

# Camp Gan Israel of Westport

## parent handbook

2024



## A LETTER FROM YOUR DIRECTORS

Dear Camp Gan Israel Parents,

We are so excited to offer you the best summer experience for your child. Camp Gan Israel, part of the largest network of Jewish camps in the world, is proud to provide the best in fun and safety in a warm and caring Jewish environment.

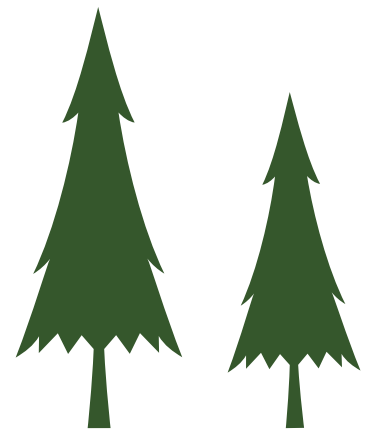
In Camp Gan Israel, we view our staff and the parents as two integral partners of a team. Together we work together to bring out the best in your child's development and growth; physically, socially and spiritually. Using our website, [www.ganisrael.com](http://www.ganisrael.com), regular email communication, and social media posts, we hope to stay in touch with you about your child's progress and activities.

The benefits of attending camp are tremendous - the socialization, exercise, and learning through exciting activities are just what our children need. Camp Gan Israel is proud to continue our commitment to our camp families and we are excited to use our experience from last summer to provide another amazing summer for our campers.

Please review this handbook so you will be familiar with the procedures and policies of our camp. Our complete Camp Policy is available on our website. If you have any questions or concerns you can call Dina Kantor at **203-226-8584**, or email [director@ganisrael.com](mailto:director@ganisrael.com).

**WE'RE LOOKING FORWARD TO ANOTHER AMAZING GAN IZZY SUMMER!**

Yours Truly,  
Rabbi Yehuda and Dina Kantor  
Directors



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# YOUR CHILD'S SAFETY

## ATTENDANCE/CHILD ABSENCE: (AD.23.1)

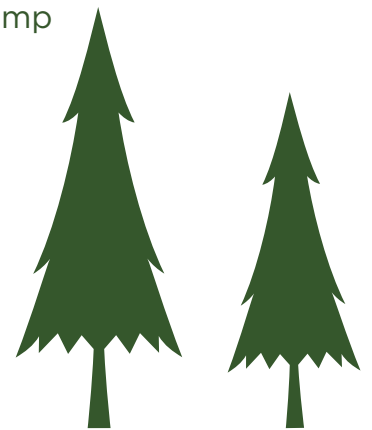
- Children are picked up by a staff member from the campers car.
- Attendance is taken by our staff every morning.
- If you know your child will be absent from camp, please notify the camp director at **203-341-1788** or email **[director@ganisrael.com](mailto:director@ganisrael.com)**. If a camper is absent and we were not notified, someone from the camp office will call the parent.

## ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE (AD.4.1)

- Drop off and Pick up begin 10 minutes before pickup/drop off until 15 minutes after pickup/drop off. Staff assist campers getting in and out of vehicles. Campers must stay seated until a staff member arrives to walk them to their bunks location.
- Please be patient during the orderly arrival and departure.
- All parents must have a camp pass placed in their window.
- Staff members will supervise the children until parents pick them up.
- Please obey the 5 MPH Speed Limit sign posted in the parking lot.
- If the parent or guardian will not be picking up the child, the alternate driver must be added as an authorized pickup person; a parent/staff communication form is available in the camp office. No child will be released to an unauthorized driver without permission from the Director. (AD.23.1)

## EARLY/LATE PICK UP

- Campers find it hard to adjust when they come late, and they worry when their parents don't pick them up on time. Please be prompt.
- Parents who come late should park in the parking lot and walk their children to the security guard. The security guard will contact the camper's counselor who will come and pick the camper up.
- If the parent is over thirty minutes late to pick up a camper, the Camp Director will call the parent to find out when the camper will be picked up and arrangements will be made.



