

**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 Magic 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 Magic and who goes to each of them?

Shabbat Magic offers three core services, 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 a.m. Mini Minyan is designed for grades K-2, and it meets on scheduled Shabbat mornings from 10:30-11:45 a.m. (see below for details). Junior Congregation is designed for grades 3-6 when Mini Minyan meets, and for grades K-6 when it does not. Junior Congregation meets each week from 10:30-11:45 a.m. We will offer three special Mishpacha Family Learning Services, on December 16th, May 5th, and June 9th, from 10:00-11:30am. These services are led by the clergy, and families with children of all ages are invited to attend. We also feature a monthly teen service for grades 7-12, which will meet October 7, November 4, December 2, January 6, February 3, March 3, April 14, May 5, and June 9.

We also celebrate each month's birthdays on scheduled Shabbat mornings, and we have Shabbat mornings that honor each of our grades. Click [HERE](#) for more details.

3. What is the connection between Junior Congregation and Talmud Torah?

Junior Congregation 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 Junior Congregation 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 Junior Congregation and Jewish day schools?

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

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 in this program. 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 a new trivia contest. 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 of 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 Mini Minyan and for Junior Congregation. 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 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.