

Five Important Things to Know About Children and Play Today

- 1) “Children who have freedom of creative expression grow up to be thoughtful, tolerant adults who think well on their feet....kids deserve playtime. It's their birthright. Play is what they do; it's what makes them happiest.” <http://www.scholastic.com/parents/resources/article/creativity-play/make-way-play>
- 2) According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, kids ages 8-18 years old spend on average 7.5 hours in front of a screen for entertainment each day. Over a year, that adds up to 114 full days.
- 3) The American Academy of Pediatrics has called the decline of playtime a national crisis, since decreased physical activity may lead to greater rates of childhood obesity.
- 4) According to the Mayo Clinic, this is the first generation that will live fewer years than their parents due to essential hypertension, diabetes, and poor conditioning.
- 5) What is the price our children are paying for the loss of free play? There are six costs that we can see: 1) obesity; 2) high stress levels; 3) rapidly increasing diagnosis of ADHD, depression, and emotional fragility; 4) social incompetence; 5) excessive dependence on adults; and 6) the loss of a relationship with nature. Michael Thomson, *The Pressured Child*



Please visit www.cjebaltimore.org/play-guides for Jewish play guides created by the Center for Jewish Education to kid-friendly sites in Baltimore, such as The Maryland Zoo, Port Discovery Children's Museum and more. You'll also find a list of local great playgrounds and play spaces in Baltimore!.



A Reusable Pocket Guide to Jewish Playground Experiences

Sunday, May 7, 2017



What's Jewish About Playgrounds?

Welcome to the Grand Playdate—a special play experience designed to connect you and your grandchild to Jewish values while you enjoy time at a playground.

As you use this guide, think about the purpose of a playground — a timeless place of games, energy and imagination, a ground for play. Jean Piaget, pioneer in child development and founder of the theory of cognitive development, wrote that “**play is the work of children.**” Try to remember a playground from your childhood and the magic that happened there. Perhaps you and your grandchild can return to that magical space as you search for some of our tradition’s treasured wisdom.

Ready... Set... Play!

Look for the Jewish value featured at the top of each page of this pocket guide. Then,

- Find the related quote on the playground.
- “Remember When”: Share memories of your childhood playground experiences, and those of their parents. (If those stories connect to the values you are exploring together, the stories will have an even greater impact.)
- “Ask the Question”: Engage your grandchild in discussion about their playground experiences.

Thank you to Chizuk Amuno Congregation and Schools for the use of the Leon and Phyllis Wagner Brill Yad B’Yad Playground and the Goldsmith Family Imaginative Play Space.

Jewish Value: Courage • לֵב אֲמֵץ • Ometz Lev



Find this quote on the playground:

“The whole world is a very narrow bridge; the most important thing is not to be afraid.” Rabbi Nachman of Breslov


Location Hint: You need good balance for this!



Remember When: Share a time when you took a risk on the playground.

Ask the Question: Is there anything on the playground that you are afraid to do, and why?

Jewish value: Care of Ones Body • שְׁמִירַת הַגּוּף • Shmirat Haguf

 Find this quote on the playground:

“I praise You for I am awesomely, wonderfully made.” Psalm 139:14


Location hint: Check the connection between the treehouse and the climbing wall!



Remember When: Share a time when you did something on the playground in a way that surprised you and made you feel accomplished.

Ask the Question: How do you use parts of the body on the playground?

Jewish Value: Friendship • חֵבְרוּת • Chaverut

 Find this quote on the playground:

“Don’t walk in front of me, I may not follow. Don’t walk behind me I may not lead. Just walk beside me and be my friend.”—Jewish summer camp song

Location Hint: Explore the treehouse!



Remember When: Share a memory of what you and your friends loved to do most on the playground.

Ask the Question: How can you be a good friend on the playground?

Jewish Value: Kindness • חסד • Chesed



Find this quote on the playground:

“The world exists for the sake of kindness” Rashi

Location Hint: Head to the Ben & Esther Rosenbloom Amphitheater



Remember When: Share a memory when someone showed you kindness on the playground (helped you, gave you a turn, invited you to play with them)

Ask the Question: When did you experience kindness on the playground?

Jewish Value: Learning • תלמוד • Limmud



Find this quote on the playground:

“Who is wise? One who learns from every person.”
Pirkei Avot 4:1

Location Hint: It's somewhere on the Goldsmith Train!



Remember When: Do you have a story of a time when you learned something you didn't expect to from someone on the playground?

Ask the Question: Who are the different people you can learn from on the playground? Who taught you something really cool on the playground?