



# PARENT Newsletter

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2008 | VOLUME 7 NO. 2

## WELCOME, Ezra Medical Center!

**Y**VY proudly welcomes Ezra Medical Center to its new site on the ground floor of 1312 38th Street. YVY's new Administrative building is now fully occupied.

Ezra Medical Center is the fulfillment of the vision of YVY CEO Solomon Igel, who realized in 2001 that a full-service medical center was needed to serve both YVY families and the general community in Borough Park. While Ezra Medical Center is now an independent entity, its ties to YVY remain strong.

YVY's Administrative building was planned with Ezra as the ground floor tenant. Close collaboration between Ezra and YVY's facilities and technology teams during the planning stage has resulted in a medical office that is outstanding both in terms of its comfort for patients and its ability to utilize state-of-the-art technology.

Ezra Medical has grown considerably in its seven years of service. Ezra now services close to 6,000 patients, who have come to recognize that they can receive a very high level of care in their local community.

To assure this level of care, Ezra has recruited physicians of the highest caliber. Its Medical Director, Dr. Jeffrey Teitelbaum, is double board certified in both pediatrics and internal medicine. Dr. Ben Zion Krieger, listed in *The Castle Connolly Guide to Top Doctors New York Metro Area* and designated as one of America's Top Pediatricians in 2008 by the Consumers' Research Council of America, has chosen to join Ezra as

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*Gathering leaves at Early Head Start*

### Research Institute Project Presented at Yiddish Conference

Dr. Isabelle Barriere, YVY Director of Policy for Research and Education and Co-Director of its Research Institute, presented a paper on the Yiddish-language screening tool for assessing language development in young children, which was developed under the auspices of the Research Institute, at the International Centenary Conference on Yiddish Language in Czernowitz, Ukraine last August. Dr. Barriere was pleased to present this paper, which attests to the vitality of spoken Yiddish in the Hasidic community and reflects the collaborative work of many YVY departments, as well as the contributions of many YVY parents, at this prestigious venue.

### YVY's Human Resources Department Expands Staff Training Program

YVY's expanded Human Resources Department has begun the new year with a renewed commitment to advancing the health and welfare of YVY employees. A formal process has been put into place for new employee orientation. Monthly sessions introduce newly-hired employees to YVY as an organization, so that they can understand where they fit into the larger whole. Employees are also told about YVY policies and procedures as well as available benefits. The response to these orientation sessions has been very positive.

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## YELED V'YALDA

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1312 38th Street | Brooklyn, NY 11218  
www.yeled.org

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Laurie Landa, MSEd

## Ezra (continued from page 1)

Chief of Pediatrics after more than twenty-five years of practice in Borough Park and also sees patients at Ezra full time. Dr. Eli Wagshall is Ezra's Dental Director and presides over a very busy pediatric and general dentistry division. Podiatry services, a specialty that is much in demand, are offered by Dr. Israel Goldstein.

Ezra continues its collaboration with SUNY College of Optometry, with a newly-revitalized Optometry and Vision Therapy Center under the direct supervision of Dr. Daniela Ruttner.

Ezra has made every effort to assure patients' comfort and respect their cultural

sensitivities. Examining tables are state-of-the-art and can accommodate handicapped patients. A room has been set aside for nursing mothers, and changing tables are readily available for babies. The waiting area has been stocked with books, and a separate play area has been set aside for children.

YVY is proud of its role in helping Ezra serve the YVY and general community. As partner community-based organizations with a shared mission and philosophy, providing high-quality services to children and families, YVY and Ezra look forward to working together in the coming years to increase the health and well-being of those they serve. ♡



YVY's outgoing Policy Council flanked by YVY Federal Head Start Director Wayne Goldberg and YVY Executive Director and ACS Head Start Director Naomi Auerbach and YVY's new PC liaison Esti Knoll. Elections for the new PC will take place in December

## Human Resources (continued from page 1)

The HR Department has also not forgotten its commitment to current employees, kicking off the year with a voluntary staff training session in September facilitated by Dr. Rona Miles, Director of Social Services at the YVY Learning Center, on Identifying and Building on your Strengths, a positive approach to motivation. The session was very well attended, and attendees reported that they both enjoyed the dynamic presentation and learned a lot. Additional training sessions for both general and supervisory staff have been planned for the coming months.