## MEDICAL & EMERGENCIES

- All campers must have a completed and signed health history form on file. All medications must be given to the camp staff at orientation.
- If your child has a special medical condition that may affect his/her participation in camp's activities, you must meet with the camp director to see if/how special accommodations will be made for your child. (HW.14.1-B)
- In case of any medical emergency requiring more than basic first aid, the parents/guardians will be immediately notified. If we cannot reach the parents, the emergency contact on file will be notified. (HW.8.1, HW.14.1-A)
- There is a Camp Nurse that is on duty during camp hours in case of emergency.
- After any incident or injury, parents will be contacted right away and receive an incident report.
- Parents may be asked to pick up their child from camp if the Camp Nurse deems it necessary. Reasons may include fever, rash, suspected contagious disease, lice, or any injury that requires more than first aid.
- For ways to contact camp in case of an emergency, please see the "Contact Camp" section in this handbook.
- For our complete Risk Management Plan, Health & Safety Plan and Emergency Plan, please see our "Camp Policy" available on [www.ganisrael.com](http://www.ganisrael.com) in the forms and handbooks section.

## COMMUNICATIONS

- Camp information, calendar, lunch menu and other relevant information can be found on [www.ganisrael.com](http://www.ganisrael.com).
- For administrative questions, please call our year-round (off-site) office number: **203-226-8584**
- Our on-site camp number is **203-341-1788**. This is for camp related calls only. NOTE: The line cannot take voice messages.
- Pictures and updates will be posted on our camp social media pages and periodical emails.
- The Director should be called in case of an emergency. The director can be contacted at the camp office. Calling the camp office is an effective mode of communication.
- Camp Gan Israel's full "Camp Policy" is available on [www.ganisrael.com](http://www.ganisrael.com) in the Parent's Section. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with our policies and guidelines.



# ABOUT OUR PROGRAM

## GENERAL INFORMATION

- Camp Gan Israel provides a wide variety of developmentally appropriate activities and games that provide entertainment and education.
- Activities include sports, cooking, magic, golf, art, tennis, drumming, arts & crafts, theater, hiphop, and creative theme days. Each activity is designed with creative excitement which engages all participants.
- Campers are encouraged to participate in all activities to promote unity in the group. Exceptions are made if an activity is medically not advisable.
- Our specialized activities have trained instructors who orient staff and campers to the specific safety and operating procedures for each specialized activity.

## BIG GAN PROGRAM

Providing the most comprehensive mix of traditional camp activities with our new enhanced electives and specialty camps, Camp Gan Israel is fun and more! At Camp Gan Israel, we strive to create a community that fosters personal growth and development, excellence, quality, relationships....As a result, campers and staff develop the most meaningful friendships... Ones that last a lifetime. It is no wonder campers return year after year to their summer “home” at Camp Gan Israel!

## SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE

9:00 AM - 9:15 AM: Lineup

9:15 AM - 10:00 AM: Tennis/art

10:00 AM - 11:30 AM: Change, Bus & Swimming

11:30 AM - 12:15 AM: Sports

12:15 PM - 1:00 PM: Lunch

1:00 PM - 1:45 PM: Daily Special

1:45 PM - 2:30 PM: Art and Music

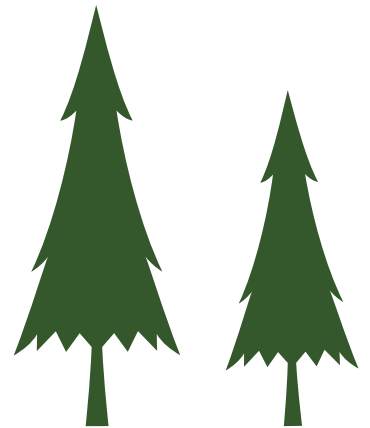
2:30 PM - 3:15 PM: Theatre/Variety Sports

