

# Kol Shalom Children's Education

**Aleph Class** (6 – 8 yr)

**Teacher:** Karen Peterson

**Assistant:** Leah Parker

## Objectives:

Provide a positive exposure to Jewish History, Customs and Holidays and humanistic ethics through art, music and lively discussions.

<b>Topics Covered:</b>	<b>Reason</b>
Family backgrounds and immigration to the US	An understanding of each or our family stories.
Jewish customs and traditions	Familiarity with Jewish customs and traditions provides a familiarity with a culture that these children are part of.
Music and food for each Jewish holiday	We want our children to be comfortable at any Jewish celebration.
Tolerance and social justice	Both Jewish and Humanistic values that we want to teach our children
Creation Myths	Important to understand that the question of how we were created has been asked and answered by all cultures
The Judea / Christian Creation Story	Important to know the story that so many in our culture know.
Evolution	Answers important questions about the history of the world we live in.
The Ten Commandments	An introduction to the concept that in order for people to live together there must be basic rules to live by.
Israel	There is much to learn from Israel. We focus on the innovative ways that the country was built up and the blending of Jews from all over the world.
Some Hebrew exposure	We want children to at least recognize Hebrew letters when they see them so that they feel some connection to the language of the Jews in Israel and the original language of the Torah.
Jewish Calendar	Teaches that there is a lunar calendar that has been used for over 5000 years. Sheds some light on why the Jewish holidays don't show up on the same day of the month each year.

## **Crafts**

We use crafts as a way to re-enforce what we have learned in a tangible way. It also gives the children a chance to interact and be creative. Our hope is that they look back at the experience as a good time and definitely not boring. It is a challenge to get anyone excited about coming to class on a Sunday morning. We try to make it as fun as possible! Here are some of the crafts we have done over the last three years:

- Name Tags – That show the Hebrew names that they picked out
- Family trees – That show where their parents and grandparents came from.
- Evolution paintings – That show some of the stages of evolution of the universe
- Garden of Eden mural – That shows the creation story we all hear about
- Clay covered Kiddush cups – A keepsake that they will have to remind them about Shabbat
- Chala covers – Another Shabbat keepsake
- Flags – A project about Israel and the countries where immigrants come from
- Clay symbols for humanistic Judaism – A creative project where students created their own symbols.
- Passover place mats – A way to study the symbols of Passover
- Tolerance Bubbles – A very tactile way to visualize what matters to us
- Mezuzahs – Filled with an important note to ourselves
- Menorahs – A special Hanukkah menorah to keep forever
- Ten Commandment Tablets – Something we can hang on our walls that look cool and have some important reminders.
- Shabbat Candles- A fun dipping candle making experience
- Graham cracker sukkas- A fun edible project that got us laughing because the peanut butter was too slippery!
- Hebrew Alphabet Poster – A poster to take home that shows all the Hebrew letters, their sounds and names.
- Jewish calendar – A 15 month calendar that showed all the holidays, Sunday school days, New Moons, Full Moons and beginnings of each Hebrew month around the full moon.
- Honey Jars – A special honey jar to be used for Rosh Ha Shana

## **Other Activities**

Along with discussions and crafts we also found time for some:

- Israeli Dancing
- Jewish Music

- Stories
- Tu ba'shavet Seder
- Watching part of Fiddler on the Roof and discussing the customs of that time.
- A Porum Party with the rest of the congregation where there was a reading of the Magila where everyone participated.
- A Chanukah Play
- A party on the last session!