

חיבורים

Hibburim

Sixth Annual Early Childhood Jewish Education Conference

*Hebrew College
Newton Centre, Massachusetts
October 26-27, 2015*

ADVANCE YOUR KNOWLEDGE.

CHALLENGE YOURSELF.
BRING NEW IDEAS TO
YOUR COMMUNITY.

Shoolman Graduate School of Jewish Education

- Master of Jewish Education with specialization in early childhood education
- Master of Jewish Education/Master of Arts in Jewish Studies (dual degree)
- Ph.D in Educational Leadership with specialization in Jewish educational leadership
- Certificate in Early Childhood Jewish Education
- Certificate in Jewish Special Education



More information

Office of Admissions

617-559-8610

admissions@hebrewcollege.edu

hebrewcollege.edu/shoolman

GREETINGS FROM THE DIRECTOR



אמור לי מי חברך, ואמר לך מי אתה.

Tell me who your friends are, and I will tell you who you are. —Genesis 1:1

Hiburim—“connections” in English—comes from the Hebrew root H.v.r, or Haver, which also means friend. Connections with other people enrich our lives, open endless possibilities, and shape our identities.

As I celebrate my tenth year at the Early Childhood Institute of Hebrew College, I would like to thank you all for joining us today to connect, learn, and grow—together.

I am very grateful for all the meaningful and powerful connections I have made over these years through various organizations and programs: Hebrew College’s academic programs, the Boston-Haifa Connection, the Boston Directors’ Council, the PJ Library, professional development programs in local schools, educational seminars in Israel and Boston, collaboration with CJP, the Gelfand Family Charitable Trust, the Grinspoon Foundation, the Lappin Foundation, and many more. These connections enrich my life and allow me to serve the community better.

This year’s conference is designed to connect you, as an individual and as a professional, to other people, resources, and big ideas. This year’s conference is designed not only for early-childhood educators, but also for clergy, directors, professionals, and heads of organizations working with children and families in any setting. Only by working together can we truly serve the families of young children and form a stronger community for a bright future.

According to Jewish tradition, our relationships can be categorized into three types of connections or relationships:

- *Ben Adam Le’atzmo*—Between a person and one’s self
- *Ben Adam Le’chavero*—Between a person and others
- *Ben Adam La’makom*—Between a person and the Divine

We will explore how the three are interconnected, and build on them to identify new forms of connections that are relevant to our generation.

We look forward to strengthening our connection with you during this conference, and in the future.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Raz' with a stylized flourish.

Rachel Raz
Director, Early Childhood Institute

WELCOME FROM THE DEAN



I'm sure many of you watched the new Disney movie *Inside Out* this past summer. It was fascinating to see the adults really grasp the neuroscience, while the kids enjoyed the story and animation. It reminds us all of the fragility of the world of young children, particularly with their growth and well-being in mind.

As Jewish educators, we are especially concerned with their joy and sadness, fear and anger. We are providing a framework and outlook that balance these emotions and allow young children to have a centring thread of meaning and value as they change and grow.

Our children will have to experience disruption, challenge, and disappointment alongside joy and fulfilment. Jewish ritual, story, and practice give articulation to these emotions within a family and community.

If we are to live up to our charge to our children, we need to know more than a Disney movie can provide. Our preparation for the classroom, our training, and our teacher development are vital for keeping up-to-date with new theories in brain research, with greater knowledge of the openness of our tradition and its customs, with deeper insight into how Judaism becomes a framework for meaning in the lives of twenty-first-century families.

Our Early Childhood Institute, so ably led by director Rachel Raz (MJEd'06), and our Shoolman School faculty are here to offer you that knowledge, skill, and insight. Sign up this year for a class on neuroscience, or inclusive special-needs education, or teaching Bible. Learn some more Hebrew with us, participate in one of our webinars on arts education, attend my classes on spiritual development.

Whatever your role in reaching children and their families Jewishly, take some time and energy this year to go "outside in" and register for an online or on-campus class to supplement the excellent workshops you will experience here at our wonderful conference.

Thank you to Rachel and her assistant director, Linna Ettinger (MJEd'12), as well as Shoolman administrative manager Aga Cyjak-Katz for the amazing creativity and thoughtfulness manifest in these days we have together.

With all good wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Michael Shire". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

Rabbi Michael Shire, PhD
Chief Academic Officer, Hebrew College
Dean, Shoolman Graduate School of Jewish Education

WORKSHOPS AT A GLANCE

O	Open Session
H	Hiburim/Connections Track
V	Veteran Educators
D	Directors
A	All

MONDAY, OCTOBER 26

3:00 to 3:30 p.m. **Registration, Ted Cutler Atrium (outside Berenson Hall, Lower Level)**

3:30 to 4:45 p.m. **Workshop Session I (five concurrent sessions)**

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mapping Our Connections: What Do We See? (Sara Shapiro-Plevan)
<i>Classroom 111, Lower Level</i> | H A |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Preschool Literacy: Shifting toward Knowledge-based Practice
(Lisa Plotkin and Kathy Pomer)
<i>Classrooms 102-103, Lower Level</i> | A |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Inclusion in the Jewish Community (Sherry Grossman)
<i>Classrooms 106-107, Lower Level</i> | O A |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Transforming the Nature of Your Playground (Eileen Kupersmith)
<i>Tichnor Conference Rooms 1-2, Conference Center</i> | A |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Building a Community of Children (Rabbi Michael Shire)
<i>Conference Rooms 4-5, Conference Center</i> | D V |

4:45 to 5:45 p.m. **Dinner, Berenson Hall, Lower Level**

Greetings: Rachel Raz, Director, Early Childhood Institute

Remarks: Sara Shapiro-Plevan, "Being Present, Being Connected"

