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# Hebrew Academy Preschool

# Infant Center Program Guide



August 1, 2023

## **Welcome to The Hebrew Academy Preschool Infant/Toddler Center**

The infant/toddler years are a wonderful part of any child's life. These years are filled with challenges and amazing developmental achievements! The staff is committed to providing your child a safe, stimulating and developmentally appropriate environment where your child can learn and grow. Also, we look forward to sharing and talking with all of our parents about the daily joys of your child's growth. You are an integral part of your child's education here at the Hebrew Academy and at home.

Thank you for letting us join you on this journey.

### **Components of the Infant /Toddler Program**

The children enrolled in this program are from 3 months to twenty four months old, and our program accommodates a maximum of 12 infants and 12 toddlers at a time. The classroom has teachers, assistant teachers and aides to maintain the appropriate child to teacher ratio of one adult to four children. Because the Infant Room staff follows stringent state safety guidelines, you can be assured of a safe, secure, and positive environment where your child can grow and develop a sense of identity and self-confidence.

### **How to Reach Us**

<b>Chanie Perelmuter</b>	<b>Director</b>	<b>714-863-0757</b>
<b>Janette Chavoya</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<a href="mailto:jchavoya@hacps.org">jchavoya@hacps.org</a>
<b>Mahogany Casseles</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<a href="mailto:mcasseles@hacps.org">mcasseles@hacps.org</a>
<b>Gabi Chaires</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<a href="mailto:gchaires@hacps.org">gchaires@hacps.org</a>

**During Program Hours**, to reach a staff member regarding any urgent needs, please call 714-863-0757.

For all non-urgent needs, please contact one of the Infant Teachers via e-mail (listed above). You should expect a response within 24 hours or less.

### **The Daily Schedule**

The daily schedule for the children is a guide. It provides a framework for planning and organizing the daily routine and play activities for the children. The daily routines for children may be a little different based on the age of your child. Infants follow their own biological needs. They are fed, changed, and nap when they need it. Toddlers are changed as needed. Adjustments to the schedule are made as your child gets older and his/her needs change. You may also notice that as your child gets older, s/he may alter her/his own schedule to fit in with the group. Some common changes you may notice in your child's behavior after enrollment in any group care situation include altered sleep/wake patterns (staying awake for longer hours or napping more frequently for short periods of time) or changes in appetite.

## **Typical Day**

Infants and young toddlers find consistent routines comforting. The Infant Room staff typically serves breakfast between 9:00 AM and 9:30 AM, lunch from 11:00 AM and 11:30 AM, and snack from 2:00 PM to 2:30 PM. **If your child arrives after 9:15 AM the Infant Room Staff will not feed your child breakfast. Staff are needed to diaper & play with the children after 9:30 in order to keep everybody on schedule.** Many of the older infants nap sometime between 9:00 and 11:00 and between 1:00 and 3:00. Of course, this schedule varies depending on the age and the individual needs of each child. For example, children closer to 3 months old sleep and eat on their own schedules, while children closer to 16 months are gradually prepared for the meal and napping schedule of the youngest toddler room.

## **Infants**

Young infants will be fed according to their own schedule. As they grow and start eating solid foods, their eating needs will change and the eating times will be adjusted toward the group schedule. **If a child needs a specific type of formula or food for a medical condition, a doctor's note will need to accompany this.** A parent may bring in breast milk if desired. As your infant grows and becomes more adept at eating, he will be using his fingers for eating "finger-foods" and working on using infant utensils. As infants gradually start to eat cereals, jarred foods, and table foods, parents will inform the teachers in the classroom as to what their child can eat. It is recommended that infants try new foods at home first, then parents can add the new food to the classroom list.

## **Dropping Off and Picking Up**

### **Daily Routine**

Please try to drop off and pick up your child around the same time each day. This helps your child adjust to group care more easily by developing a routine. The preschool is open from 7:30 AM to 5:00 PM (4:00 PM on Fridays)

### **SIGN IN / SIGN OUT**

All parents must park their cars in the lot or on Willow Lane and walk to the preschool to drop off and pick up their children. The sign in and out sheet is outside your child's classroom.

**SIGN IN:** Find your child's name. Sign your full name - **no initials please** (state law) - and time.

**SIGN OUT:** Find your child's name. Sign your full name and time in the second box. A new sheet will be present every day.

### **Arrival and Departure Times**

If you are going to bring your child to school much earlier or later than usual, please let the staff know ahead of time so that the room is properly staffed for your arrival.

