

Schools

Charlotte Jewish Preschool – Building a Better World

Children at the Charlotte Jewish Preschool get an early introduction to the concept of tikkun olam, or repairing the world. Beginning with weekly Shabbat renditions of the song "Building a Better World," and continuing with service projects throughout the year, Judaica teacher Elka Bernstein helps teach the children of their responsibility to make the world a better place.

So far this year, Morah Elka has organized several opportunities for CJP children and families to participate in acts of tikkun olam. At Sukkot, the preschool held a food drive for the food pantry at Jewish Family Services. Many

classes were able to hand deliver their food donations to JFS and see where their contributions went. In December, a "quiet tzedakah" project, in which children were encouraged to contribute a dollar bill, rather than coins, for their weekly tzedakah, raised \$500 to help JFS make Hanukkah

brighter for some of our neighbors. In January, Morah Elka taught the children about the mitzvah of visiting the sick, *bikkur cholim*, and



The kids at Charlotte Jewish Preschool learn about the world on Tu B'Shevat.

about Martin Luther King and his efforts to build a better world.

In honor of Tu B'shevat, CJP

children learned about physically healing the Earth and completed a special tzedakah project that was six months in the making. At the beginning of the school year, each child decorated a blue tzedakah box with stickers representing the seven days of Creation. The children took the boxes home with a letter asking families to contribute tzedakah weekly for a special project to plant trees in Israel. For

Tu B'shevat, CJP received a visit from "Blue Box Bob" (Director Denise Abadi, dressed up to look like a blue tzedakah box), who collected the tzedakah to be sent to the Jewish National Fund, which will use the money to plant trees in Israel.

Todah rabah to CJP staff, children and families for their dedication to building a better world. ☆

Levin Middle School P.E. Rocks Six Climbing Classes at Inner Peaks

By Jessica Sammis

The students at The Barbara and Jerry Levin Jewish Middle School have many wonderful opportunities available to them that students at larger middle schools do not. One of them is our unique physical education program. I wrote earlier this year about one of our series of classes with Mike Hartman of Better Life Training. Since then, the students have taken classes in soccer, tennis, and Krav Maga.

Our current PE class is a four week series at Inner Peaks Indoor Climbing Center. There are many benefits for middle schoolers of a class like this over a traditional PE class. First, the act of climbing builds upper and lower body strength. The students are also improving their core strength

without doing sit-ups, which are much more boring than scaling a wall. In addition to the obvious physical benefits, climbing challenges students to think on their feet, constantly having to readjust to their position on the wall, and to overcome their fears. The combination of improvements in all these areas can be a terrific self-esteem booster as well.

The middle school students have really had a positive response to this class. The fun nature of climbing walls helps to keep the students engaged in the activity, which is another important feature of the class. While they only think about how fun it is to climb, the wonderful staff at Inner Peaks and I know that they are learning much more than just to have fun. ☆



Rachael Hall works her way up a challenging incline during our latest PE class. Climbing challenges the students to think on their feet while overcoming fear and building upper and lower body strength.

Let's Celebrate Together Ice Skating with CJDS for Hanukkah at Extreme Ice Center

By Jessica Sammis

Students at The Barbara and Jerry Levin Jewish Middle School have a very close connection to our younger neighbors downstairs, Charlotte Jewish Day School. One of the benefits of this relationship is that we often share our celebrations with each other. One such event occurred in December to celebrate Hanukkah.

All students from both schools joined together at the Extreme Ice Center to enjoy a day of ice skating fun. Here is a picture from that great day. ☆



Sixth grader Brianna Shporer skates with fifth grade CJDS student Cailey Kreitman during the Hanukkah Day ice skating celebration in December. The middle school students enjoyed spending time with some of their younger friends in the elementary grades.

If you have any questions about the Barbara and Jerry Levin Jewish Middle School, our one-of-a-kind PE program, or our special events, please contact Jessica Sammis at 704-366-4885 or jsammis@cjd-school.org. Also, please remember that tickets for our annual raffle are currently on sale! The prize this year is \$1000, and the money raised by the sale of tickets helps to fund our students' trip to Israel. Please contact the school, or one of the student directly, if you would like to support our school through the purchase of a ticket. Thank you.

704.609.5639
BRUCE MEHLMAN
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