well.
Twos	Several out with a virus and fevers.
Threes	Two out with strep throat, one with pink eye and one with a fever.
Fours	All well.
K	All well.
1st	All well.
2nd	All well.
3rd	All well.
4 <sup>th</sup> /5th	One out with a virus and one with a cough.

Shabbat Shalom and happy Chanukah,

Rabbi Meir