5:45 to 7:00 p.m. **Workshop Session II (five concurrent sessions)**

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | The Power in Connection: How Do We Identify, Harvest, and Use It?
(Sara Shapiro-Plevan)
<i>Classroom 111, Lower Level</i> | H A |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Jewish Learning Matters! (Emily Teck)
<i>Classrooms 102-103, Lower Level</i> | A |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | The Students Are Easy, the Hard Part Is Dealing with Their Parents!
(Andrea Katzman)
<i>Classrooms 106-107, Lower Level</i> | A |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Outdoor Spaces for Healthy Minds (Rachel Danford and Elizabeth Leahey)
<i>Tichnor Conference Rooms 1-2, Conference Center</i> | A |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Authentic and Meaningful: The Transformation of a Schoolwide Shabbat Celebration
(Ellen Dietrick and Emily Perlman)
<i>Conference Rooms 4-5, Conference Center</i> | A |

WORKSHOPS AT A GLANCE

G	Godly Play Track
O	Open Session
H	Hiburim/Connections Track
V	Veteran Educators
D	Directors
A	All

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27

8:00 to 8:30 a.m. **Sing-a-Long Shoharim** (Emily Teck)
Tichnor Conference Rooms 1-2, Conference Center

A

8:30 to 9:00 a.m. **Registration and Breakfast, Ted Cutler Atrium (outside Berenson Hall)**

9:00 to 9:30 a.m. Welcome: Rabbi Daniel Lehmann, President, Hebrew College
 Remarks: Sara Shapiro-Plevan, “Listening to Stories, Listening for Connection”

9:30 to 10:45 a.m. **Workshop Session III (seven concurrent sessions)**

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--|----------|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mapping Our Connections: What Do We See? (Sara Shapiro-Plevan)
<i>Berenson Hall, Lower Level</i> | H | A |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | How to Bring Hebrew and Israeli Culture into Your Early-Childhood Environment
(Shirah Rubin, moderator)
<i>Classrooms 102-103, Lower Level</i> | | A |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Engaging Families in and around Shul (Rabbi Michael Fel)
<i>Classroom 111, Lower Level</i> | O | A |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Better Communication between the Preschool and Families: How?
(Raz Wasserstein and Doron Oded)
<i>Classrooms 106-107, Lower Level</i> | | A |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Starting from Text: An Approach to Professional Learning
(Sarah Ruderman Wilensky and Amy Bolotin)
<i>Tichnor Conference Rooms 1-2, Conference Center</i> | | A |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Connecting Multiple Identities as a Way to Empower Individuals and Create a Community (Na’ame Ore)
<i>Classroom 104, Lower Level</i> | D | V |

9:30 to 12:15 p.m. ☐ **Introduction to Torah Godly Play I** (Rabbi Michael Shire)
Conference Rooms 4-5, Conference Center

G **A**

11:00 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. **Workshop Session IV (six concurrent sessions)**

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|---|----------|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | The Power in Connection: How Do We Identify, Harvest, and Use It?
(Sara Shapiro-Plevan)
<i>Classroom 104, Lower Level</i> | H | A |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | You Had Me at Hello: Audacious Hospitality as Spiritual Practice
(Rabbi Julie Zupan)
<i>Conference Room 3, Conference Center</i> | | A |

O	Open Session
H	Hiburim/Connections Track
V	Veteran Educators
D	Directors
A	All

Workshop Session IV (continued)

- ☐ **Authenticity in the Early-Childhood Classroom** (Chantal Lawrence and Malgosha Szlempo)
Classrooms 106-107, Lower Level **O** **A**

- ☐ **Remini App Tutoring** (Raz Wasserstein and Doron Oded)
Classroom 111 **A**

- ☐ **Yoga Yeladim: An Experiential Workshop Introducing Yoga For Children** (Ellen Allard)
Tichnor Conference Rooms 1-2, Conference Center **A**

- ☐ **Engaging Young Children with Books and Music to Teach Jewish Values** (Emily Teck)
Classrooms 102-103, Lower Level **A**

12:15 to 1:45 p.m. Lunch, Berenson Hall, Lower Level

Greetings: Rabbi Michael Shire, Chief Academic Officer, Hebrew College
Remarks: Sara Shapiro-Plevan, "Designing for Connection"

Lunch Table Topics

Join a table where informal discussion will be based upon a topic. We've come up with a few to get you started, but feel free to create your own.

Bringing Hebrew into the Classroom

Bringing Israel to the Classroom

CJP New Educator Orientation

Connecting through Music and Jewish Values

Connecting to Children through Godly Play

Connecting to Families

Directors' Network

Early Education Inspired by the Reggio Approach

Inclusion for the Classroom and Beyond

Jewish Connections to Children's Literature

Nature Education in the Classroom

Technology in and outside the Classroom

1:45– 3:00 p.m.

Workshop Session V (five concurrent sessions)

- ☐ **Changing Ourselves by Changing Our Connections** (Sara Shapiro-Plevan)
Classroom 111, Lower Level **H** **A**

- ☐ **But I Don't Speak Hebrew! Making Classroom Connections to Israel for Early-Childhood Educators with Limited Hebrew** (Sharon Cores)
Classrooms 102-103, Lower Level **A**

- ☐ **Hesed and Creating a Caring Community in Your Preschool** (Dena Glasgow and Erica Streit-Kaplan)
Classrooms 106-107, Lower Level **A**

- ☐ **Torah Alive!** (Lorraine Posner Arcus)
Conference Rooms 4-5, Conference Center **A**

- ☐ **The Creative Power of Play for Infants & Toddlers** (Amy Bolotin)
Tichnor Conference Rooms 1-2, Conference Center **A**

SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

MONDAY, OCTOBER 26

Workshop Session I (5 concurrent sessions)

3:30–4:45 p.m.

Mapping Our Connections: What Do We See? (Hiburim/Connection Track Session A)

Sara Shapiro-Plevan Founder, Rimomim Consulting

Who is in? Who is out? We will select a small network of our own and work to map the connections in our network. Using a variety of tools, we will then examine the network as we have represented it to see what we can learn about how we are connected, who holds power, who is absent or on the periphery, and how we can connect with someone new. Why is it important? What are the benefits?

