



*Come learn, play and grow with us!*

# FAMILY HANDBOOK CONGREGATION ALBERT EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

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## Welcome

Congregation Albert's Early Childhood Center, (ECC) established in 1982, strives to make your child's school experience a happy and secure one that will set a positive foundation for all future learning. The ECC is committed to providing a developmentally appropriate learning environment for a diverse population of young children, gently integrating Jewish culture, values and holidays into an inspiring school experience.

Congregation Albert's Early Childhood Center offers a highly accredited 5 Star, quality school program in a positive child-centered environment. Our faculty prides itself in providing a great sense of stability for our students and creates a close-knit family environment for all of our families. The Early Childhood Center offers the following programs for children between two and six years of age: a 2 year old class, a 3 year old class, a 4 year old class, and a 5 year old, accredited kindergarten class.

We also offer a before school program from 8:00AM – 9:00AM and an after school program to serve the needs of our working families from 3:00 PM – 4:00 PM. We try to accommodate the needs of our families, so for late afternoon, a 4:00 PM – 5:00 PM availability with a minimum of 5 children pre-registered for that time may be possible. For the 2023 – 2024 school year, our school day ends at 4:00 PM with the possibility of extended care past that time.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact the EC Director at 883-0306 or at [ecc@congregationalalbert.org](mailto:ecc@congregationalalbert.org).

## Congregation Albert Mission Statement

Congregation Albert, founded in 1897, is the oldest continuing Jewish organization in New Mexico.

We are a Reform congregation whose members rejoice in our diversity.

Together, we are committed to the ongoing work of building a congregation shaped by the Jewish values of *Kedusha* (spirituality), *Kehillah* (community), *Torah Lishmah* (lifelong learning) and *Tikkun Olam* (repairing the world).

## ECC Mission Statement

The Congregation Albert ECC has a unique opportunity to engage young children and their families in a rich and meaningful Jewish communal life in partnership with the professional staff of the ECC. The mission of the ECC is to provide excellence in the educational environment while providing opportunities for families to participate in building a strong foundation of personal relationships and communal belonging which are laid down in early childhood experiences. At this stage of their lives, families with young children are open to considering questions of identity and connection for themselves and their children. This time spent with young children offers Congregation Albert an unrivaled opportunity to engage young families and deepen this Jewish journey while simultaneously strengthening the membership of Congregation Albert.

## Philosophy Statement

Congregation Albert's approach to early childhood education is based on extensive knowledge about young children and how they learn. While no two teachers ever have the exact same teaching style all ECC faculty are guided by the same underlying early childhood philosophy.

The program has evolved from our beliefs about what is developmentally appropriate. The faculty of the ECC believes young children have the best opportunity to develop in an authentic environment that stimulates their curiosity and capitalizes on their abilities through developmentally appropriate activities and projects. We believe that *play (with a purpose)* is essential in children's lives. We believe that through exploration and discovery our pedagogical practice should sustain a culture of inquiry, where educators listen, wonder and reflect with their students.

Each child brings uniqueness to the school experiences. We know those experiences, whether in culture, language, growth patterns, experiences, strengths and approaches to the learning situation are individual. The role of the teacher as a facilitator is first to assess the developmental level of each child, and then provide an appropriate learning environment for the different needs, interests and developmental levels of each child within a safe and loving, nurturing and educationally sound environment.

## Anti-Bias Statement

Congregation Albert understands that people are different in any number of ways, yet all are precious as God's creation. We embrace diversity and work against bias. We are a community of various genders, sexual orientations, family structures, economic resources, races, national origins, cultures, abilities, religions and ages.

## Licensing

Our Early Childhood Center has achieved the **5 STAR** level of accreditation by the state of New Mexico. It is the highest level of accreditation awarded by the state, and we are rated according to state required standards of excellence. We were the 11<sup>th</sup> of more than 350 schools statewide to achieve this distinction.