## YVY Head Start and Early Head Start YVY Head Start and Early Head Start Children and Parents are Welcomed to New School Year

YVY Head Start and Early Head Start welcomed parents and children to the new school year with orientation activities and

elections to class and site committees. Orientation activities included all mandated Head Start trainings, such as training in pedestrian and bus safety. Teachers, too, were trained, or retrained, on all policies and procedures at the beginning of the year.

## YVY Children Undergo Screenings

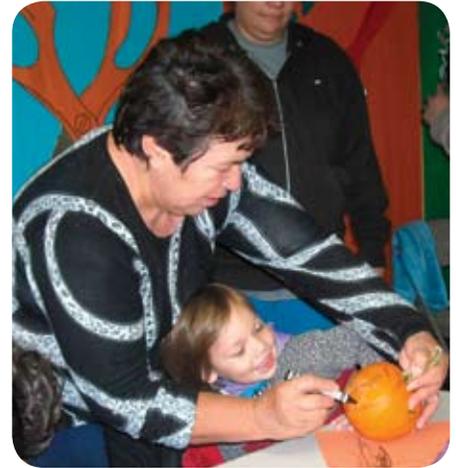
YVY Head Start and Early Head Start children have undergone all screenings within the proper time frame. Teachers have performed cognitive screenings on all the children to assure that all their students are performing at age level. Social-emotional screenings have been done with the cooperation of parents.

All YVY Head Start children have also received vision and hearing screenings. These non-invasive screenings, done with state-of-the-art equipment, have in the past detected vision or hearing problems which are easily remediated if caught early. YVY Head Start performs these screenings as an extra service to its children and families.

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(Above) Fall Home Based outing  
(Above right) Grandma helps!



## Staten Island

### Orientation Activities Open New School Year In Staten Island

Parents at both Silver Lake sites attended Orientation sessions in September, where they also heard a presentation on Pedestrian Safety. Both sites have also held parent elections, where representatives were chosen for Classroom Committees and for Site Parent Committees. In fact, at SLI, it was standing-room-only for election of officers.

in hand at SLII to assist parents with the Food Stamp application process. YVY's own Facilitated Enrollment division was on hand at both sites to help parents with Medicaid recertification.

And, of course, both the GED and Computer classes are already in session.

### Silver Lake Head Starts Celebrate the Fall Season

Fall activities occupied children, parents and staff at both Silver Lake I and Silver Lake II during the first months of school. SLI's "Fall into Reading" literacy theme was celebrated by a day of reading and activities based on the fall season, including trips to local farms where the children picked their own pumpkins and a parade, where children wore their Halloween costumes. Parents in the

Home-Based program spent a beautiful fall day attending a Harvest Celebration/Socialization activity. The children played on an outdoor play gym, looked for hidden pumpkins, and ended the day with pumpkin-painting and piñata activities. Winter coats were donated to all the children and to some of the parents as well, and all the families went home with pumpkins, coats, and good memories.

The theme of sharing was stressed at SLII as well, as Halloween activities included the children making Halloween cards and presenting them to seniors at a local nursing home. November's Thanksgiving activities will reinforce the theme of sharing, as parents will gather at both Staten Island sites to share dishes from their home culture with the other parents.