Preschool Literacy: Shifting toward Evidence-based Practice

Lisa Plotkin, Assistant Director, Gan Elohim Preschool, Wellesley, Massachusetts

Kathy Pomer, Mentor Teacher, JCCs of Greater Boston Early Learning Centers

What is literacy in a high-quality early-childhood setting? What does it look like? What does it mean for educators to promote awareness of developmentally appropriate literacy practices in ways that families can understand? In this workshop, participants will engage in activities that will build confidence in articulating the importance of developmentally appropriate literacy practices with families in an effort to help our culture shift from fear-based reliance on what literacy “should look like” toward knowledge-based practice about how children learn best.

Inclusion in the Jewish Community (Open Session)

Sherry Grossman, Director of Community Services, Gateways

How do we balance the needs of the individual child with the needs of the group? How can we consistently connect to children who display challenging behaviors with compassion and competence? Have you or your team members encountered challenging situations and simply run out of tools or approaches? Or have you had success building positive relationships and shaping scenarios with good outcomes. Either way, we need your perspective and your voice. Please join us for a substantive and open discussion of these important issues.

Transforming the Nature of Your Playground

Eileen Kupersmith, Consultant, Space for Childhood

An examination of Jewish values reveals many references to caring for the Earth, and the importance of appreciating the gifts of nature: *l'avdah ul'shamra*, *shomre adamah*, and *tikkun olam* are just a few examples. And yet, contemporary children spend less time outdoors than at any time in the history of our country. We cannot expect children to care for the Earth until they learn to love it. This session will explore ways to enhance outdoor spaces in order to engage and connect children with nature. Participants will explore the benefits of intellectual growth, health, and social development. Ideas will be shared for bringing curricula outside in all weather. Participants will see examples of outdoor playscapes (home and school transformations), and discuss ways to begin to bring nature into the lives of children at school and at home.

Janucz Korczak: Building a Community of Children

Rabbi Michael Shire, Chief Academic Officer, Hebrew College

What would the world of Jewish education look like if ruled by the needs, aspirations, and fantasies of children? The renowned Polish educator, author, and pediatrician Janucz Korczak deeply believed in the concept of a “community of children,” and wrote about and practiced this innovation as director of orphanages in prewar Warsaw. Though Korczak and his orphans of the Warsaw Ghetto perished in the Treblinka concentration camp, his belief in the sacred quality of childhood and his commitment to understanding the child in all of us is an inspiring and still-provocative idea. Come and find out why!

Workshop Session II (5 concurrent sessions)

5:45–7:00 p.m.

The Power in Connection: How Do We Identify, Harvest, and Use It?

(Hiburim/Connection Track Session B)

Sara Shapiro-Plevan, Founder, Rimonim Consulting

What makes someone a great connector? The characteristics of connectors (sometimes called network weavers) vary by setting, but these individuals never fail to be powerful levers as we work to change our systems. This session will explore basic techniques for encouraging born connectors to do what they do best in our contexts, and how to help individuals improve their capacity to be connectors. We will also think together about why relationships and connections are so important, and how can we use them to our best advantage. Finally, we will consider how we can tap these connections and model them for members of our professional teams, colleagues, parents in our communities, and learners.

Jewish Learning Matters!

Emily Teck, Director, JewishLearningMatters.com

This workshop will offer an explanation and exploration of how JewishLearningMatters.com, a searchable database of peer-reviewed resources—including lesson plans, picture books, songs, projects, videos, and other digital media—deepen and reinforce the understandings of Jewish topics and values in developmentally appropriate ways for both educators and students. Participants will emerge from the session equipped to implement new resources and strategies, and will be empowered to create their own materials as well as access resources designed for them at JewishLearningMatters.com.

The Students Are Easy, the Hard Part Is Dealing with Their Parents

Andrea Katzman, Team Leader, Pre-K–First Grade, Jewish Community Day School of Rhode Island

The refrain of this workshop's title echoes in staff rooms, faculty meetings, and principal offices across the country. While research shows that genuine school-family partnerships greatly impact student learning and growth, the path toward this goal is often unmarked—even treacherous at times! This session will identify the benefits and challenges of school and family relationship-building, and consider some of the theories, skills, and practices of school-family partnerships, thereby providing us with a clearer path forward.

Outdoor Spaces for Healthy Minds: Finding Ways to Connect Kids to Nature in Any Environment

Rachel Danford, Outdoor and Environmental Educator, The Discovery Museums, Acton, Massachusetts

Elizabeth Leahey, Assistant Director of Learning Experiences, The Discovery Museums, Acton, Massachusetts

Research indicates that children (and adults) are spending less and less time outdoors, and becoming disconnected from nature. This is especially an issue for early learners, who depend on caretakers to bring them outdoors. However, providing quality experiences in the natural world isn't as simple as sending kids outside. Many cities and suburbs offer little in the way of publicly accessible green space or are conducive to the "messy" play necessary for children to benefit fully from being outdoors. This session offers ideas on how to promote quality connections with the outdoors, whether surrounded by woods or by parking lots.

Authentic and Meaningful: The Transformation of a Schoolwide Shabbat Celebration

Ellen Dietrick, Director of Early Childhood Learning, Temple Beth Shalom, Needham, Massachusetts

Emily Perlman, Music Teacher, Temple Beth Shalom and the Jewish Community Day School, Watertown, Massachusetts

We believe children are competent beings, capable of real spiritual connection and learning. At this sessions, we will share Temple Beth Shalom's Shabbat-celebration journey from a typical children's Shabbat sing along to a rich and meaningful prayer service designed around the needs and interests of young children. Come ready to sing and learn the hand motions to our favorite songs, review our Shabbat curriculum for ages one to six, and take a peek at some of the materials we use to share Shabbat with our families.

SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27

Sing-a-Long Sh^har^{it}

8:00–8:30 a.m.

Emily Teck, director of JewishLearningMatters.com, helps you start the day with songs and activities inspired by the prayers and themes of the morning service that are ideal to engage members of your early-childhood and young-family communities in developmentally appropriate ways. Learn new repertoire for morning meeting, circle time, parent-child classes, Tot Shabbat, or wake-up time with your kiddos.

Workshop Session III (7 concurrent sessions)

9:30–10:45 a.m.