Please bring your child to the Infant Room each day in a clean diaper and with some food (or milk or formula) in his/her stomach. We cannot guarantee that a staff person will be available to feed and/or diaper your child immediately upon arrival.

### **Pick Up by Person Other Than a Parent**

Please let the staff know if someone other than yourself will be picking up your child. This person needs to be on the child's list of people allowed to pick up the child or if this is just a one time pick up we have a short form for you to complete. Let staff know the approximate time this person will arrive, and please tell the person who is picking up to bring a photo ID as staff *will* ask unfamiliar individuals for identification.

**If someone who is not listed comes to pick up your child and we have no note/message, and cannot reach you, we will refuse to release your child.**

Children will not be released to anyone under the age of 16, including siblings. In order for us to legally stop a non-custodial parent from taking a child, a copy of the court order must be on file.

### **Late Pick Up**

If you pick up your child after 5:00 P.M. you will be charged a **\$1 per minute per child late fee**. Out of respect for the staff and their time, please call if you know you are going to be late.

If we have not heard from you and cannot reach you by 15 minutes after the program end time, your emergency contacts will be called.

If we have still not heard from you or your emergency contacts and cannot reach you by 45 minutes after the program end time, the Huntington Beach Police will be notified.

It is understood that conditions beyond one's control exist. If these conditions arise, you must notify the school as soon as possible, and make arrangements for your child to be picked up.

**Continued late pick up *may* result in the termination of your registration.**

### **Absence**

If you will be going on vacation, please let the staff know the dates your child will be gone so we can staff the room appropriately. If your child is ill, please call and let us know. **It is extremely important to let us know if your child has a contagious illness. The ECC is required, by law, to post information regarding all communicable diseases to which children have been exposed.**

### **Calendar**

Little Gan is closed on all major legal and Jewish Holidays. There are no make-up days for legal holidays. For the days off for Jewish Holidays parents may make up the day, the week of the holiday. If students are absent there are no makeup days.

## Infant Center Calendar - August 2023 to June 2024

Fri., August 11	Last day of Kiddy Camp
Mon.-Fri August 14-18	ALL SCHOOL CLOSED
Mon., August 28, 2023	Preschool Orientation 10:00AM
Tue., August 29	First day of School
Mon., September 4	<b>All school closed</b> - Labor Day
Mon., September 25	Yom Kippur -All School Closed
<b>Fri., Nov. 10</b>	All School Closed -Veterans Day
Wed. Nov. 22	Infant Center closes at 4:00PM
Thur. & Fri., Nov. 23 & 24	<b>All school closed</b> - Thanksgiving
Dec. 22 - Jan. 1	<b>All school closed</b> - Winter break
Tues. Jan. 2	School Resumes
Mon., Jan. 15	<b>All school closed</b> - Martin Luther King Day
Tues., Feb 13	Infant Center closes at 3:30 Staff meeting
Mon., Feb. 19	<b>All school closed</b> - Presidents Day
Mon. & Tues April 29 & 30	All School closed - Spring Break / Passover
Monday, May 27	<b>All school closed</b> - Memorial Day
Wed., June 19	Infant Center closes at 11:30
Monday, June 24	Kiddy Camp begins
Wed., July 3	Infant Center closes at 4.
Thurs., July 4	<b>All School Closed</b>
Fri., July 5	Infant Center opens at 9:00AM - No AM daycare
Wed., August 14	Last day of Kiddy Camp
August 15- August 27	<b>All School Closed</b>

*The Infant room opens at 7:30 and ends at 5:00. (The late fee after 5:00 is \$1.00 per minute.)*

### **Security**

The Hebrew Academy has a key card security system installed. As you understand, the security system will only work if we are all (staff and families) diligent. It is imperative that anyone dropping off or picking up your child from the building have a key card.

### **Visitors to the Infant Room**

Parents are always welcome to visit the Infant Room. We have an open door policy for all parents of children currently enrolled in our program.

If you think a family member or friend will be visiting the Infant Room, please let us know who will be coming and give written permission that the person may visit your infant. Approved visitors are welcome to visit the Infant Room at any time. However, visitors are not allowed to wake sleeping children, enter the nap room or alter the child's schedule in any way. It is recommended that visitors call the Infant Room before coming to visit. If somebody will be making regular visits to your child in the Infant Room, please request an additional key card for this individual. As you know, our staff are very busy and it can be challenging to get to the door in the midst of feeding, diapering, etc.