3:15 PM - 4:00 PM: Lineup and dismissal

### PLEASE NOTE:

5 year olds end at 3:00 PM

6+ year olds end at 4:00 PM



## WHAT TO SEND TO CAMP

### LUNCH

- Campers are provided lunch 4 days a week by Camp. On Wednesday packed lunches should be brought from home in a marked lunch box/bag with the child's first and last name.
- Lunch should be dairy or vegan; no meat is allowed in camp, lunch must be nut-free. Please don't send glass jars/bottles.
- We are a nut-aware campus- peanut and tree nut products are not offered or permitted on campus. Camp Gan Israel will continue to meet the needs of campers with additional allergies and will work with parents and medical staff to make sure camp is safe for all our campers.

### WATER

- Each camper will receive a water bottle and holder to be filled each day at home. Water is always available for campers to drink.

### TZEDAKAH

- Tzedakah (charity) is a concept that is fundamental to Judaism. Our camp attempts to develop a commitment among our campers to share with others less fortunate than themselves by donating a few pennies every day to charity.

### CLOTHING/BATHING SUITS

- All campers should bring a bathing suit, towel, and swimming gear.
- Closed-toe shoes or sneakers should be worn. Flip flops, sandals and Crocs are not appropriate for our playground and sports activities.



# AQUATIC PROGRAM

## AQUATIC PROGRAM FOR GAN IZZY CAMPERS

Gan Izzy has a longstanding working partnership with Lynn Stevens and the Weston Middle School Pool. All our campers will be receiving swim instruction . Campers will be evaluated the first day and will be placed in groups of four campers for instruction. Instruction will be for 25 minutes and then free swim for 20 minutes. In addition to the instructors, there will be 2 lifeguards at all times.

## FIVE YEAR OLDS

Five year olds will swim at Weston Pool Daily. Campers that are non swimmers should bring a labeled floatie to camp, that will remain at the pool for the summer. The Float will NOT be used during instruction, but during the structured free swim. The instructors will be in the pool during this time.

## SIX YEAR OLDS AND UP

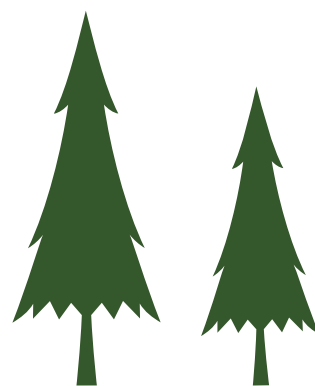
Campers ages 6 and up, will swim four times a week at the Weston Middle School Pool. The Weston Pool Staff supervises the safety and swimming. Campers will go with their bunk and sister bunk.

## CHANGING FOR SWIM

Campers will change at camp for swim and go onto the bus with a towel, and all swim gear. Please label towels, goggles and make sure to send swim shoes as well.

## COMMUNICATION

Swim Progress Reports will be given out at the end of each session. If you would like to speak to the aquatic director during the summer, please email [director@ganisrael.com](mailto:director@ganisrael.com) and you will be put in contact.





## TRANSPORTATION & TRIPS

- Campers go on trips as indicated in our Camp Calendar available on [www.ganisrael.com](http://www.ganisrael.com). Children are transported by First Student Bus Company and Student Transportation of Connecticut. Staff members do NOT transport children in private vehicles.
- Campers must wear a camp T-shirt on trip days. Each camper receives one T-shirt upon registration. Additional t-shirts may be purchased at camp.
- The following rules must be obeyed while travelling on the busses. (AD.7.1, AD.8.1)
  - Remain properly seated while on the bus.
  - Keep arms and other objects inside the bus
  - Always follow the directions of the driver
  - Keep games, balls, toys, etc. in a bag or box
  - Help keep your bus clean! Put all garbage in the appropriate containers
  - Learn emergency drill procedure (taught by driver)
- Campers cannot:
  - Chew gum while riding on the bus
  - Stand or change seats while on the bus
  - Fight, shout, or throw objects while on the bus
  - Leave anything in the center aisle
- Additional information about transportation/trip procedures and policies are available in our “Camp Policy”, available on [www.ganisrael.com](http://www.ganisrael.com).