Mapping Our Connections: What Do We See? (Hiburim/Connection Track Session A)

Sara Shapiro-Plevan Founder, Rimolim Consulting

Who is in? Who is out? We will select a small network of our own and work to map the connections in our network. Using a variety of tools, we will then examine the network as we have represented it to see what we can learn about how we are connected, who holds power, who is absent or on the periphery, and how we can connect with someone new. Why is it important? What are the benefits?

How to Bring Hebrew and Israeli Culture into Your Early-Childhood Environment

Shirah Rubin, Director, Hebrew Play, Brookline, Massachusetts (moderator)

Chantal Lawrence, Director, JCC Early Learning Center, Brookline/Brighton

Sara Sinai, School Director, Congregation Kehillath Israel, Brookline, Massachusetts

Revital Ganzi, Hebrew Coordinator, Hebrew Play, Brookline, Massachusetts

Yael Assaf-Gruzman, Teacher, Israeli Complementary School, Brookline, Massachusetts

Ellen Agulnick, Founding Director, Gan Shelanu, Solomon Schechter Day School of Greater Boston

Why is Hebrew and Israeli culture important to all early Jewish education contexts? How can Hebrew and Israeli culture be integrated into different early-childhood settings? We will discuss the challenges and successes relating to the incorporation of Hebrew and Israeli culture into existing curricula and program goals.

Engaging Families in and around Shul (Open Session)

Rabbi Michael Fel, Associate Rabbi, Temple Emunah, Lexington, Massachusetts

Sending out a weekly congregational video? Watermelon parties every Wednesday? A congregational Tot Shabbat CD? Rabbi Mihael Fel will share and reflect upon different programs and communication strategies that have been used to make Judaism more easily accessible to families of all ages. Come join the Open Session discussion to explore how these strategies can be applied to recruit new families to all kinds of communities.

Better Communication between the Preschool and Families: How?

Raz Wasserstein and Doron Oded, Co-founders, Remini

Come and explore the popular Web and mobile app Remini (www.remini.me), which allows parents, close family, and early-childhood teachers to safely share, update, and create ever-lasting memories of a child's life story. The platform also enables quick and secure communication between parents and their preschool teachers and administrators. The product has been touted by many as the next Instagram.

Starting from Text: An Approach to Professional Learning

Sarah Ruderman Wilensky, Jewish Educator, JCC of Greater Boston

Amy Bolotin, Assistant Director, Godine Early Learning Center, JCC of Greater Boston

How can you introduce Jewish holidays, values, and themes in deeper and more meaningful ways in the classroom? Through small-group work, participants in this workshop will employ a strategy of connecting Jewish texts to modern children's literature (and other secular texts), first to draw out the deeper values associated with the Jewish holidays, and then to explore ideas and materials that provoke and inspire meaningful exploration within classrooms.

Connecting Multiple Identities as a Way to Empower Individuals and Create a Community

Na'ama Ore, Boston Regional Director, Israeli-American Council

Having multiple identities can be challenging, but also an opportunity. What identities do you have as an individual? What types of conversations can you have with your colleagues, caregivers, and the children you educate that will influence the development of their identities? How can your school or organization develop a platform and environment of empowerment for individuals with several identities? How can your school or organization create a community of leaders who have a strong sense of identity? Na'ama Ore will share the model she employs at Israeli-American Council in Boston.

Introduction to Torah Godly Play (double session)

Rabbi Michael Shire, Chief Academic Officer, Hebrew College

Godly Play is an accredited Torah-telling practice designed to enhance the spiritual lives of children. Its application to Jewish education has been pioneered by the Shoolman Graduate School of Jewish Education at Hebrew College and a community of practice led by Rabbi Michael Shire. Early-childhood educators are invited to participate to enhance their repertoire of teaching Torah. There will be an opportunity to practice the art of Godly Play, experience newly written stories on Jewish holidays and Torah stories, and to enroll in a newly established community of practice designed to conduct action research on the impact of Godly Play.

Workshop Session IV (6 concurrent sessions)

11:00 a.m.–12:15 p.m.

The Power in Connection: How Do We Identify, Harvest, and Use It?

(Hiburim Connection Track, Session B)

Sara Shapiro-Plevan, Founder, Rimonim Consulting

What makes someone a great connector? The characteristics of connectors (sometimes called network weavers) vary by setting, but these individuals never fail to be powerful levers as we work to change our systems. This session will explore basic techniques for encouraging born connectors to do what they do best in our contexts, and how to help individuals improve their capacity to be connectors. We will also think together about why relationships and connections are so important, and how can we use them to our best advantage. Finally, we will consider how we can tap these connections and model them for members of our professional teams, colleagues, parents in our communities, and learners.

You Had Me at Hello: Audacious Hospitality as Spiritual Practice

Rabbi Julie Zupan, Associate Director, Reform Jewish Outreach Boston, Newton, Massachusetts

As the Jewish community grows more diverse, how can we facilitate and encourage deep and lasting connections between families, to our school and its host institution, to the larger Jewish community, and to a meaningful Jewish life? We will give special attention to serving families that identify as interfaith, LGBTQ, multicultural, and multiracial.

SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

Authenticity in the Early-Childhood Classroom Inspired by Our Director Seminar to Israel (Open Session)

Chantal Lawrence, Director, JCC Early Learning Center, Brookline/Brighton

Malgosha Szlempo, Assistant Director, Godine Early Learning Center, JCC of Greater Boston

This session will consider a presentation of photographs and discussions that took place at the panelists' visit to preschools in Israel last year, with particular emphasis on a preschool on Kibbutz Nir David and the junkyard playgrounds. Questions that may be discussed include: How is authenticity visible in these classrooms and playgrounds? What does authenticity look like in our early-childhood center community? How do early-childhood educators strive for authenticity? What does that mean for the classroom environment? What does that mean for our professional growth as educator or as director? What does that mean for our relationships with children, families, and colleagues? What steps will we take to make the notion of authenticity concrete in our daily practice?

Remini App Tutoring

Raz Wasserstein and Doron Oded, Co-founders, Remini

Come and learn how to use the Remini app for enhancing communication between preschools and families during a hands-on tutorial.