Princess and bumblebee

### Parent Activities/Workshops Offered for Staten Island Parents

The Silver Lake Head Starts' regular full calendar of parent activities has already begun. A partnership with Health Plus sent representatives from that organization to SLI in October to facilitate a parent workshop on preventing lead poisoning in children and to SLII for a workshop on breast cancer. A representative from the Seaman's Society was on



Working with Daddy: Fathers in Action

## ONGOING PARENT ACTIVITIES: BROOKLYN

### Swimming

Boro Park YM/YWHA  
Tuesdays November 11, 25

### Aerobics

Boro Park YM/YWHA  
Thursdays November 6,  
13, 20, 27  
99 Heyward Street  
Sundays November 2, 9,  
16, 23, 30

### Yoga

99 Heyward Street  
Tuesdays November 4, 18

### Simcha Dancing

99 Heyward Street  
Wednesday November 12

### Focus on Fathers

1257 38 Street  
Tuesday December 2

### Parenting Workshops

1257 38 Street  
Wednesday November 17  
Wednesday November 26

6002 Farragut Road  
Thursday November 6

99 Heyward Street  
Mondays November 10, 17  
Wednesday November 26

### Fitness for Men

99 Heyward Street  
Thursdays November 6,  
13, 20, 27

### Expectant Mom's Program: Aerobics & Childbirth Education, Parenting Skills for Postpartum Moms

1257 38 Street  
Sundays November 9, 23  
99 Heyward Street  
Wednesdays November  
11, 25

## SPECIAL ACTIVITIES: BROOKLYN

### Safety Around the House

99 Heyward Street  
Wednesday November 19

### Food Safety

99 Heyward Street  
Monday November 26

### EHS/Home Based: Let's Make Music

1257 38 Street  
November 18, 26

## YVY WIC

### Mommy and Me

1312 38 Street  
Mondays November 3,  
10, 17, 24

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### MindWing Concepts

Young Israel of Midwood  
Sunday November 9

### SEIT Training: Reading and Literature in Therapy

1257 38 Street  
Tuesday November 11

### Staff CPR

1257 38 Street  
November 18, 19, 20

### Staff Excel Training

1312 38 Street  
Tuesdays November 4, 11

### Management Training

1312 38 Street  
Tuesday November 25

## ONGOING ACTIVITIES: STATEN ISLAND:

### ESL Classes

*Beginners*  
Mondays November 3,  
10, 17, 24  
*Advanced*  
Wednesdays November  
6, 13, 20

### Computers

Tuesdays November 4,  
11, 18, 25

### Home-Based Infants

Friday November 7

### Home-Based Toddlers

Friday November 14

### Parent Committee/ Workshop

Thursday November 13

### Fathers in Action

Thursday November 8

## SPECIAL ACTIVITIES: STATEN ISLAND

### Parent Teacher Conference

Tuesday, November 4

### Brooklyn Housing and Family Services

Wednesday, November 12

### YVY Medicaid Recertification

Wednesday, November 12

**Health Advisory Committee Meeting • Monday November 24**

**Policy Council Elections • Tuesday December 16**

# NOVEMBER 2008

For more information on any of Yeled V'Yalda's services, please call the following numbers:

Headstart..... 718.686.3700 \*3

Early Headstart ..... 718.686.3700 \*3

Special Education ..... 718.686.3700 \*1

ABA Program ..... 718.514.8600

Early Intervention ..... 718.686.3700 \*2

Ezra Medical Center ..... 718.686.7600 \*9

YvY WIC Program ..... 718.686.3799

YvY Facilitated Enrollment  
..... 718.686.2189

### YELED V'YALDA STATEN ISLAND:

#### Silver Lake Headstart,

10 Gregg Place ..... 718.815.4488

#### Silver Lake Headstart II,

20 Park Hill Circle: ..... 718.720.0090

### YELED V'YALDA SUPPORT LINES:

#### YvY Parenting Hotline

Fridays, 10-2 ..... 718.686.2402

All calls are confidential. You do not need to give your name.

#### Yeled v'Yalda 311

for comments/concerns ..... 718.686.3700 \*311

## Screenings (continued from page 2)

Results of all screenings have been shared with parents and, where necessary, referrals have been discussed with parents.