## General Program

Core school classes begin at 9:00 AM and end at 1:00PM or 3:00PM, daily. The Two Year-Old and Three Year-Old programs offer a choice of 2, 3, 4, or 5 days a week. The 4 year old program has a choice of 3, 4, or 5 days a week. The kindergarten program meets 5 days a week, from 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM. Extended care will also be available every afternoon from 3:00PM - 4:00 PM. To meet the needs of your family, additional childcare hours are also available in the morning from 8:00AM - 9:00AM, and then in the afternoon from 3:00 PM until 4:00PM.

Extended care from 4:00 PM – 5:00 PM is enrollment dependent.

#### **TYPICAL DAILY SCHOOL SCHEDULE (with ability to be flexible)**

9:00-9:30 Self Selection (may be inside or outside)  
9:30-9:45 Circle Time  
9:45-10:15 Projects  
10:15-10:30 Classroom Clean-up time  
10:30-10:45 Bathroom Break (one of several during the day)  
10:45-11:00 Snack  
11:00-11:40 Small and large group learning  
11:40-12:00 Self Selection (may be inside or outside)  
12:00 – 1:00 Literacy, lunch and quiet play  
1:15 – 3:00 Afternoon session, outdoor play, rest and/or nap  
3:00-4:00 P.M. Extended care  
4:00 – 5:00PM Extended care, enrollment dependent

### **Curriculum**

The curriculum in each classroom is created with developmentally appropriate practice as a guideline where the children's daily schedule provides for a balance of activities with respect to the child's total daily experience, always focusing on the social and emotional growth of the child. Introduction to basic Hebrew vocabulary, traditions and symbols of Jewish holidays are gently integrated into our curriculum.

### **Beginnings with Baby: for babies, 6 months – 1 year of age: (45 minutes)**

This interactive class is designed for you and baby, to help bring music and movement to life! Songs and finger-plays are fun, stimulating and developmentally appropriate for our youngest learners. With your baby, explore and discover the wonderful world of play and learning. In order to keep the play space clean, please wear or bring socks, as shoes are not permitted on the classroom rug. (all classes are enrollment dependent)

### **Together with Tots: for tots, 1 – 2 years of age (1 hour)**

With your tot, experience music, finger-plays, songs, art and much more, all under the guidance of an early childhood educator. It is a social experience where tots are offered the opportunity to interact with peers in a relaxed and play oriented setting. This class encourages relationship development and promotes feelings of security and independence. (all classes are enrollment dependent)

**Please note: Classroom configuration is Enrollment Dependent**

### **2 Year-Old Program (2 by September 1)**

Our 2 year old class is often a starting point for students and many times is a child's first introduction to a group setting. Every child is unique, developing language and motor skills at different rates. The children at this stage sometimes experience their first separation from parents and so easing the separation for both parent and child is of utmost importance. We provide a variety of hands-on experiences and encourage each child to develop at his/her own pace. Children are introduced to a variety of music, art, dance and movement activities. Introduction to age appropriate Hebrew terminology and Jewish holidays is thematically woven into our curriculum. We encourage creativity, understanding the environment, social skills, and respect for self and others. In addition,

we provide support and encouragement for toilet training when the child is showing developmental signs of readiness. Children in this program can enroll for 2, 3, 4, or 5 days a week, either half or full days. Nap time is required for our full time 2's day.

### **3 Year-Old Program (3 by September 1)**

Our 3 year old program encourages each child to develop and perform at his/her full potential. The program stresses conceptual development and hands-on learning. Children must be potty trained by the time they enter this program. In this classroom we have children aged 3 through 4. These children are ready for more independence and choice. Mornings begin with self-selection, encouraging children to explore the environment, acquire social skills and develop respect for themselves and others. The use of materials enables children to be successful in their understanding of language, number concepts, science, cooking, art, music and dramatic play. Introduction to age appropriate Hebrew terminology and Jewish holidays is thematically woven into our curriculum. The children participate in circle games and other cooperative ventures throughout the day. Parallel play moves to more collaborative play in this group as well. Vocabulary expands and children feel comfortable talking about their feelings. Each child is treated as an individual moving through developmentally appropriate creative, literacy, scientific and numeracy experiences. Children in this program can enroll for 2, 3, 4, or 5 days a week, either half or full days.