Yoga Yeladim: An Experiential Workshop Introducing Yoga For Children

Ellen Allard, Recording Artist, Composer, Performer, and Educator

Join Ellen Allard in an experiential workshop exploring the benefits of yoga for young children. Connect with your inner child as she shares a variety of child-friendly yoga techniques with a Jewish twist. Great for teaching self-regulation, focus, and mindfulness.

Engaging Young Children with Books and Music to Teach Jewish Values

Emily Teck, director, JewishLearningMatters.com

Engage your community in integrated living and learning about Jewish values with the help of new and familiar stories, characters, and melodies. Strategies including choral reading, visual thinking strategy, musical storymaking, zipper songs, and more that can be widely applied to a variety of resources will be explained and modeled. Educators will leave with several tools (strategies of engagement) they will have experienced, discussed, and now have a level of comfort to use in their classrooms. Additionally, participants will learn about curricular resources available to them to support their utilization of those tools, including several dozen book-based learning units and a gift of two CDs of Jewish music for kids, from the Rosenfeld Legacy Foundation.

Workshop Session V (5 concurrent sessions)

1:45–3:00 p.m.

Changing Ourselves by Changing Our Connections (Hiburim/Connections Track Session C)

Sara Shapiro-Plevan, Founder, Rimonim Consulting

Real change in organizations, schools, and systems happens when we change not people, but the way that people connect with one another. We will look at techniques and tools for making small-scale changes that shift the way that we work from disconnected to connected, isolated to collaborative, reactive to reflective and one-off to partnerships. Each of these small-scale shifts engages us with others and helps us to connect in relationships.

But I Don't Speak Hebrew! Making Classroom Connections to Israel for Early-Childhood Educators with Limited Hebrew

Sharon Cores, Teacher, Jewish Preschool of Lexington

As early-childhood educators in Jewish settings, we strive to help our young students make a connection to the land and people of Israel. We know how to relate Jewish holidays with Israel, but what about the rest of the year? Join us for an interactive workshop to develop lesson plans and activities to link your secular units to Israel. You will leave with a curriculum web, ideas for brainstorming with the teachers at your school, and connections to secular and Israeli books.

Hesed and Creating a Caring Community in Your Preschool

Dena Glasgow, Director of Faculty and Curriculum Development for Adult Learning, Hebrew College

Erica Streit-Kaplan, Coordinator, Parenting Through a Jewish Lens, Hebrew College

Explore how children's books (often Jewish, but not always) can be used to create a distinctly Jewish caring community in classrooms and school communities. We will see how "just right" books can bring to life the Jewish values around hesed (caring). In particular, this session will highlight new and classic Jewish books that are sensitive to the needs of today's diverse early childhood communities, including non-Jewish, secular and interfaith adults and/or children. We'll spend time considering how teachers from various backgrounds can bring their perspectives/interact with these books.

Torah Alive!

Lorraine Posner Arcus, Early-Childhood Curriculum Consultant

Add a new dimension to your early-childhood curriculum or Tot Shabbat. Create connections to the Torah lessons as the stories come alive for young students through dramatic presentation of the text and creative role-playing. Learn how to create scenery, props, and easy costumes to enhance the dramatic presentation of the Torah lessons. Enhance the learning and understanding of the Torah lessons through discussion topics, craft ideas, cooking activities, and puppets. Learn how to make Torah study an essential part of your curriculum and a bridge between home and school. The lesson presented will be related the current Torah portion as Avraham and Sarah show generosity and hospitality to others. Directions for all activities will be distributed.

The Creative Power of Play for Infants and Toddlers

Amy Bolotin, Assistant Director, Godine Early Learning Center, JCC of Greater Boston

In this interactive workshop, participants will explore the creative power of play. We will examine the ways in which children create and articulate their learning journeys through open-ended, self-directed play. Reflecting on their own experiences with play, participants will examine ways in which authentic Jewish items can be used in combination with open-ended materials to support young children's experience of daily Jewish life and values in meaningful ways.

PRESENTER BIOS

ELLEN AGULNICK, MEd'11

Ellen Agulnick has served since 2010 as founding director of Gan Shelanu, the early-childhood program of Solomon Schechter Day School of Greater Boston. Prior to starting Gan Shelanu, she was director of the nursery school at Congregation Mishkan Tefila in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts. Agulnick has also served as assistant director and lead teacher at Temple Beth Avodah Preschool in Newton, fifth-grade teacher and ESL after-school program instructor for the Newton (Massachusetts) Public Schools, and assistant teacher at Schechter Day School. She holds a bachelor's degree in psychology and elementary education from Brandeis University and a Master of Jewish Education and certificate in early-childhood Jewish education from Hebrew College.

ELLEN ALLARD

Ellen Allard, multi-award-winning recording artist, composer, performer and educator, is one of the most popular and influential Jewish musicians and educators on today's vibrant contemporary Jewish music scene. She presents captivating family concerts (secular and Jewish), tot and family Shabbat Jewish worship services, keynote presentations, and teacher workshops (secular and Jewish), and is enthusiastically and passionately committed to helping children and families build community through the use of song. Widely recognized for her appeal to audiences of all ages, Allard's songs have become the gold standard when it comes to engaging children and adults of all ages and helping them strengthen their Jewish identities. She weaves together powerful, moving and spiritual moments that speak to the hearts, minds and souls of all audiences.

LORRAINE POSNER ARCUS

Lorraine Posner Arcus, a 2001 recipient of the Covenant Award for Outstanding Creative Jewish Educators, is nationally recognized for her work in the fields of early-childhood education and Israeli dance for children and teens. A veteran kindergarten teacher, she integrates Judaic values with science, nature, culture, the world's children and Torah study. Arcus' book *Torah Alive! An Experiential Approach to Teaching Torah to Young Children* (2004, URJ Press) is reflective of her innovative and original curricular programs. She is an early-childhood curriculum consultant, conducting teacher training programs both locally and nationally.