## Parent Activity Calendar Reflects Parent Choices

YVY parents have overwhelmingly cited their desire for courses on parenting, and the calendar of parent workshops reflects this desire. Parenting workshops at the YVY Learning Center are available to parents from all YVY sites, in addition to available workshops on the site level. The format of these workshops is designed to appeal to all parents, as they range from informal round table discussions to formal presentations, from presentations by social workers and psychologists to presentations by highly-regarded community educators and parents. Some workshops are geared to both parents, and there are also workshops that are targeted especially for fathers.

We Care workshops in Williamsburg are open to all YVY Head Start and Early Head Start parents in that neighborhood and echo the diversity and range of the Borough Park workshops.

Please see the calendar on this page for additional workshops and events.

## WIC

## YVY WIC Represented at Conference, Community Meeting

YVY WIC presented a poster reflecting the innovative Healthy Lifestyle initiatives it offers to its WIC participants at the annual NYS WIC Conference in Albany in October.

YVY WIC Coordinator Nechama Stolzenberg and YVY Health Coordinator Janie Friedman, R.N., represented YVY at the meeting of the Council of Community Organizations held at Maimonides Medical Center on October 29. 

# THE *Parent-Teacher* RELATIONSHIP

*My four-year-old daughter gets stomach aches in the morning and doesn't want to go to preschool. She cries and dawdles and gives me a hard time. Last year she had a problem with being bullied, but when I ask her if it's happening again this year, she tells me that it's not. I know there's a problem, but I don't know what it is. How can I help her?*

*My youngest child is in preschool, but he doesn't seem to catch on to things as quickly as my other children did. Is he just immature, or does he have a serious problem which requires intervention before it gets worse?*

**Y**our child's preschool teacher may have the answers to these kinds of questions. Establishing a productive relationship with a child's preschool teacher is one of the best ways there is of being involved in your child's educational well-being. Meetings, conferences, phone calls, or personal contact with your child's teacher can do a lot to relieve any educational concerns you may have. Your child's teacher can be your best ally when it comes to helping your child be successful in school.

It is important that parents begin to be involved in their child's education at the preschool level. Pre-school is a child's first school experience. If this experience is a positive one, it can lay a good and lasting foundation for the rest of a child's school years.

The parent-teacher relationship is a collaborative one. It is based, to a large extent, on good two-way communication. Even if you do not always agree with your child's teacher, remember that your child's best interest is at the core of the relationship.

Like every other relationship, the parent-teacher relationship has its own dynamic. Setting the proper tone is crucial to its success.

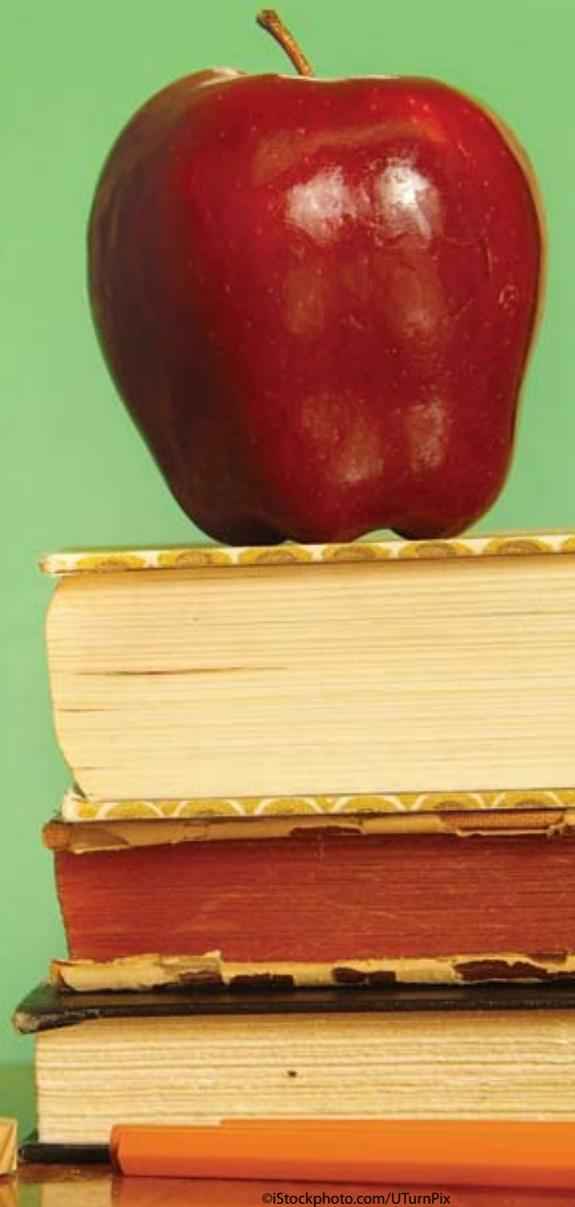
Some guidelines to establishing a good working relationship with your child's teacher follow:

- **Honesty and Persistence:** Let the teacher know that you want to work with her to help your preschool child and that you would appreciate her help. Say "I want to work WITH you to help my daughter," or "What can WE do to help my child?"

Make sure your exchange with the teacher is ongoing. Call, ask questions, and meet in person when necessary, but be sure to give the teacher time to get to know your child before discussing any concerns that are not urgent.

- **Good Communication:** Good two-way communication is the key to a good parent-teacher relationship. You need to be respectful while being sure your point is coming across. Don't do all of the talking. Be open to ideas from your child's teacher. While you should

*(continued on page 5)*



## Parent-Teacher *(continued from page 5)*

not hesitate to approach a teacher or feel shy about asking her questions, you must not be aggressive.

- **Openness:** The more a teacher knows about your son or daughter, the more informed decisions she can make. Let the teacher know if anything is happening at home that she needs to be aware of. Through a quick note you can let the teacher know if a child is coming in fatigued from a late night, or if a child needs extra attention because of a physical complaint.

You should also let the teacher know if something potentially disturbing is going on in the family, for example if someone in the family is ill. A young child is sensitive to changes in family atmosphere and may act out in school as a result of this. Positive developments such as a new sibling or an engagement in the family also affect a young child. The more a teacher understands about what is going on in your child's life, the greater the chance a teacher has of understanding her and responding to her in a truly constructive way.

Openness is especially important if your child has a disability or health concern. Being open about your child's diagnosis will help the teacher deal with him better and allow her to give you advice on how to handle his learning situation. Ask the teacher to contact you immediately if she feels there is a problem.

- **Open Mindedness:** Never take your child's side against the teacher or the teacher's side against your child. Listen to both points of view, share information, and try to come up with a solution that satisfies both teacher and child.
- **Advocacy:** Always remember that you are your child's greatest advocate. Nobody knows him or her better than you do or cares more about his success. Don't hesitate to say what you want or to take the initiative. But don't brag. Trust your child's teacher to come to value what you value most in your child.
- **Respect:** Respect goes a long way in

the parent-teacher relationship, as it does in all the other relationships in your life. Remember that your child is only one of many in her preschool classroom.

Respect for the teacher means that you must understand that she often cannot respond to you immediately. It may take her a day or two to respond to a note about a matter that is not urgent. If you wish to discuss a matter by phone, you can ask the office staff when it is a good time to call, or ask this question in a note to the teacher, since she cannot always leave the classroom to respond to a phone call. You should also make an appointment if you wish to speak to the teacher in person.

When you do reach the teacher, be open to hearing her perspective instead of confronting her immediately with what you think is wrong.

## THE PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCE

Your child's Head Start center offers all parents an opportunity to speak with their child's teacher at regularly-scheduled parent-teacher conferences. This is a good way you can get to know your child's preschool teacher if you have not had an opportunity to interact with her previously. Such meetings are designed to be a forum where parents can air their concerns about what is going on in school and gather information and ideas from their child's teacher.