## **Feeding and Supplies**

### **Bottle Feeding**

While at Little Gan your child may be fed using a bottle. You may choose for your baby to be fed formula or breast milk, however **all bottles must be made of plastic**. By labeling (**child's name & date**) all parts of your child's bottle (excluding the nipple) we can ensure that no part of your baby's bottle will be used to feed another child.

### **Breast Milk**

Please express the breast milk, put it in bottles in a separate container, and bring it to school every day when you drop off your child. **All breast milk bottles must be labeled with the child's name and date on which you bring them to the center.** The milk will be stored in your child's assigned place in our refrigerator. The staff encourages breastfeeding. Please help your child become acclimated to bottles well before they transition to group care. Not all babies are able to latch onto bottles without assistance. Introducing your baby to a bottle well in advance of childcare minimizes the stress your child may experience when transitioning to group care.

**Ready-to-feed plastic bottles are required.**

All bottles containing breast milk will be sent home unwashed at the end of each day. Licensing standards do not allow staff to have direct contact with breast milk.

### **Formula**

Prepare your child's bottles for the day at home and send them in a lunchbox. Bring the lunchbox to school every day when you drop off your child and it will be stored in your child's assigned place in our refrigerator. Please keep a backup supply of formula and a spare bottle on your child's shelf in case of emergency. Please note that all bottles prepared at home will be sent home unwashed per licensing standards.

### **Juice**

Staff are not allowed to serve juice from bottles at the program. This is a preventive measure against baby bottle tooth decay. Unless your child is extremely constipated, and a pediatrician recommends it, we will serve only water and milk.

**All bottles must be labeled with your child's name and the date on which you bring them to the center.**

### **Bottle Warming**

Microwaves are **NOT** used for warming. Infant staff places all bottles in a cup of warm water or a bottle warmer to bring up the temperature of the milk

**Solids**

We do not require that solids are given by our staff, but doctors recommend that infants start on solids at six months in order to keep them satiated longer and we strongly support this recommendation.

***Please try all foods at home with your baby for at least three days before asking us to serve them in case of allergic or adverse reaction to any foods. This is for your child's safety.***

**Baby Food**

Unless your child consumes the entire container of baby food in one sitting, we will serve your child's baby food out of a bowl rather than the original container in order to keep the remaining portion fresh.

**Finger Food**

When it is time to start finger foods (recommended between 7 and 9 months), please bring your child's food in a container that is labeled with their name. Please make sure that all food items are individually and clearly labeled with your child's name and date. Your child's spot is labeled with your child's name.

It is extremely important for infants to learn to self-feed and, eventually, self-feed from a spoon. We strongly encourage children to pick up food and feed themselves, however if consistency at home does not exist, infants will take longer to learn this vital skill.

**Diapering and Supplies**

Disposable diapers are required in the Infant Room. Typically, the Infant Room staff changes each child's diaper every two hours and when a child has a BM. If your child is sleeping, his/her diaper will be changed upon waking. If your child is on a stroller ride, his/her diaper will be changed upon returning to the Infant Room.

**Disposable Diapers**

Please bring a pack of the appropriate size diapers for your child. When your child needs more diapers, the staff will indicate this on the Daily Sheet. If you change your child's diaper while in the Infant Room, please follow the state licensing procedures for proper sanitation.

**Diaper Wipes**

Please bring a large refill package of wipes that can stay at school with your child. A note will be sent home when you will need to bring refill wipes.

**Diaper Rash Ointment**

Please bring a tube or container of diaper rash ointment to be kept in the Infant Room. This must be labeled with your child's first and last name.

## **Clothing and Supplies**

Please bring three sets of the appropriate size clothing, including socks, to be left in your child's cubby at school. Make sure to label all clothing items with your child's first and last name. If your child's clothing becomes dirty due to a messy meal, or because of a diaper leak, the staff will put the dirty clothing in a plastic bag and send it home.

***While the Infant Room staff tries to make sure that your child stays clean during the day, please note that it is an important part of a child's development to explore and get messy. Hands-on activities are essential at all stages of a child's life. Consequently, staff recommends sending your child in clothing that stands up to a little wear and tear. Infant clothing may become stained.***

## **Outdoor Attire**

Please bring a hat to protect your child from the sun when we go outside. If you would like your child to wear sunglasses, please bring those as well. Also, please bring sunscreen of at least **SPF 45**. This must be labeled with your child's first and last name.