### **4 Year Old Program**

In our 4 year old program, all the children are 4 years of age by September 1<sup>st</sup> and they can attend 3, 4, or 5 days a week, either half or full days. The morning is structured yet continues to be a developmentally appropriate environment. Activities in the classroom and on the playground reflect longer attention spans and support ongoing development of gross & fine motor skills. Our 4 year old curriculum includes conceptual exploration, supports aesthetic creativity, encourages upper and lower case alphabet recognition in readiness for reading and language arts, exploration of science and the world around us, as well as math concepts and number identification. Introduction to age appropriate Hebrew terminology and Jewish holidays is thematically woven into our curriculum. It is our desire to provide a nurturing, supportive environment that cultivates the growth of the child both academically and affectively.

### **5 Year Old Program/Kindergarten**

This program runs from 9:00AM to 3:00PM, Monday through Friday. Some children enrolled in this class do meet the state mandated cut-off date of September 1. However, children enrolled in this class do not have to be 5 years of age by that date. For these students, this state accredited program is considered as a "Transitional Kindergarten." The objectives encompassed in this program focus on the development of the whole child in a nurturing and developmentally appropriate learning environment that allows children to both lead and engage in rich and meaningful experiences. Students who finish this program can be eligible for first grade in APS.

An enriched kindergarten curriculum is integrated with study in the content areas of mathematics, language arts and reading, science, health-related issues and social studies. Areas of art, music, drama and movement are incorporated to promote creative

expression. Field trips are an integral component of learning as they enhance the existing curriculum. Judaic studies include recognition of and participation in holidays, traditions, rituals and customs in addition to introduction to age appropriate Hebrew in the classroom. Above all, we support the child in the development of the habit of success.

## **The Extended Day**

In addition to our school classes which run from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM or 9:00AM – 3:00PM each day, we are able to offer extended care options from 8:00AM – 9:00AM and 3:00 PM – 4:00 PM (or until 5:00PM) for an additional fee. For the comfort of your children and in considering that our teachers need this time to clean their classrooms and prepare for the next day, please understand that our half day classes end promptly at 1:00 PM and our full day classes end promptly at 3:00PM. If you are late in picking up your child, a late fee of \$5.00 will be assessed every 10 minutes past 1:10PM or 3:10PM. Explained another way, at the end of your child's scheduled school day a late fee will be charged for children not picked up on time. A late fee of \$5.00 will be assessed for every 10 minutes past your scheduled time.

We can provide drop in service at an additional fee, if we have the appropriate staffing in place. 24 hour notice to the EC Director helps us ensure this option. It is important that you understand that the safety of your child is our primary concern. Of course, in the event of an emergency we will do our best to accommodate the needs of your family.

## **Rest Time**

Following our 1:00PM dismissal, rest and/or nap time will be provided for children enrolled in our full day programs. Children who stay for rest or nap are encouraged to bring a favorite nap item/lovey, a blanket and a pillow for their comfort. Blankets and pillows should be labeled and sent home on Fridays to be laundered. Comfortable mats are provided.

## **Shabbat**

Every Friday the Early Childhood Center comes together to celebrate Shabbat. Children participate in the lighting of the Shabbat candles and the blessings over wine (grape juice) and challah (braided bread). The EC Director, the Rabbi and Cantor lead with stories and the singing of Shabbat songs. Families are welcome to join us each Friday at 9:30AM for this joyful, community celebration. Visiting family members are also invited to attend!

## **Summer Camp Program**

The summer program consists of exciting and creative theme based, hands on units divided into age appropriate groups. Registration takes place in the spring. For more information please speak with the EC Director.

## **Calendar & Holidays**

The Early Childhood Center typically follows the Albuquerque Public School calendar as well as the Jewish calendar, closing in accordance with some Jewish holidays.

Each school year a calendar will be provided to all families enrolled in our program and will also be available on the Congregation Albert website. Calendar dates can be subject to change. As a Jewish community we do not participate in the following holidays: St. Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day or Halloween. Please do not have your child wear a costume or bring treats to school on Halloween or Valentine's Day. Save your costumes for Purim!

## **Lost & Found**

Parents, please check to see if your child is missing any belongings. Items left after a few weeks will be disposed of or sent to charity. **Please remember to label your child's belongings to minimize the possibility of loss.** We suggest using a "Sharpie" to label your child's clothing, as they are not always able to identify items that belong to them.