Yael ASSAF-GRUZMAN

Yael Assaf-Gruzman is an art therapist, a clinical consultant, and an educator with a specialization in utilizing creative means to support self-expression and communication. She is a founder of the Muse Art Therapy Studio and a teacher at the Israeli Complementary School in Brookline, Massachusetts. Assaf-Gruzman has been working with children, adults, and families for more than fifteen years, providing support and fostering personal growth through the use of play and creative expression. She grew up in Israel, where she completed her master's degree in expressive arts therapies and a teaching certificate in integrating creative arts in learning. Assaf-Gruzman moved to Boston in 2005 and has designed and led groups, workshops, and community-building activities in various settings, including Hadassah Hospital, Beth-El Preschool, the Center for Family Development, and the Boston Institute for Psychotherapy.

AMY BOLOTIN

Amy Bolotin is assistant director of the Godine Early Learning Center at the Jewish Community Centers of Greater Boston, where she works closely with the infant and toddler teachers and families. A graduate of Bank Street College of Education's Infant and Parent Development program, Bolotin has been working with very young children and their families for more than twenty years. In addition to her work at the JCC, she is involved with the Paradigm Project, a national organization that supports Jewish early-childhood educators. Bolotin is also a recent graduate of the Jewish Early Childhood Leadership Institute. She and Sharon Cores have created a new protocol for learning about Jewish holidays and values through text study that combines both sacred Jewish texts and Jewish children's books. This new approach has been incredibly successful with the teachers at the JCC, and was very well received in presentation at the inaugural Paradigm Project conference.

SHARON CORES

Sharon Cores is celebrating her fifteenth year at the Jewish Preschool of Lexington, Massachusetts, where she currently serves as lead teacher of the mixed-age class. In this role, she enjoys introducing young children to the natural wonders and artistic representations of the world around them. Cores is also the JPL representative to the Boston-Haifa Early Childhood Connection. Prior to joining JPL, Cores worked for more than twenty years in a variety of residential and clinical settings. She holds a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling and a certificate in early childhood Jewish education, the latter from Hebrew College.

RACHEL DANFORD

Rachel Danford is the outdoor and environmental educator at the Discovery Museums in Acton, Massachusetts. She is completing a PhD in environmental conservation and policy at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, where her research focuses on access to green space and environmental-education opportunities in urban areas. Danford holds a master's degree in environmental conservation, also from UMass-Amherst.

ELLEN DIETRICK

A fifteen-year veteran in the field of Jewish early-childhood education, Ellen Dietrick serves as director of early-childhood learning at Temple Beth Shalom in Needham, Massachusetts. She is co-founder of the Paradigm Project, a national organization that supports Jewish early-childhood educators, and author of the children's book *It's Israel's Birthday* (2008, Kar-Ben Publishing), which follows preschoolers on an imaginary journey to Israel. Dietrick holds a Master of Education from the University of Virginia, and is a graduate of the Covenant-JECEI Early Childhood Leadership Fellowship and the Covenant Fellowship for Early Childhood Leadership programs. She recently served as a mentor for the Jewish Early Childhood Education Leadership Institute.

RABBI MICHAEL FEL

Rabbi Michael Mauricio Fel is associate rabbi at Temple Emunah, a Conservative congregation in Lexington, Massachusetts. He was ordained at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York City, where he studied as a Schusterman Rabbinic Fellow and earned a master's degree in midrash and scriptural interpretation. Fel enjoys cooking (and eating), exploring the outdoors, speaking Spanish (his family is from Argentina), and woodworking. He lives in Lexington with his wife, Shayna, and their son, Nadav.

REVITAL GANZI

Revital Ganzi teaches Hebrew at several Greater Boston institutions and organizations, including Hebrew Play, the Jewish Community Day School, and Merkaz Ivri. She formerly served as an immigration officer in the Israeli Defense Forces, where she specialized in teaching Hebrew to new immigrants and introducing them to Israeli culture. Ganzi has also taught Hebrew at the University of Tennessee, the Knoxville Jewish Day School, Heska Amuna Synagogue, and Temple Beth El, all in Knoxville. She is a graduate of the College of Management in Israel and holds a Master of Arts in Teaching from Brandeis University.

DENA GLASGOW

Dena Glasgow is director of faculty and curriculum development in the adult learning division at Hebrew College. Before joining Hebrew College, she worked for five years as director of the Boston-area Jewish Education Program, a Sunday-school community at Brandeis University. She was also a long-term member of the PJ Library Book Selection Committee. As a mother of four children, Glasgow particularly enjoys teaching on parenting topics. She holds a bachelor's degree from Yale University and a master's degree in Jewish studies and Jewish communal service from Brandeis University.

SHERRY GROSSMAN, MAJS'02

Sherry Grossman has worked since 2009 as director of community special-education services at Gateways: Access to Jewish Education. She previously served as founding director and director of early-childhood education at Gan Yeladim preschool of the Jewish Community Centers of Greater Boston. Grossman is a graduate of Simmons College, and holds a Master of Education from Tufts University and a Master of Arts in Jewish Studies from Hebrew College. She supports positive lasting changes for individuals, families, and organizations as a certified professional co-active coach in private practice.

ANDREA KATZMAN

Andrea Katzman is lead preschool teacher and early grades' teacher-leader at the Jewish Community Day School of Rhode Island, and an adjunct faculty member at Hebrew College. Nurturing partnerships with families and communities has been an integral part of her identity and work as an educator for many years. Her formal teaching career began more than a decade ago at Rhode Island College, where she guided teachers as they learned to create diverse, safe, and democratic classrooms. Her experiences in the classroom have reinforced for her the essential nature of family, school, and community partnerships.

PRESENTER BIOS

EILEEN KUPERSMITH

After working for forty years in the field of early-childhood education, Eileen Kupersmith is now concentrating on creating natural playscapes for home and school as a consultant at Space for Childhood. She also continues to provide professional development for teachers and college students, as well as workshops for community groups and parents of young children. Kupersmith formerly served as director of the Leonard and Madlyn Abramson Early Childhood Education Community, a Legacy Heritage School, at Tiferet Bet Israel in Pennsylvania, and was founding director of the Children's Center at Grand View Hospital. She holds a bachelor's degree from Brown University and a master's degree from the Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Study at Tufts University.

