

Beth El Preschool

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Dear Prospective Beth El Preschool Parent,

We are delighted to provide you with information for the 2022-2023 school year.

Beth El Preschool (BEPS) is a play based, parent co-operative Jewish preschool located in downtown Bethesda. The children at BEPS are encouraged to explore their environment, make discoveries, ask questions and gain competence through a variety of child centered, hands-on experiences.

BEPS offers a developmentally appropriate curriculum that promotes growth in all areas of a child's development: social, emotional, cognitive, physical and spiritual. By integrating Jewish customs and traditions, values, holidays, songs and dance throughout the day, we foster a strong, positive cultural identity and love for being Jewish.

At BEPS, parents are actively involved in the preschool community. Teachers and parents work together to provide a loving and nurturing environment during the school day through co-oping. Parents support the children in their learning by facilitating programming outside of the school day through participation on parent committees such as Events, Tzedakah, Teacher Appreciation, Fundraising and more. Our community orientated school environment promotes life-long connections with other families at Beth El.

You can learn more about our school by visiting www.bethelpreschool.org, contacting our Admissions Team at BEPSadmissions@gmail.com, or reaching out to us at any time.

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Programs

Beth El Preschool is a play based school, offering a range of fun, stimulating and engaging learning opportunities for children ages 15 months to five years. Our classes focus on physical, social, emotional and cognitive development. We provide a balanced program of active and quiet activities, as well as individual, small group and large group activities, free and structured play choices, and a mix of teacher directed and child initiated activities. Judaism is infused into our daily teaching with a special focus on holidays, Shabbat and tikkun olam.

Mazel Tots

A baby and toddler program that meets once a week for group play, songs and dancing. For babies and toddlers who are 15 - 24 months old. Must be accompanied by an adult.

Tiny Twos

Parent/Toddler class that meets two days a week for children who turn 2 from September 1 to December 31. Parents join their children in the fall and transition out of the classroom in the early winter.

Two-Year-Olds

Our 2s begin to build their independence in our three-day and five-day 2s classes. Our program is for children who turn 2 before Sept 1.

Three-Year-Olds

Friendships grow and communication skills develop in our 3s program. Our program is five-days a week for children who turn 3 before Sept 1.

Pre-K (Four-Year-Olds)

Children continue to develop social and emotional skills and pre-academic skills are introduced using developmentally appropriate practices. Our program prepares our 4-year-olds for a smooth transition to Kindergarten the following year and is five days a week for children who turn 4 before Sept 1.

The A-B-Cs of CO-OPING

Participating in a co-operative preschool is a unique and special experience for families. At Beth El Preschool, we pride ourselves on the many ways families can be involved in their children's preschool education- both in the classroom and on Preschool Committees.

What does it mean to co-op?

Parents are an extra set of eyes, ears and hands during the in-person co-op experience. You are there to not only assist teachers with the smooth functioning of the classroom and preschool day, but also to build relationships with children in the classroom.

Traditional Co-Op helps in the classroom 5-6x/semester.

Co-op Plus helps in the classroom 10-12x/semester.

Non Co-Op* does not help in the classroom on a regular basis, but may schedule a drop-in day.

*Non co-op is limited to a maximum of 25% of each age group across the school.

Participating in Shabbat with your child is a meaningful experience. Parents will be invited 1-2 times per semester to spend Shabbat with their child and their class regardless of co-op status.

Parents are the primary co-ops. Once per semester a grandparent or caregiver may co-op in place of a parent.

What is a Parent Committee?

All parents at Beth El Preschool (regardless of co-op status) serve either on the Parent Board or a Parent Committee.

The Parent Board meets 1x/month throughout the school year and each Board Member spearheads a Parent Committee.

Parent Committees range from Event/Holiday planning, Tzedakah (charity), Teacher Appreciation, Admissions, Class Representatives and more. Families serve on one committee per child. Collectively, the Committees are an integral part of the preschool and one of the primary reasons families choose to join the communal environment of Beth El Preschool.

Common CO-OP FAQs

What are the co-op responsibilities?

Co-oping is from 9:00am to 12:15pm. Responsibilities may include:

- Helping your child's classroom teacher set up before school/clean-up the room after school
- Accompany children to their classrooms at drop-off
- Assist with classroom projects, games and activities
- Help set up and clean snack
- Supervise children on the playground
- Facilitate hand-washing

How are co-op dates assigned?

In a typical school year, families specify days they are available to co-op and a class representative creates a class co-op schedule. During the pandemic, parents signed up for their dates directly with the teachers. We are weighing the pros and cons of each system, but either way parents' schedules and availability will be taken into account.

I have two children at Beth El Preschool. How does co-oping work?

Doing Co-op Plus for two children is quite a lot of co-oping and does not usually work for most families. However, doing Traditional Co-op for two children can definitely work! If neither of these options work well for your family, we will also allow you to select Non Co-op for one child and Traditional Co-op for the other child and then split the co-oping between the two classes.

Do I have to co-op in the classroom?

We encourage all families to consider either Traditional or Co-op Plus. However, we understand that these options do not work for every family and so we do offer Non Co-op as an option. Please note that Non Co-op is limited to a maximum of 25% of each age group across the school.

Events

Below is a taste of some of Beth El Preschool's most popular parent-led events.

Fall Shabbat Dinner

A musical evening to welcome Shabbat with songs, dinner and dessert with Beth El Preschool families.

Parent's Night Out

Take a break from the bedtime routine to get to know the other grown-ups at BEPS.

Coffee Socials

Jump start the morning with coffee and socializing at morning drop-offs.

BEPS Book Fair & Holiday Shopping

Partnering with a local book shop, families (and friends) can purchase books for their children and fulfill teacher wish lists.

Pajama & Clothing Drive

Culminate a season of giving to a local family support center with Pajama day at school.

The Big Event

Beth El Preschool's biggest fundraiser of the year to secure funding for school improvements. It's a kid-free night to hang with parents, spend time with teachers and bid on an auction item (or five!).

BEPS Book Club

Read, listen or watch a parent-picked book, and then gather to discuss (or just hang out).

And More!

In addition to many more parent-led programming, Beth El Preschool partners with Beth El Congregation to sponsor holiday and social action events throughout the year.