## **Policies & Procedures**

### **Billing Information**

At Open House, you will sign an Enrollment/Billing Worksheet that determines your monthly tuition. We individualize your schedule and are as flexible as possible. Scheduling changes can be made by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the previous month, after a conversation with the EC Director. Please be aware that there will be an automatic 3% surcharge on every credit card transaction. ACH payments carry no surcharge.

Please note that any financial information can only be released to the individual(s) listed on your child's account.

Tuition is due on the first of each month and is considered late after the 10<sup>th</sup>. The first time that tuition is late a \$25 charge will be incurred. The second time that tuition is late a \$50 charge will be incurred. The third time that tuition is late; there will be a \$75 charge and the parent must provide bank account information for tuition to be automatically charged. The months do not have to be consecutive. Students may not enter a new school month until all unpaid balances are cleared.

### **Billing Responsibilities**

Tuition is amortized at an annual rate, and then divided by 9.5 months. The tuition amount will remain constant for the full 9.5 months of the school year regardless of holidays or breaks in the schedule, including time for family holidays and/or vacations so as to ensure a child's space in their respective class.

If a situation arises where a child will not be at school for an extended period of one month or more, there are 2 options available:

- Families can continue with their set payment or
- Formally dis-enroll in writing and then re-enroll their child with the appropriate payment.

It is important that you understand that if you choose to dis-enroll, we cannot guarantee that your child's space will still be available when you decide to return to school.

Since school begins in mid-August, the amount due is half of the regular monthly payment (the ".5" on the amortization schedule), which is payable at Open House.

All further full payments are **DUE IN ADVANCE ON THE FIRST OF EACH MONTH**. Exceptions will be made only for a family emergency or prolonged illness, with documentation from the appropriate medical or legal professional.

### **Scholarship Information:**

Limited, need-based scholarship funds may be available. Please contact the EC Director for more information.

### **Confidentiality Policy**

Your children's records and personal information will be kept confidential and are for the use of appropriate staff only. Accident reports will not name children involved in any incidents except for the child whose family is being given the report.

### **Records Policy**

When all financial obligations to the school have been met, student records will be forwarded/released to a requested educational institution with written permission from the student's parent or guardian.

### **Regulations**

Congregation Albert Early Childhood Center operates under the provisions of the New Mexico CYFD/ECECD Licensed Child Care Center Regulations. A copy of these regulations can be found in the school office.

### **Enrollment and DisEnrollment/Expulsion**

The enrollment process begins with a phone call to the EC Director and a scheduled visit. Prospective families are given a tour and an explanation of our program along with the opportunity to spend some time in the classroom. When the family is ready to register, appropriate paperwork will be provided for completion. This paperwork includes the Registration Form, the Enrollment/Billing Worksheet, the ECC Waiver, ECC Release Form, Authorization for Pick-up, a Student Health Form and a copy of current immunization information.

In the infrequent event of a child's disenrollment, the EC Director will set up a meeting with the parents/guardians and classroom teachers. Following documentation and meetings with parents/guardians, circumstances that would necessitate withdrawal could include but may not be limited to:

- Behavior which endangers the health and safety of the child, other children or faculty.
- Failure to pay fees
- Parental/Familial/Custodial refusal to adhere to school policies

There will be a 30 day trial period during which time we reserve the right to not permanently enroll any child whose needs we cannot meet. Following that 30 day trial period, the ECC reserves the right to terminate service if a child is unable to benefit from the program, if the program is unable to meet the special needs of a child or family, or if the child or family causes undue disruption or danger to the program.

## Absences

If your child is absent for any reason, please let us know by calling the school office at 883-0306, or email the EC Director at [ecc@congregationalbert.org](mailto:ecc@congregationalbert.org). Please help to keep communication between home and school open by informing the classroom teacher of vacations, appointments, etc., which may involve absences. We do not provide the option of "make-up" days if your child misses a scheduled day.

