

# CJDS Helps Your Children Love Being Jewish

Audrey Pearlman, parent at CJDS introduced Doron Kornbluth who spoke about "Raising Your Children to Love Being Jewish."

Good evening. I'm Audrey Pearlman and before introducing our guest speaker, I wanted to thank The Charlotte Jewish Day School, PJ Library, and The Jew-

ish Federation of Charlotte, who in conjunction have sponsored this program tonight.

In preparation for this event, I perused Doron Kornbluth's website and watched his video of "Raising Kids To Love Being Jewish," which led me to think about my parenting decisions and my childhood. The fact is, that I kind of stumbled onto loving being Jewish, because as a young divorced parent of 28 with a four year old, I had to make some hard decisions about how to raise my son. It was not in the forefront of my mind if or how I would raise my child Jewishly. Yes, I enrolled my son in a Jewish preschool. Although, until my divorce, I never gave it much thought. I was just Jewish.

If you grew up like me, being Jewish was who we were and what we did and not necessarily something to love. In summary, I went to public schools. My parent's "made" me and my two sisters go to Hebrew school every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon, synagogue on most Friday nights and Saturday mornings, and suffer through holiday dinners at long length. It didn't occur to me to be in love. I do remember several recurring events as fun Judaism: being in the Temple sukkah and

getting to eat cookies; dancing with an Israeli flag on Simchat Torah; going to the Purim carnivals; and actively participating in Jewish youth groups and camps.

So, it struck me after my separation that, if my child's father would see my son, in another city every other weekend, he would miss 50% of his "mandatory" Hebrew school. This thought frightened me, because I felt that we needed family and a community to support us at a very unsettling time in our lives.

It was Debbie Block who ran the The Charlotte Jewish Preschool where my son was enrolled, who led me to investigate The Jewish Day School as a solution to my Hebrew school conundrum. I visited the then dumpy old house on the hill with its disjointed trailers, now the Shalom Park Parking deck. I thought, "Okay, so it's an ugly school, but seems like a good education. Great. My son will be part of a



The Pearlman Family

small Jewish extended family and I won't have to force him to go to Hebrew school twice a week."

I had no idea what influence this one decision would have on my son's life, mine, or my husband Guy's life, or the lives of our two young children now enrolled at the day school.

The most amazing things began to happen with my oldest at CJDS. He loved it. He was a sponge for secular and Judaic studies. He would come home and retell what he learned and want to take part in the Jewish community and customs. Amazingly, I myself got a second round of Jewish ed-

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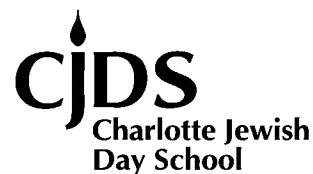


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## CJP's Circle of Life

By Ron and Janice Weiner

The Charlotte Jewish Preschool (CJP) has been an integral part of our lives since we moved to Charlotte in 1989. We were fortunate benefactors of those who came before us - who established the school and made it a shining beacon within the Charlotte Jewish

community. We arrived in Charlotte as our three children were just 1,3, and 5 years old. Our two youngest, Rebecca and Jordana, were attendees at CJP right from the start. Both received a wonderful introduction to Judaism in a warm and loving environment.

CJP has been the foundation of our children's Jewish education and an entrée into the Charlotte Jewish community for our entire family. It was there that lifelong friendships began and where our children learned the basics of Jewish values and celebrations while having a lot of fun. It also became a springboard for our adult involvement in the community as I served as both the Treasurer and later co-chair of the Charlotte Jewish Preschool Board of Directors.

In 1989, CJP had a strong reputation in the Charlotte community for its safe, loving, and educational environment. This reputation continues today with special thanks to its dedicated leaders and staff. Fast forward to 2009 ... our daughter, Rebecca, returned to Charlotte from Grinnell, IA after receiving her bachelor's degree from Grinnell College and her



teaching certificate. She found a second home at CJP starting as a substitute teacher in the Spring semester and then becoming the Judaica specialist. Her love of Judaism and of all the children spills over to her full life and is a strong part of her identity.

How wonderful it is to be out in Charlotte with Rebecca and watch her with her students. They are full of love and hugs for her and for them from her as well. She has a strong commitment to teaching Jewish fundamentals in a fun, loving and caring way to our future generations. In addition to her CJP role, Becca teaches fifth grade Hebrew for both Temple Israel and Temple Beth El. Her sister, Jordana, also had a love of Judaism planted in her at CJP and now teaches the mini minyan class at Temple Israel on Saturday mornings.

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