## **Preparing Your Infant for Group Care**

There are a few things you can do in advance to prepare your child for the transition to group care:

### **Socialize Your Baby**

Expose your baby to other family members, children, friendly adults or babysitters. This will help your child enjoy and look forward to interactions with other people.

### **Sleep**

Let your baby learn to sleep around conversation, music or other daily activities. During group care some infants will enjoy a restful sleep while others are playing, eating or engaged in a developmental activity.

### **Becoming Familiar with Bottle Feeding**

If you are breastfeeding at home, you must acclimate your child to drinking from a bottle.\* Not all babies are able to latch on to the bottle without assistance. Introducing your baby to a bottle well in advance of his/her transition to group care will set him/her up to succeed while here at the Little Gan.

**\*If your infant begins care and refuses to take a bottle, we may have to ask you to pick up your child or come to the center for feedings until your infant is able to take a bottle.**



## **Infant Room Curriculum**

The infant classroom provides activities to fit the developmental level and needs of each child. The major developmental areas are: Cognitive and Language Development, Social Development and Group Playing; Large Motor; and Small Motor Development. The children have the opportunity to explore and learn in a secure and safe environment.

### **Social Development and Group Playing**

Group playing refers to the ability to interact socially on a nonverbal level. The idea is to have fun, learn about relating to others by playing with them and, incidentally, develop motor and social skills. With social development, sharing is an important skill to be mastered because children are naturally egocentric. This skill mastery does not occur in the Infant Room; however we do lay the foundation for this developing skill.

### **Gross Motor**

Gross Motor refers to activities using large body muscles. Activities that encourage children to use their large muscles are an important part of brain development. These activities include large block play, music and movement, crawling, walking and climbing both indoors and outdoors.

Balance is the basis of all large muscle movement. Balance games that encourage postural awareness include tiptoe walking, rocking, or walking with something on the head.

Eye-foot coordination happens when the feet respond to information from the eyes. Eye-foot coordination helps us to avoid tripping and stumbling over things in our path. Dancing and clapping encourage rhythm and a sense of timing.

Motor planning refers to the ability to plan movements, even if a person is only subconsciously aware of this planning.

Finally, the spatial sense has to do with knowing where one is in space and how physical objects relate to one another. Good games for this include getting into boxes, crawling through tunnels, and going through obstacle courses.

### **Fine Motor**

This term refers to the manipulation and strengthening of the small muscles of the hand and foot. Children need to learn how much muscle strength to use to accomplish different tasks. For instance, children practice using their hands and fingers while playing with interactive toys in our classroom. Hand-eye coordination is developed by playing games such as throwing and catching, and playing with cause-and-effect toys.

### **Cognitive and Language Development**

Children learn to recognize their name. They will begin to understand the concept of objects. They learn what is/is not food. They will begin to understand me, you, him/her, and yours/mine. They will begin to understand when an activity is ok, or when to stop an activity. Sensory activities are a fun and excellent stimulus for brain development. Participating with music will encourage memory, imagination, and language. Staff will read with the children, and will encourage touch, playing and nurturing, which are all necessary experiences for your child's healthy development.

### **Baby Sign Language**

In the Infant Room we work with the infants to communicate their basic needs without whining or tears. Giving infants the proper tools to communicate will cause less frustration for them and for you! As soon as your baby can wave goodbye, he/she can begin to sign other things, too. The basic signs we use here include, but are not limited to: milk, water, eat, drink, more, all done, play, please, and thank you. Please ask your primary caregiver if you have additional questions about sign language.

### **Primary Care Groups**

Little Gan follows a continuity of care model. Research has shown that providing infants and toddlers with a consistent caregiver allows children to maintain a sense of security that allows them to explore more freely the world around them. Your child will be assigned to a primary care group that is led by one of the teachers. Infants need a loving, consistent caregiver to help them with their learning process.

### **Medication in the Infant Room**

If your child needs to take medication daily, it is preferable that you give the required doses at home before your child comes to school and when s/he gets home in the evenings. However, we understand that sometimes it may be necessary for the Infant Room teachers to administer medication. **We follow very strict guidelines for medication administration, and your adherence to these rules is of the utmost importance to your infant's health and safety.**

Parents are required to complete a Prescription Medication Authorization/Administration This form is valid for two weeks from the date of completion. **A separate authorization is required for each medication and each episode of illness.** Forms are available in the classroom and the office upon request.

### **Prescription and Non-Prescription Medications**

- The medication must be in its original container, with a legible label from the pharmacy indicating the child's name, date (covers period when medication is to be given), name of medication, dosage, instructions for use (consistent with parent's request), doctor's/nurse practitioner's name, pharmacy name

and telephone number. (This label constitutes the physician's/nurse practitioner's order.)