## Arrival & Departures

Core school classes begin promptly at 9:00AM and end at 1:00PM or 3:00PM. Since the onset of COVID, drop off and pick up have been curbside or in a designated space on our front lawn. When parents are in the building, here is the protocol: Please enter the building using the school door. Upon entering there is a keypad that will allow you entry to the school with the use of a fob. When we receive your registration form you will be given a fob. It is each family's responsibility to make sure all people authorized to pick up your children are aware of the required protocols (whether curbside or fob). Please walk your child into the classroom. There is a sign-in/out sheet at the door to each classroom. Please remember to sign your child in and out each day. When arriving, please check in with a faculty member who will assist your child in making a positive transition to the classroom. We ask that you inform the faculty if there are any relevant issues we should be aware of (family illness, any specific reason your child might be extra sensitive that day). Always feel free to call the school later in the day if you need reassurance that your child is doing well. While you are welcome to stay for a short while in most cases, once you are ready to say good-bye, do it with a smile and a smooth transfer to a faculty member who will then be able to direct your child to an activity taking place within the room. If someone other than the parent or designated caretaker is picking up the child, please inform both Director and the classroom teachers. The assigned person must be included in the list of people authorized to pick up the child. The person who picks up the child will be asked to present identification. Children not picked up on time will be taken to the after-school program and parents will be charged for the extended care fees.

## Safety/Security

While we pride ourselves on being a warm and welcoming community, we have to acknowledge that we have security in our building for a good reason. We are fortunate that the Temple is security conscious and they have provided a keypad/fob that allows limited access to the school wing. We humbly ask for you to be conscious of the safety of all our children and ask any stranger to go to the main entrance of our building for entry.

Our open communication policy states that any information that might impact the health, safety or well-being of our children and families will be made known to all enrolled families. Such relevant information will be passed along to families as soon as possible. Notification will be sent home with each student and if necessary, by mail or e-mail.

## Concerns & Compliments

Parents/families/guardians are urged to be direct and candid when they have concerns or compliments. Our faculty is committed to providing the BEST school experience for your child. If you feel this is not being accomplished, we want this feedback.

If you feel you have been unable to resolve your concerns with a teacher or you are unable to deal with this person directly, contact the EC Director. If you feel the EC Director has not provided an adequate forum or action, contact Rabbi Celia Surget, at [rabbisurget@congregationalbert.org](mailto:rabbisurget@congregationalbert.org).

## Conferences

Parent/Teacher conferences are held annually, with scheduled Open Houses providing extra opportunities for teachers to share your child's work. If the need arises, an additional conference can always be scheduled. For your convenience, notices of times and dates of the conference will be posted in each classroom and on the calendar you receive at Open House in August. Notice of Open Houses will be posted in advance.

Faculty is always available to discuss our program in greater detail. Parents/Guardians should feel free to set up a time outside of class time to speak to the teacher, and not when class is in session, as the teachers are focused on the children during these times. We stress open and honest communication between school and home.

## Dress Code

Children should come to school wearing appropriate clothing for active play and school activities; children should not feel worried about getting dirty, therefore it is preferable that they not wear "special" outfits. The children play outside almost everyday. Even on cold days it is healthy for them to be outside, so please dress your child accordingly. Mittens, hats or hood and boots are needed on cold or snowy days. During warm weather, sunscreen must be applied by parents before school. It is also important to send an extra set of clothing for your child. Place it in a plastic bag and *label* it with your child's first and last name. Include a shirt, pants, underwear and socks, sweater or sweatshirt. This will be kept at school and used in the event of an emergency. Make sure the clothing is appropriate for the season and returned to school immediately after laundering. Congregation Albert cannot be responsible for inappropriate, "special" or lost clothing brought or worn to school. We will let you know when additional changes are needed.

## Potty Training

Children in the 3 year old classroom must be potty trained by the time they enter the program in the fall. Please note that it is not the responsibility of the school staff to accomplish this developmental milestone, but every effort will be made to support the process being undergone at home.

## Videos and Podcasts

Short videos or podcasts may be shown or listened to, to help support or enhance a specific area of study. Videos may also occasionally be used on special “pajama days” and bad weather days to wind down in place of outdoor play. This is kept to a minimum and children are always offered an alternative activity.

