



# Beth Emeth Early Childhood Center

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## CAPTURING HIDDEN LEARNING POTENTIAL

Have you ever taken the eye exam that tests your peripheral vision and you have to click a button every time you see a squiggly line? Or how about when you are having your hearing tested and you need to raise your hand when you hear a \*beep\*? When you are tuned in to something – your awareness is heightened, and you are much more likely to capture the things you are searching for. At BEECC, one of the things we heighten our senses and awareness for is for authentic, real-world learning to happen. It means being mindful and ready to expand upon moments that have “a potential.” When these golden moments present themselves, we are excited to begin a valuable learning process and journey with the children that takes us to new places together. Let me share an example that recently had an impact on the entire school...

The BEECCPA, thanks to the money raised at the dreidel shop, was able to purchase some new items for us for the flex space (our indoor play area). How easy and simple it would have been to put these new items in the room and allow the children to have fun and play. However, we would have let an amazing learning opportunity pass us by. Instead, we saw the potential this situation had to offer and chose to seize the moment! First, the BEECC PA president and I presented the new items to the Dalet class – our oldest children. We first explained why and where these items came from, answered their questions, and then, connecting it to the exploration of their body they are currently immersed in, asked for their help. We asked them if they would test out the equipment, generate rules on how to keep our bodies safe, and share their findings with the other classes. I'm sure you can imagine their delight and sense of pride, and they accepted this responsibility with much enthusiasm! From seeing the potential in one simple thing – new flex space toys – emerged a valuable and authentic learning process.

While the teachers were there to scaffold the experience, by demonstrating our respect for and trust in the children, it not only empowered them to feel a sense of ownership and accountability, but the process itself led to more than I can even write about: An appreciation and awareness that things don't just appear, but come from somewhere with purpose and thought. Experiencing mindfulness as they thought about the connection between their bodies in relation to these new items. An understanding of why rules are made – and navigating how to work collaboratively together to come up with those ideas. Discovering how to share the knowledge they constructed and developing leadership and communication skills through teaching the younger classes. These just name a few!

And of course, the message it sends to the other children in the school is equally valuable. There is something extremely powerful about children learning from other children. One Gimel class teacher even thanked the Dalet

teachers during our faculty meeting the following week and commented on what a difference it had made for their children. The process is actually still in progress! The Dalet children are currently working on photographing the items so they can label the bins they are kept in – and there are some more new flex space items still on the way!

It's amazing how a simple moment that could so easily be overlooked can become such an authentic and meaningful learning opportunity. At BEECC we strive to do our best to keep our awareness open and ready to capture the rich learning potential around us – and now you can see why! These moments are like geodes – from the outside they may seem ordinary and we can easily pass them by, but when you take the time to explore them, you discover an extraordinary world that lives inside that you can't imagine never having experienced.

-- Robin



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**RUACH WITH RABBI MINA!**



**Preschool through Grade 5 and families,  
 join us for a fun and engaging Shabbat experience  
 filled with singing, lots of learning and a few prizes!**

**Saturday Mornings at 10:30 AM**  
**Culminating in the sanctuary for the end of services and Kiddush**

**March 17**

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