



# SHABBAT

## Youth & Family Services

### **1. Why do we come on Shabbat? Why do we come every week?**

Shabbat is a time to gather together for song, study, and prayer. Shabbat is a time to recharge and prepare ourselves for the week ahead. That is part of the reason why we offer our unique Shabbat Youth & Family services every week at B'nai Israel—we want to make sure you always have the opportunity to unplug, unwind, and prepare for what is ahead. Additionally, the experience of communal worship on Shabbat is a core component of synagogue life and what it means to be part of a Jewish community. At B'nai Israel, we are proud to offer weekly options for our youth and families to fully engage in the experience of Shabbat, the holiest day of the week.

### **2. What services are part of Shabbat Youth & Family Services and who goes to each of them?**

We offer three core services (Tot Shabbat, Family Minyan, Teen Minyan), as well as some special events to mark occasions throughout the year. Tot Shabbat is for preschool-age children and their parents, and it meets every week from 11:00–11:45 AM, typically in Hayman Chapel. Family Minyan is designed for Grades K–6 and meets each week from 10:00–11:45 AM, typically in Goldberg Youth Chapel. Teen Minyan is for our post-B'nai Mitzvah teens and pre-teens and meets every other week from 10:45–11:45 AM. Each month we celebrate Birthday Shabbat, typically on the first Shabbat of each month, with a brief ceremony at the conclusion of our services and a special treat at Youth Kiddush. We also honor each grade at scheduled Grade Shabbatot throughout the year. All of our Shabbat Youth & Family Services conclude with Youth Kiddush of grape juice, challah, and cookies, generously provided by B'nai Israel Sisterhood.

### **3. What is the connection between Family Minyan and Talmud Torah?**

Family Minyan is a core component of the Talmud Torah curriculum, designed to provide a space in which our students learn more about prayer and worship. If you like sports, think of our Talmud Torah classes as practices and scrimmages, whereas Family Minyan is the game where the athletes (or students!) put into practice all that they have learned. The experiences of study and worship are intimately bound together, and we therefore construct our program with this holistic vision in mind.

### **4. What is the connection between Family Minyan and Jewish day schools?**

Although B'nai Israel is not formally tied to any of our neighborhood Jewish day schools, many of our members are students in these schools. Many of these students have great familiarity with Jewish prayer and are an asset to any service in which they participate. We welcome all students into our Shabbat Youth & Family Services, and we have designed the services so as to offer something for everyone!

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## **5. What is Gold Kippah? How do I get one?**

Gold Kippah Honor Society recognizes students for their proficiency in various prayers. There are four levels to the program: Blue, Bronze, Silver, and Gold. This program is tied to our Talmud Torah curriculum, where students are learning prayers during the week that will allow them to move up the levels to eventually reach Gold Kippah on Shabbat! We also invite our day school students to participate. Gold Kippah Prayer Practice is each week at 10:00 AM before the start of Family Minyan. Students may come at that time to demonstrate proficiency in a prayer and receive credit on their Gold Kippah card from one of the clergy. Click [HERE](#) for more details.

## **6. What is “Grade Shabbat?” Why do we have these?**

Grade Shabbat is a time to honor and recognize each grade level. On your scheduled Shabbat, the entire grade is invited to lead prayers, teach about the weekly Torah reading, and participate in other ways. These Shabbat services are an opportunity for the entire family to come out and celebrate the accomplishments of their children and their grade level. We look forward to celebrating with you!

## **7. I’m a parent. Where do I go during youth services?**

Great question! Parents are invited to all our services, and they are more than welcome to sit with their children to pray and learn together. We require parents to attend with their children for Tot Shabbat, whereas they are free to choose whether to stay with them for Family Minyan. We kindly request that if you choose to stay with your children for the service, that you please assist the service leader in maintaining a sense of decorum and respect for the atmosphere of Shabbat. Parents are welcome to attend any of our Shabbat morning services, including our youth services and our main sanctuary service in Dweck Sanctuary.

## **8. I’m a parent with children who go to two different services, so what do I do?**

If you have a child in Tot Shabbat, we request that you stay with them for the duration of that service. For all other services, parents are free to choose where to go, and they can certainly come into our main sanctuary service in Dweck Sanctuary while youth services are ongoing. Alternatively, parents can choose to bring their entire family, regardless of their children’s ages, to any one of our services. The age guidelines described above (Question #2) are simply guidelines, not rules, and we welcome all learners of all ages at all of our services.

## **9. What is EPIC Shabbat?**

EPIC Shabbat is held about three times each year. Each EPIC Shabbat has a theme and typically includes a brunch, activities for children from Tots to 6th Grade, and a parallel parent learning program for the grownups. All in the B’nai Israel community are invited to participate in EPIC Shabbat, and friends are also welcome to attend.