## Family Involvement/Engagement

Family involvement in our program can take many forms. Any of the adults engaged in the child’s life are always welcome to join us for Shabbat Sing or other family events. Family is also needed to drive on field trips and is welcome to present projects to their child’s class. Classroom activities must be scheduled with the teacher. We welcome families to join to help, to observe and to play. Again, for your convenience, the EC Director sends out emails on a regular basis to help keep families informed of dates and times of upcoming events.

## Emergency Procedure

There must be two local emergency contacts on file with the school. In the event of an emergency, parents will be contacted first. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, we will call an emergency contact person. It is critical that **all** information on your child’s registration form be current at all times.

*All changes in information must be conveyed to the EC Director immediately to help keep your child safe.*

## Disaster Preparedness Plan/Fire Drills/Active Shooter Drills

In case of a disaster and we need to vacate the premises we will go to Smith’s, located at 4016 Louisiana Blvd., NE, 87110, phone number 884-1860.

Parents will be notified to pick up their students as soon as we ensure the safety of all the children. Accommodations will be made for children with special needs.

A more detailed plan is posted in every classroom, and faculty is trained to respond appropriately in the event of any emergency.

In accordance with state regulations, we also practice fire drills and active shooter drills (called “quiet drills,” in our efforts to be sensitive to the ages of our students). Please see the EC Director if you have any questions.

## Policy & procedure for reporting or suspicion of child abuse

Congregation Albert will not let a child remain in a neglected or abusive situation. As each child arrives, teachers will make a quick visual inspection as part of their greeting to the children and listen to what the parent has to say about how things have been that morning. While the child is at school, the teachers should be aware of any unusual bruises or wounds.

Faculty members are familiar with the following list of possible signs of abuse. As required by New Mexico law, staff members are required to report any known or suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. Failure to report is a misdemeanor. Faculty is only obligated to report any suspected abuse, not to prove it. If a child tells you alarming information or specific fears or concerns, report it to the EC Director immediately.

Faculty must document, in writing, any suspected abuse and observations, and then the information will be reported to the Abuse Hot Line at 843-2190. Faculty may request their name be withheld from the state report.

## **Possible Signs of Abuse:**

### **THE CHILD**

- Seems unduly afraid of his/her parents;
- Is kept confined for long periods of time;
- Shows evidence of repeated skin or other injuries;
- Has injuries that appear inappropriately treated in terms of bandages and medication;
- Appears to be undernourished or inappropriately fed;
- Shows evidence of overall poor care;
- Is described as “different” or “bad” by parents;
- Does indeed seem “different” in physical or emotional makeup;
- Cries often;
- Takes over the role of parent or otherwise takes care of the parent’s needs;
- Is notably destructive and aggressive;
- Is notably passive and withdrawn.

### **THE PARENT/GUARDIAN**

- Discourages social contact;
- Is unable to share problems with an interested listener, and appears to trust nobody;
- Makes no attempt to explain the child’s most obvious injuries, or offers absurd, contradictory explanations;
- Reveals insufficient awareness of the seriousness of the child’s condition and concentrates on complaining about problems unrelated to the injured/neglected appearance of the child;
- Shows signs of fear and of losing control; is unable to cope with stress;
- Delays in taking the child in for medical care;
- Appears to be misusing drugs or alcohol;
- Ignores the child’s crying or reacts with extreme impatience;
- Indicates that he/she was reared in a motherless, unloving atmosphere;
- That he/she was neglected or abused as a child; and
- That he/she grew up under conditions of harsh discipline and feels that it is right to impose those same conditions on his/her own children.

## **Policy & procedure for missing child**

Faculty will never leave children unattended. In the event that a faculty member suspects or discovers a child is missing from the center, notify the EC Director immediately. Faculty should check with all other faculty to see if the child went to the bathroom, was expected to leave or seen leaving. All adults on premises will be notified, and a thorough search of the building and grounds will take place. If absolutely sure the child is missing, the EC Director or designee will call the police at 911 as well as the child’s

parents or custodial adult. The EC Director will notify the licensing agency that a child is missing from the premises. Any incident of a child missing must be documented and placed in the child's file.

