

CROSSING THE RIVER

Crossing the River (CTR) is our 2-year pre-B'nai Mitzvah (6th and 7th grade) preparatory class. This program is a culmination of everything your child has learned in Living a Jewish Life and Hebrew Chavurot. The basic understanding achieved in these earlier programs is what the teachers on build during Crossing the River.

Our 6th grade CTR students focus on what it means to become a Jewish adult. They will study the responsibilities and privileges they will have as an adult in the Jewish community and especially in the Nevei Kodesh community. After each class your child will have something to discuss with you at home. We encourage you to talk to your child about what they have learned and help them in their decisions for how to live life as a Jewish adult.

Along with the core curriculum, your child will participate in a mitzvah (community service) project. It is up to the students how they want to plan and implement their project. Your child's teacher will work very closely with the class and any community groups they choose to help to ensure a positive experience for both your child and the group the class decides to help. Because of the Mitzvah project, 6th grade has more classes than 7th grade. Please check the CTR calendar for your child's meeting days.

This class will challenge your children and require them to come out of their shell. Because of this, your child needs to feel that his/her 6th grade CTR classroom is a safe place. One way we strive to achieve this goal is through Adventure Sunday. One Sunday afternoon a month your child will go on an outing with Amy Kopkin somewhere in the Boulder area. Amy will take your children on the journey of their lives (an Adventure Sunday schedule is in the back of this handbook). These outings encourage and teach leadership skills and help build bonds among all the children in CTR. Amy has an amazing way of taking what students are learning while sitting in class and embodying it through full body activities. In addition, at the beginning of the school year we will have an overnight for all CTR students. This is a great time for the students to get to know one another outside of the classroom and really begin to form friendships.

Our 7th grade CTR class studies Torah (the five books of Moses). This amazing class teaches our children how to read and interpret the Torah, debate it with each other, and find what meanings it offers for their lives in the 21st century as 12 and 13 year olds. Our superbly educated and dynamic teachers work with your children to really help them understand what is meant when G-d commands the Jews, and will teach your students the beauty of wrestling with and questioning G-d when they meet difficult or controversial passages. Your children will also have a chance to discuss their individual torah portions with the class. Please be sure to let your teacher know what your child's torah portion is and send your child to class with a copy of the Torah (in English) and a copy of their specific Torah portion.

Once a month, during your child's lesson a parent class is held. These are lectures/discussions by different experts in town. Rabbi Tirzah will be leading two of them, and we will be sending out a schedule of the other presenters once the school year

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begins. If you have a request for a presenter, or would like to present, please contact Robin Youngelman (robin@youngelman.com).

We will have a “Dinner with the Rabbi” during the spring semester. Each class will also attend one service and lead part of that service with Rabbi Tirzah. We also have school-wide tikkun olam (social action) projects scheduled throughout the year. These projects are not just for the students, but for your entire family. More information about services and other special events will be given to you or your child as we get closer to the dates.

Because this program is our pre-B’nai Mitzvah program, we have a special packet with B’nai Mitzvah information. Be sure you get a copy of both handbooks so you have all the information necessary to make this a successful year for you and your child. If you have any questions about B’nai Mitzvah, please contact Rabbi Tirzah (rebtirzah@aol.com) or Ann Marie Arvoy (annmarie@neveikodesh.org).

Welcome to a wonderful year!