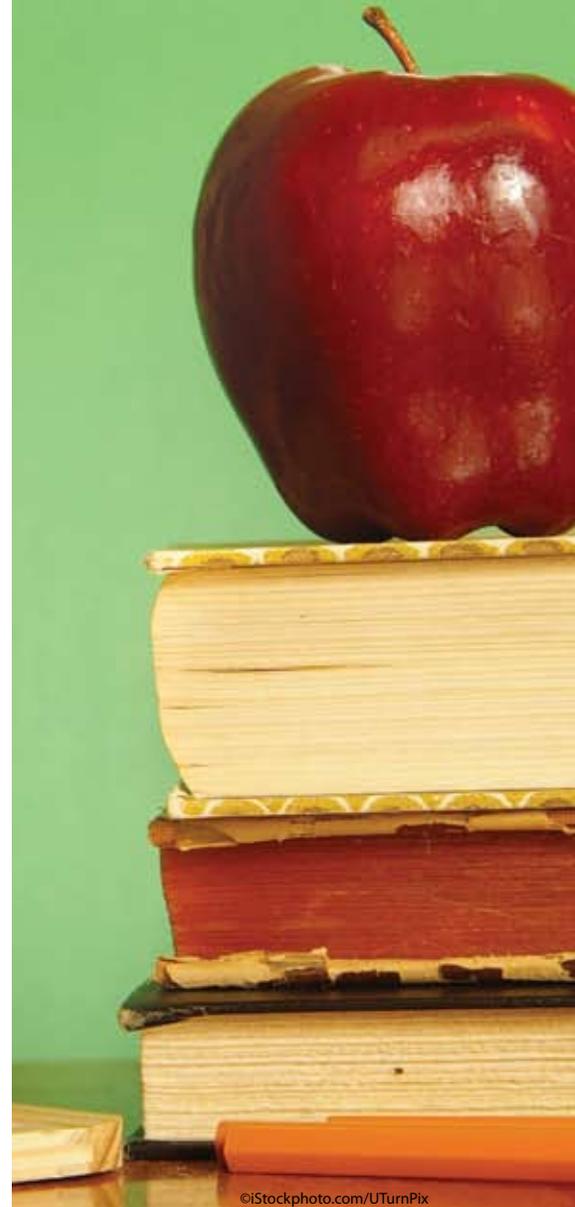
In order to get the most out of a parent-teacher conference, there are a number of pointers that parents should keep in mind. Good planning before the meeting, productive discussion during the meeting, and consistent follow-up after the meeting will ensure that any concerns you may have about your child in preschool are properly addressed.

**Before the conference.** Think about the questions you have and the issues you want to raise. For instance:

- Does my child get along well with her classmates? Does she play well with the other children? Does she have any special playmates?

*(continued on page 8)*

*The more a teacher understands about what is going on in your child's life, the greater the chance a teacher has of understanding her.*



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# Advocating for Your Special Needs Preschool Child

**S**ome children experience difficulties in school, ranging from problems with concentration, learning, language, and perception to problems with behavior and/or making and keeping friends. These difficulties may be the result of physical disorders, emotional or behavioral problems, or learning disorders (or disabilities).

Sometimes parents suspect a child has a disability, and sometimes the teacher will point out that a child is lagging behind his peers in a certain area. Parent and teacher should then discuss whether intervention, such as special education services or therapy, is warranted. The education director and social worker are also part of the team that recommends services once classroom individualization by teachers and preschool personnel is deemed to be insufficient to deal with the delay in the child's development.

If both the parent and the preschool team agree that additional services are needed, it is important that the proper protocol be observed in order to access services quickly and efficiently. In New York City, eligible preschool children are given special services at no cost through the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) of the NYC Department of Education. The first step is writing to the CPSE to request services. The Head Start Education Director or Family Worker will be glad to give parents the address of the district that services the area in which the child lives so that they can send a letter. Alternatively, parents may request that the teacher write the letter, cosigned by the parent, explaining the reason she feels the child requires additional help.

Every Yeled V'Yalda Head Start site has a Disabilities Coordinator to help parents with referrals and to assure that the process is moved along as expeditiously as possible. The Family Worker at your child's site will be glad to give you

the name and contact information for the person who services that site.