CHANTAL LAWRENCE

Chantal Lawrence has worked in the field of education and psychology for almost thirty years, and currently serves as director of the JCC Early Learning Center in Brookline/Brighton. Lawrence cares deeply about building a Jewish foundation for young children and their families through the medium of education. Her passion is the professional development of teachers and how to inspire them to view themselves as learning alongside children with enthusiasm and excitement. Because of her strong belief that literacy and language acquisition play a key role in the future academic success of young children, Lawrence is an advocate for providing foreign-language opportunities, particularly Hebrew, for her preschool students.

ELIZABETH LEAHEY

Elizabeth Leahey is assistant director of learning experiences at the Discovery Museums in Acton, Massachusetts. Before that, she worked at the Providence Children's Museum and an afterschool program at a charter school, both in Rhode Island. She holds a master's degree in museum education from Tufts University.

DORON ODED

Doron Oded is co-founder of Remini, an app that helps improve communication between preschools and families, and facilitates parental involvement. Oded graduated from Ben Gurion University where he earned bachelor's and master's degrees in information system engineering, specializing in machine learning. He has vast experience in technological positions in the Ministry of Defense and the Israel Defense Forces.

NA'AMA ORE

Na'ama Ore is regional director of the Israeli-American Council of Boston. She previously held various senior positions at Clalit Health Services—Israel's largest public health service provider—in areas including operations; quality and strategic planning; and most recently, human resource planning. For the past seven years, she has been an active member and a local chairperson at Ladies Circle International, a volunteer organization that provides support for the underprivileged. Ore holds bachelor's and master's degrees from Bar Ilan University, and a Master of Public Administration from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

JOHANNA PERLIN

Johanna Perlin has been an educator in the field of Jewish early-childhood education for the past twenty-eight years. She has served since 1999 as director of the preschool at Temple Shalom in Newton, Massachusetts. Previously, she was director for seven years at Striar Hebrew Academy and director of the JCC Nursery School, both in Sharon, Massachusetts. Perlin holds a master's degree in early-childhood education from Wheelock College, and a certificate in early-childhood Jewish education from Hebrew College. She is a longtime member of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, and an active member of the Union for Reform Judaism Early Childhood Educators Organization. As a member of the Boston-Haifa Early Childhood Partnership group, Perlin leads the Temple Shalom nursery school staff's curriculum exchange with their counterparts in Israel.

EMILY PERLMAN

Emily Perlman is a music teacher at Temple Beth Shalom in Needham, Massachusetts, and the Jewish Community Day School in Watertown, Massachusetts. At Beth Shalom, Perlman has created an innovative musical Shabbat prayer experience for the youngest learners. She also leads services on Friday evenings and directs the TBS youth choir. Perlman brings to her work a passion for Jewish music and more than twenty years of summer-camp and song-leading experience. She holds a degree in early-childhood education and certification in music education from Tufts University.

LISA PLOTKIN

Lisa Plotkin is assistant director of Gan Elohim Preschool at Temple Beth Elohim in Wellesley, Massachusetts. She holds a master's degree in early education from Lesley University, and post-master's certification in early-education practice, policy, and research from the University of Massachusetts, Boston. For the past three years, Plotkin has been involved with the Paradigm Project in Boston.

KATHY POMER

Kathy Pomer has worked for more than ten years at the Early Learning Centers of the JCC of Greater Boston, where she currently serves as a mentor teacher. She is a graduate of Tufts University, and holds a master's degree in child study. As a teacher, director, parent liaison, and advocate for early childhood, Pomer has works toward helping educators teach with more knowledge and passion, and articulate the importance of what they do to the community around them.

SARA SHAPIRO-PLEVAN

Sara Shapiro-Plevan is founder of Rimonim Consulting and a doctoral candidate at the Davidson School of the Jewish Theological Seminary. Her work and research focus on relationships and their ability to improve our practice and change the way we understand our work. Shapiro-Plevan consults primarily with Jewish educational organizations, schools, congregations, and foundations to support their alignment with vision, and develop a networked, collaborative culture and approach to their practice in a variety of domains. She has partnered with congregations across the country to reimagine their model, build new governance structures, and align curriculum with vision, previously serving as an education director in New York congregations as well as leadership roles at the Board of Jewish Education of New York (now the Jewish Education Project) and the metropolitan New York district of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism. Shapiro-Plevan is a graduate of Brandeis University, holds a master's in Jewish education from the Jewish Theological Seminary, and was a fellow in the Senior Educators' Program at the Melton Centre at Hebrew University. She currently serves on the boards of the Jewish Educators Assembly and the Network for Research in Jewish Education.

SHIRAH RUBIN

Shirah Rubin is a Jewish educator, arts educator, and consultant. She has served since 2010 as director of Hebrew Play, a Brookline, Massachusetts-based nonprofit that runs Hebrew-language immersion playgroups for children zero to age five and their families. Rubin has previously taught Hebrew at an immersion program for kindergartners, in Manhattan; served as an art instructor in Jerusalem and Herzliya; and led and developed arts workshops and curricula at the Ruth Youth Wing for Art Education and the Shrine of the Book at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem. She was the founding director of education and administration at the Berkshire Institute for Music and Arts (now BIMA at Brandeis); head of the art department at Gann Academy; and a teaching artist at the Jewish Museum in New York City and the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. Rubin holds a master's in Jewish education from the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York City. In June, she received the Sidney Hillson/Rose Bronstein Memorial Award at Hebrew College commencement, given for distinguished leadership and commitment to the centrality of the Hebrew language in Jewish education and for the advancement of Jewish culture and civilization.

RABBI MICHAEL SHIRE, PH.D.

Rabbi Michael Shire is chief academic officer of Hebrew College, where he also serves as dean of the Shoolman Graduate School of Jewish Education and the graduate programs in Jewish studies. In addition, he is the founder of Torah Godly Play, a spiritual-based pedagogy for entering biblical narrative. Shire holds a doctorate in Jewish education from Hebrew Union College and *s'micha* from Leo Baeck College in London.

