

Schools

A New Year of Giving

By Elka Bernstein, CJP Director
L'shanah Tovah Tikatev V'taihatem, may you be inscribed and sealed for a good year.

CJP Preschoolers began the year learning about Rosh Hashanah. Our teachers create Rosh Hashanah lessons that develop our students' skills in literacy, math, science, fine and gross motor areas. More importantly, CJP uses this opportunity to teach the children how to live Jewishly in this world. Learning to live Jewishly is an ever present theme at CJP. With Tikkun Olam always in the forefront of lesson development, Rosh Hashanah is the perfect opportunity for our students to begin to turn inward and discover how they can learn and grow in the new year.

Tikkun Olam, repairing the world, has come to be a call to participate in social action and social justice. CJP teaches that despite the age or family conditions, it is a mitzvah to participate in Tikkun Olam. As Maimonides wrote, "Even a poor person who lives entirely on tzedakah must also give tzedakah to another." The lesson and action of tzedakah is part of our strong Judaic curriculum. Tzedakah is an essential Jewish value, and giving is an important part of what young children are learning to do. "Tzedakah" is often translated as "charity," but the value of tzedakah goes well beyond donating money. Tzedakah actually means "righteousness." When we

teach our children the mitzvah of tzedakah, we are teaching them that as Jews we are commanded to care for each other - Jews and non-Jews - and to take our place in the repair of the world.

The hands-on approach to academic learning is the same method that CJP uses to help children understand the importance of giving tzedakah. All our students jingle their tzedakah boxes each Friday morning as they prepare for Shabbat. The excitement builds during our preparation for Shabbat when the giant tzedakah can is brought out and we can all hear the clanging of coins as they are poured into the tzedakah box. The joy of giving a few pennies, dimes and nickels will forever be imprinted on the souls of our students. But, CJP does not stop there because money has little value to the preschooler. Each month, CJP wants the children to "repair the world" with tzedakah that they can make a connection to.

Morah Becca has continued to develop a program that has a real effect on the local and international communities. In August, the children heard the call from Jewish Family Services to help fill the food pantry and the two large CJP tzedakah boxes quickly filled. Since September is back to school month for all our preschoolers, our students will carry in school supplies for Sterling Elementary and Huntingtowne Farms Elementary, sister schools of Temple Beth El and Temple Israel.

Our students will line the halls with crayons, markers, notebooks, folders, notebooks and more. To celebrate Sukkot, our families will harvest food from their pantries and grocery store and once again, help stock Jewish Family Services food pantry. Each month a new lesson and a new project for tikkun olam will be implemented. One of our favorite projects is when we teach the children *tzar ba'alei chayim* - caring for animals. Not only will CJP students donate items this year to the Spay and Neuter Clinic, therapy dogs will come to the school, so the children can learn how animals help us.

A Year of Giving is part of CJP's Year of Learning. Please join The Charlotte Jewish Preschool, The Charlotte Jewish Day School, and The Jewish Preschool on Sardis in our Year of Giving and take part in Two Days with Wendy Mogul which will take place on January 11 and

12. Visit us at www.joinineducation.org for sponsorship and ticket opportunities. Purchase early so as not to miss this incredible event.

Learn. Grow. Connect. With our staff and families at the Charlotte Jewish Preschool. For further information on how to enroll your child into our wonderful world of learning, please contact Alyson Kalik at 704-944-6866 or akalik@shalomcharlotte.org. ✨



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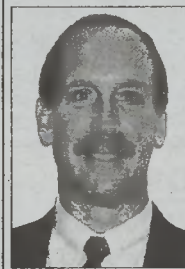
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CJDS Orientation Night Speech

By Mariashi Groner, CJDS Director

Growing up, I never enjoyed roller coasters, and I certainly am not enjoying the ride we are experiencing right now in our world. As I have been reading the papers about the stock market swings, the economy unable to right itself, and the crazy behaviors that are reported throughout the world, I thought about our kids and realized how unstable and precarious this world is.

My thoughts continued as I wondered how we can best provide stability, security, and a sense of hope for our kids. They deserve their childhood, their time to dream and believe, and their knowledge that we as a people — and as a Jewish people — can persevere.

Moshe told the Jewish people, "He (God) gave you the strength to accomplish. We have the power." So, based on that directive from Moses, our motto for this year is "Let's Change the World." Along with our Global Studies initiative which encourages the students to look beyond themselves, our students are being encouraged to find a way to change the world — and this world certainly needs changing.

We can make a difference. Giving this kind of power to the children, assuring them that they are capable, and sharing all the

choices they have will give them a sense of confidence, hope, and optimism.

In a time of questioning, faith and trust in God give us a center, reminding us that although much is demanded from us, we can't just sit back, there is someone in charge, someone who sees the bigger picture.

The children at CJDS are cared for, nurtured, and valued in ways that don't exist at other schools. This knowledge surely gives parents the confidence that their children feel safe. We once had a student who was upset by some frightening stories on the news. Her mom assured her that she was safe and that Mariashi and the teachers would take good care of her. She responded and said to her mom, "I know I'll be fine at CJDS, but what happens when I leave?"

At CJDS we have also been researching ways in which we can stay ahead of the curve and be in touch with the latest in education. Twenty-first century education is the latest chatter and we realize that if we don't change the methodology, goals, and purpose of our teaching, our kids will not be ready for life, especially in the work place. It's hard for parents, teachers, and administrators to let go of what is essential, but we all

(Continued on page 12)

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