## Field Trips

Field trips enhance the early childhood curriculum by exposing children to meaningful experiences outside the classroom. Children can only join field trips with a signed and dated permission slip. We know many of our parents work outside the home, and it is sometimes difficult to accompany us. However, we encourage you to attend or drive on at least *one* field trip per year. Children are always excited to have a family member join us.

## Snow Days & School Cancellation

The Early Childhood Center follows the A.P.S. schedule. Please consult radio or TV for school closing announcements. If A.P.S. is closed, our entire program will be closed. If A.P.S. is on an *abbreviated* schedule, our morning school classes (9:00AM - 1:00PM) and early morning classes (8:00AM – 9:00PM) are CANCELLED. The Center will be open, however, from 11:00 AM - 4:00 PM for children enrolled in our full day or extended care programs. (or 5:00 PM, if we have a late afternoon extended care program). If your child's schedule ends at 3:00PM, that is your pick up time on these days. Extended care classes (3:00pm – 4:00PM or 5:00PM) will remain the same unless otherwise notified.

## Snack

Your child will bring their own lunch and snack. Please provide choices for your child! If you prefer specific foods for lunch and for snack, please label them appropriately. If foods are not labeled, we will encourage your child's autonomy in choosing what they will eat at snack and lunch time. *Due to the recent surge in food allergies in young children, Congregation Albert ECC recognizes that food allergies can cause serious, life threatening conditions for some children. We strive to keep each child safe by aiming to eliminate all nuts from our school. Please remember this as you pack your child's lunchbox every day. Be sure to check ingredients!* On occasion, you may also be asked to bring juice (100% natural juice), water or milk, Clorox wipes, baby wipes, paper towels or napkins. On Fridays we celebrate Shabbat and part of that celebration is the sharing of Challah. You may order Challah for your own families' Shabbat celebration; order forms are available in the front office or in the office of the EC Director.

### *Some snack or lunch suggestions:*

Cheeses  
Crackers, rice cakes, pretzels  
Raisins and natural fruit rolls  
Fresh fruit or vegetables  
Yogurt, Applesauce, Hummus  
Milk or 100% fruit juice  
Breads, muffins, tortillas, bagels

### *Discouraged snack items:*

Candy  
Cakes, cookies, doughnuts, etc.\* (except for birthdays!)  
Gum  
Soda Pop

*Not allowed at any time:* Nuts of any kind

## **Parent/Guardian responsibility:**

Parents/guardians of a child with a severe allergy must:

Provide the school with an Allergy Action Plan that is completed and signed by their child's physician. This should be updated annually and appropriately throughout the year if changes occur. Information must outline the child's allergen, allergic response, and emergency drug protocol.

Prior to the first day of school, parents/guardians must provide the appropriate doses of all emergency medications, which are kept in a specified, designated location.

Whenever foods are going to be served to the child that are not on the "Approved Snack List" (cooking in class or if a parent brings in a special snack), the classroom teacher will reach out to the parents and the parents will review the ingredients and give approval before the food is served.

## **Birthdays**

We encourage children to celebrate their birthdays at school. If you would like to provide a special treat for snack, please make arrangements with your child's teacher. Any invitations given out at school must include **all** children in class; otherwise we ask that the invitations be mailed from home.

## **Lunch**

Please leave your child's lunch box (labeled) in the appropriate area. Please keep in mind the dietary restrictions inherent in the Temple building.

- No shellfish or pork products, to include ham, bacon, pepperoni and sausage.
- Serving meat and dairy at the same time is discouraged, but we do not require kosher meat products.
- **Please remember that we strive to be a nut-free school.** (see notes in "Snack")

If school is in session during the holiday of Passover, please refrain from sending bread products. The use of Matzah is encouraged during Passover. More information with suggested lunch items will be sent home regarding this matter at the appropriate time.

## **Toys from Home**

If your child has a special security item, it is welcome at school (please no army toys, weapons, etc.) Make sure that it is clearly labeled with your child's name. Toys from home can cause problems; please support our school policy and leave toys and other unnecessary items at home. Please check with your child's teacher regarding Share (aka: "show and tell") times. Sharing time provides invaluable opportunities for the children to tell about their experiences or favorite things. This time also encourages the building of verbal skills. Please note that school is not responsible for lost or broken toys.