SARA SINAI, MJED'07

Sara Sinai is director of KINS Preschool of Kehillath Israel in Brookline, Massachusetts. She previously ran a Hebrew immersion program at Gan Yeladim Early Learning Center at the JCC of Greater Boston. Born in Tel Aviv, Sinai is fluent in English and Hebrew. She holds degrees in English and elementary education from Simmons College, and a Master of Jewish Education from Hebrew College.

PRESENTER BIOS

ERICA STREIT-KAPLAN

Erica Streit-Kaplan is coordinator of Parenting Through a Jewish Lens at Hebrew College. As a mother of two young daughters, she is delighted to have a role in helping other parents learn and reflect on parenting, and make decisions that are right for their families. She is committed to inclusion of all families with diverse experiences and family types. Streit-Kaplan is a graduate of Rutgers University, and holds Master of Social Work and Master of Public Health degrees from Boston University.

MALGOSHA SZLEMPO

Malgosha Szlemko is assistant director of the Godine Early Learning Center at the JCC of Greater Boston, working primarily with the three-, four-, and five-year-old classrooms. She has been working with children for more than thirty years, first as a child psychologist in Poland, and later as director of a Jewish day-care center in Brighton, Massachusetts. Malgosha holds master's in psychology from the University of Wroclaw in Poland, and passed the National Clinical Mental Health Counseling exam for the state of Massachusetts. Her passion is empowering families, teachers, and children to enjoy the outdoors and explore their surroundings. She inspires her teachers to use the outdoors as an extension of the classroom, where experiential learning challenges children to further develop their social, cognitive, and motor skills.

EMILY ARONOFF TECK

Emily Aronoff Teck is director of JewishLearningMatters.com. The site is a constantly evolving, pluralistic, searchable bank of peer-reviewed Jewish educational resources, including lessons plans, book units, songs, stories, projects, crafts, videos, and research-based strategies. The goal is to extend and expand learning for students in areas including Jewish thought, text, values, and history created to help educators update existing curricular design and teaching styles in a manner consistent with twenty-first-century teaching and learning. Teck has released four albums of Jewish children's music, and is featured in PJ Library song compilations. She holds a bachelor's degree in Jewish studies, a Master of Education in curriculum and instruction, and is pursuing an EdD in Jewish education from Gratz College.

RAZ WASSERSTEIN

Raz Wasserstein is co-founder of Remini, a startup that helps improve communication between preschools and families, and facilitates parental involvement. He holds both bachelor's and master's degrees in information systems engineering, specializing in information privacy, from Ben Gurion University. Wasserstein has vast experience in technological positions in the Ministry of Defense and the Israel Defense Forces.

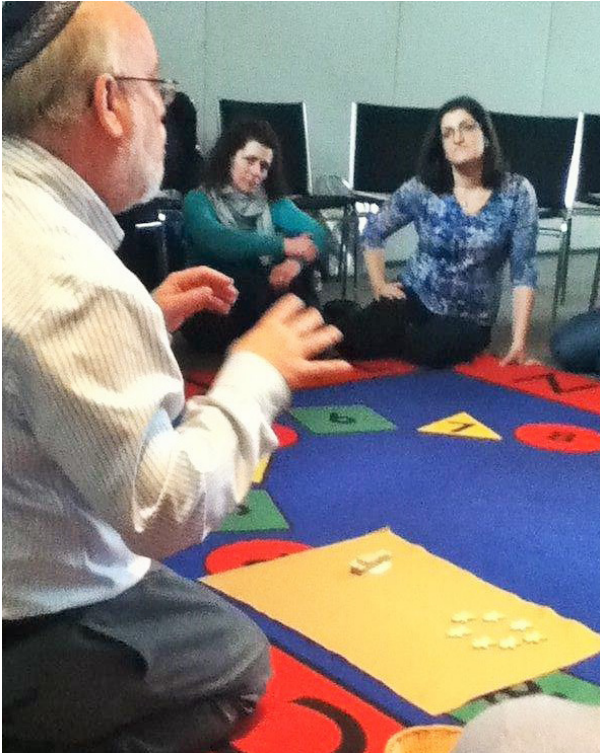
SARAH RUDERMAN WILENSKY

Sarah Ruderman Wilensky is the PJ Goes to School educator at the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, an experienced Jewish educator, and the founder of JewFood, where she specializes in teaching about Jewish identity, holidays, and values through cooking and eating. Through JewFood, Wilensky is a food blogger for Interfaith Family, where she also serves as a member of the Advisory Council. Wilensky has worked with students of every age, and most recently was the Jewish educator at the Jewish Community Centers of Greater Boston's Early Learning Centers. She is a StorahTelling trained educator, is trained in Torah Godly Play, has been a member of the 92Y's Shababa Network, is a member of Hazon's Jewish Food Educator's Network, and is active with the Paradigm Project. Wilensky is a graduate of Muhlenberg College and studied in the Master of Arts in Religious Education program at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in New York.

RABBI JULIE ZUPAN

Since receiving rabbinic ordination Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in 1999, Julie Zupan has served in a variety of congregational, educational and pastoral settings. She currently serves as associate director for the Union for Reform Judaism/Reform Jewish Outreach Boston, and as an instructor for Parenting Through a Jewish Lens, a program of Hebrew College. From 2008 to 2014, Zupan served as the Jewish educator for the Early Learning Centers of the Jewish Community Centers of Greater Boston, working most closely with the Godine Center in Newton. She is especially devoted to helping interfaith families and those new to the Jewish community access the deep beauty and wisdom of Jewish tradition.

Torah Godly Play



The Center for Jewish Spirituality at Hebrew College has developed a unique method of teaching Torah and spirituality, Torah Godly Play, as a way to tell stories, raise questions, and create community while encouraging imagination, spiritual growth, and religious learning.

Participants in trainings have reported that the most important thing they learned was that they can implement this curriculum on their own, and that there are resources available to support them in this endeavor.

To learn more about Torah Godly Play, upcoming training sessions, and our forthcoming guide to Torah Godly Play for educators, email jrubin@hebrewcollege.edu.



"Godly Play respects children (and adults) in a way that appeals to me as an educator."



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