- Samples must be accompanied by a doctor's written prescription. Medications are to be given only to the child indicated on the container (twins and siblings **cannot** share).
- Parent/guardian is required to give as many doses as possible at home.

### **Nebulizers**

Children who require nebulizer treatments are, by law, only allowed to have two treatments per day in the child care setting. Any child who is still wheezing or having respiratory distress *after* a nebulizer treatment *will be* excluded until his/her condition improves.

All medication administered in the Infant Room will be documented on the Medication Authorization/Administration Form. Medication will be returned to parents at the end of the two week period for which the medication form is valid.

### **Administering First Aid and Sources of Care in Case of Emergency:**

We make every effort to maintain a safe environment for all participants in the Infant Room. A staff person trained in CPR, first aid, and general emergency response (fire, tornado) will always be present.

Emergency contact information forms must be completed and signed when enrolling in the Infant Room. No child will be allowed to attend the Infant Program without a completed and signed emergency contact form.

If a child has a **MINOR INJURY**, first aid will be administered and a family member will be informed.

If a child has a **MAJOR INJURY**, which may need medical attention, the staff will contact a family member immediately so that the child may receive necessary medical treatment.

In an **EMERGENCY**, when immediate attention is needed, the staff will call 911 then immediately contact a family member. After the emergency services have been called it is up to EMS personnel to decide on appropriate action. If the child needs emergency treatment, it will be at the nearest available facility. The family will be responsible for all medical charges.

## **Toddler Development**

### **Exploration and Language**

As infants enter the toddler years, they begin to perceive themselves as separate from other people. They are beginning to become more independent and able to do things for themselves. They are rapidly developing expressive language and becoming better able to convey their likes and dislikes.

### **Tantrums and Biting**

The gap between what a child wants to do and what the child is capable of doing can lead to frustration and tantrums that are common during these years. It can also result in biting.

### **A Note to Parents about Biting**

Biting is a natural event that occurs in all childcare programs. It is unavoidable. When it happens, it can be frustrating and very stressful for children, parents and teachers. There are no quick or easy solutions.

Children bite for a variety of reasons: simple sensory exploration, over stimulation, teething, panic, crowding, seeking attention, cause and effect experimenting, or an intense desire for a toy. Repeated biting becomes a pattern of learned behavior that is often hard to extinguish because it does achieve results. In the Infant Room, staff applies the following deterrents:

### **Parent/Staff Communication**

The Infant Room staff works with parents to understand any biting event, and ask parents to reinforce non-biting resolutions at home.

### **Response to Biting**

When a child is bitten, the staff avoids any immediate response that reinforces biting. This includes negative attention. The biter is immediately removed from the situation with no emotion. Caring attention is focused on the victim. The biter is not allowed to return to play for a moment and is talked to on a level that s/he can understand. S/he is redirected to another activity.

### **Context**

The staff discusses and examines the context and possible causes of each biting incident. In addition, the Infant Room staff tries to determine if the child who is biting is getting enough attention, care, appropriate stimulation and positive non-biting reinforcement. The staff works with the child on conflict resolution or expressing frustration in a positive manner.

### **Environment**

The Infant Room staff tries to provide an environment that minimizes crowding and frustrations.

### **Avoidance of Biting**

The Infant Room staff makes every effort to protect potential biting victims. Many times a staff person shadows the child who bites to try to avoid any biting situations by redirecting the child to other activities.

## **Assessments and Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Little Gan completes regular assessments to determine the developmental growth of each child on intellectual, physical, social and emotional criteria. Conferences are scheduled as needed. Please contact your child's primary caregiver if you would like to schedule a conference at a different time.

## **Publicity**

Participants' images and names may be used in \ publicity (including newsletters, brochures, websites and videos) and any media coverage of our programs and events. If you do not want your child's image used in publicity, please contact the Director.

## **Presence of Pets**

Due to allergies and health concerns, there are no pets allowed in the Infant Room.



## Little Gan Infant Center

**AUGUST 2023**

**PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN TO THE HEBREW ACADEMY PRESCHOOL OFFICE BEFORE YOUR CHILD BEGINS SCHOOL**

I have received a copy of the Hebrew Academy Parent Handbook and understand that I must abide by the guidelines and expectations of the Hebrew Academy Preschool to ensure my child's continued enrollment in the program.

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signed