## Immunizations and Exemptions (24-5-3):

Any minor child through his parent or guardian may file with the health authority charged with the duty of enforcing the immunization laws:

A certificate of a duly licensed physician stating that the physical condition of the child is such that immunization would seriously endanger the life or health of the child; or

Affidavits or written affirmation from an officer of a recognized religious denomination that such child's parents or guardians are bona fide members of a denomination whose religious teaching requires reliance upon prayer or spiritual means alone for healing; or

Affidavits or written affirmation from his parent or legal guardian that his religious beliefs, held either individually or jointly with others, do not permit the administration of vaccine or other immunizing agent.

Upon filing and approval of such certificate, affidavits or affirmation, the child is exempt from the legal requirement of immunization for a period not to exceed nine months on the basis of any one certificate, affidavits or affirmation.

## Health, Illness, Chronic Illness

A current medical form for your child containing emergency information and immunization history **must** be on file before the first day of school. Please be sure to include any important information concerning allergies and /or medical conditions. Please keep this form updated.

### Illness & Chronic Illness

In the interest of keeping us all healthy, sick children need to be cared for at home.

**Keep your child at home if he or she.**

- is feverish or has had a fever within the last 24 hours
- coughs terribly or excessively
- has vomited or had diarrhea within 24 hours of a school day
- has pink eye or symptoms which might be pink eye
- has a sore throat
- has been on antibiotics for less than 24 hours
- appears too "out of sorts" to participate in class activities

**Your child will be sent home if:**

- he or she shows signs of illness (i.e., elevated temperature), extreme lethargy
- staff observes signs of contagious disease or severe illness
- experiences diarrhea at school

It is important that children who have been ill not be sent back to school when they are still at risk. A low resistance jeopardizes your child's health.

**If your child is not ready to fully participate in the class activities, including outdoor play, please do not send your child to school.**

If your child becomes ill during the day, you (or your emergency contact) will be notified and asked to pick up the child. We are not equipped to keep ill children at school. If it is determined that your child is to be too ill to be at school, please understand that this is a determination aimed only at trying to keep your child comfortable and everyone else healthy, as well.

Children who are sent home by staff cannot return to school within the next 24 hours unless a pediatrician's note says that they are healthy and ready to return.

Children with chronic illnesses (asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, etc.) are required to submit a signed doctor's plan of health (i.e., an "Action Plan") care at time of registration. Parents are responsible for providing any medications included in the plan.

We strive to provide a free Vision Screening every year. All other screenings are a required component of enrollment. To support our families, we have a list of medical professionals available upon request to facilitate this health component.

## **Medication**

In accordance with state regulations, no medication will be given to a child without written authorization. Authorization forms can be picked up from the Director and must be filled out with the name of medication, prescription number, dosage, times to be administered and your signature. *All* medications being dispensed **must** be in their *original containers*.

**CONGREGATION ALBERT  
EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER  
BEHAVIOR POLICY**

We use “positive/constructive discipline” in our classrooms. It is our goal to help children build self-control/self-regulation skills, thus increasing self-esteem.

**When a problem occurs we:**

1. Talk with the child/children, use positive reinforcement or try to redirect. Children are taught the logical and natural consequences of their actions. They are not punished or humiliated.
2. If the child has lost control, is unable to reason, or the disruptive behavior continues where he is a danger to himself or others, we remove the child from the situation. This is to give the child a sense of dignity, to calm down, think about his/her actions, and prepare to rejoin the group. Any separation from the group will always be within sight and hearing of faculty or the Director.
3. Sometimes we need to talk with the parent/guardian and develop a plan that fosters the child’s ability to grow these essential skills.
4. If a problem persists, we will schedule a conference with the parents and the EC Director to resolve the situation.

Faculty at Congregation Albert will *never* physically reprimand, belittle or yell at any child, and children will never be deprived of snacks.

Dear Early Childhood Center families,

I/We have received and read Congregation Albert's Early Childhood Center's Family Handbook and understand and agree to the philosophy, policies and procedures written therein.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature(s)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Parent(s) of: \_\_\_\_\_

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Comments