## WHAT PARENTS CAN DO

1. Make sure you respond to all requests for signatures or other information promptly. If you do not reply by the deadline, your case will have to be formally reopened, which will lengthen the approval process.
2. A team of evaluators will be sent to evaluate your child in different areas so that they can make recommendations for service. Children are evaluated based on the service that is being sought. Evaluations of preschool children are most often done in school. An evaluator will also interview a parent to get a history of the child's developmental milestones. Make sure you cooperate with the evaluators so that paperwork can be done within the proper time frame.
3. The next step is the IEP Meeting. This meeting is where the decision as to what services the child will receive is made by an administrator of the NYC Department of Education, based on the evaluations which were done on the child. The meeting takes place at the offices of the Department of Education or at the evaluation site. You will be invited to the meeting, and it is a good idea to attend. In most cases, the Disabilities Coordinator from your Yeled V'Yalda Head Start site will also attend the meeting to advocate

for your child, but the input of the parent is always necessary.

4. Once your child is approved for services, be sure you work with the child's therapist to reinforce the therapeutic process at home. Parents' cooperation is vital in order to maximize the efficacy of therapy.
5. If your child was denied services because the IEP team felt that intervention was not needed, you can request that the case be reopened at a later date if you and the teacher feel that the child has not progressed. Your Disabilities Coordinator can help you with this process.
6. Do not withhold crucial information from your child's teacher. Your child's Head Start teacher is your partner in the development of your child. If your child has a diagnosed condition for which he is receiving treatment, your child's teacher should know about this so she can respond to the child appropriately in the classroom. Any requests for confidentiality will be respected.

This also applies to a child's health condition. Remember, your child is in the classroom for many hours. If any emergency should occur, the preschool staff must know how to deal with your child in

an appropriate manner. Yeled V'Yalda's Health Coordinator, who is a registered nurse, will be happy to work with parents to assure their child's well being. 🙋



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**Parent-Teacher** (continued from page 6)

- Have you noticed any learning problems or behavioral difficulties?
- What are my child's strengths and interests, and are they being nurtured?

Talk to your child before the meeting and find out if there is anything he or she would like you to discuss with the teacher. Ask her what she likes about preschool, what she doesn't like, and if anything is a problem for her. You might find out something that warrants discussion.

*At the conference.* There are also some pointers to help maximize the benefit of the face to face meeting with the teacher.

First, make sure to observe meeting etiquette. This means

- Be on time. Being prompt or even a little early shows consideration and interest.
- Stick to your scheduled time slot. Other people want to talk to the teacher as much as you do.
- Use your time slot productively. Talk about things that matter such as health conditions, family issues, personality

traits, or behavioral issues that you think the teacher should know about. Don't waste your time talking about who hit whom in the playground yesterday.

- Don't bring your younger children along as they will distract from the meeting
- Turn off cell phones and pagers during the meeting so you can focus your full attention on what is being said.

Attend the meeting as a couple if possible. Fathers as well as mother have a stake in their child's well-being.

Ask specific questions about how your child is doing. Is your child participating? Is he getting along with the other children? Does she follow directions? Is there anything you need to do at home? Admire the samples of the children's work that are displayed in the classroom. They worked hard to prepare them!

*After the conference*

- Think about what you discussed with the teacher while it is still fresh in your mind.
- Talk with your child after you have

met with the teacher and try to focus on the nice things she said.

- Set up another meeting with the teacher if necessary.
- Maintain contact with the teacher to track your child's progress in between meetings.
- Read and respond to the school memos that the teacher sends home.
- Send the teacher a thank you note to show how grateful you are for her interest in your child.

Establishing a good parent-teacher relationship benefits everyone — your child, yourself and the teacher as well. By opening and maintaining channels of communication with the teacher, you are setting down a foundation of rapport and trust that will last throughout your child's school career.

While parents' involvement with their child's school will vary depending on the age of their son or daughter and his or her changing developmental circumstances, parents' interest and productive participation in the school experience can help a child at any stage. 



1312 38th Street  
Brooklyn, NY 11218  
Phone: 718.686.3700  
www.yeled.org

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