# **FAIRFIELD BUS TRANSPORTATION**

## **LOCATION**

- The bus will be picking up/dropping off at one central location:
- Chabad of Fairfield (452 Brookside Drive in Fairfield).

## **TIMES**

- The morning bus leaves Chabad at 8:30 am.
- The afternoon bus arrives at Chabad at approximately 4:15 pm
- A bus monitor will be present with a clipboard and attendance sheet with a list of campers provided by the camp administrator. Parents are instructed to wait for campers at drop off.
- Campers will only be released if parents are present.
- In the event of an emergency, our procedure is to have immediate contact with parents of passengers. This is done through Ultra Camp. We notify parents appropriate information and instructions. Parents will be given the number of the bus monitor and camp director. In case of change (non emergency) all travel changes will be communicated by phone/email by the camp director or camp administrator. (AD.5.1)

## **BUS SAFETY: SAFETY REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES**

- All campers must be seated and be wearing seat belts when provided at all times.
- No one should ever put their head or arms out the window or throw anything out of the window.
- All campers must remain seated while the bus is in motion.
- Do not block exit doors with backpacks. Keep backpacks on your lap or under your seat.
- All campers must always listen to the driver and the bus counselor.
- Campers must keep their voices down so the driver can concentrate on the road.
- Please walk up and down the steps of the van or bus carefully.
- When arriving at camp in the morning, wait for the bus counselor to escort you down the driveway.

## **FAIRFIELD BUS TRANSPORTATION**

- When on the bus to go home, please listen for your name when attendance is taken.
- The bus driver and bus monitor will assume responsibility for the safe passage of all passengers on the bus.
- In the event of a vehicular accident, the bus driver and/or the bus monitor will call 911 to notify emergency personnel. He/she will provide or secure care for any injured campers, staff or volunteers, and supervision for uninjured campers.
- In the event of a vehicular accident, the bus driver and/or bus monitor is responsible to identify witnesses and obtain accident emergency information in order to prepare a written accident report.
- Bus traffic is to be carefully controlled and transport zones are to be clearly marked and monitored at the camp site to ensure safety of campers, staff, and volunteers.



## GOALS AND OUTCOMES (CR.2.4)

### GENERAL INFORMATION

- To provide opportunities that stimulate the development of each camper's self-esteem.
  - Each camper will be able to select their own electives.
  - Each camper will participate in at least one activity to promote self-esteem, which could include arts & crafts, values clarifications, music, sports or special hunts and activities.
  - Campers will participate in getting-to-know-you games during the first 24 hours of camp.
  - Staff will provide the campers with positive comments and encouragement throughout their stay.
- To help each camper appreciate the natural surroundings and take an active role in the stewardship of our environment.
  - Each camper will have the opportunity to participate in some nature activity, which could include one of the following: nature, environmental activities, or other appropriate activity.
  - At the beginning of each session, the campers will discuss as a group the importance of taking care of their camp and the type of things that they need to do such as picking up litter, not picking flowers, respecting property (no graffiti), and conserving water.
  - Campers and staff will participate in recycling of materials such as aluminum cans, cardboard, and paper in clearly marked recycling bins.
  - Each unit will be encouraged to perform a service project at camp to help the environment such as picking up litter and recycling.
- To provide situations for each camper to set goals and challenge themselves while discovering his or her own skills and abilities.
  - Each camper will participate in at least two activities during the week that will personally challenge the camper - such as sports, arts and crafts, and learning.
  - Campers will have the opportunity to work in small groups during activities and bunk time with each camper taking on different roles.
  - Campers will learn at least one new skill while at camp.



- To provide exposure to Jewish culture and practices in a fun, non-judgmental and hands-on way.
  - Campers will participate in daily activities and arts & crafts sessions that educate them in specific Jewish cultural concepts.
  - Campers will learn and sing camp songs and hear stories that contain themes of Jewish culture and practice.
  - Each camper will bring home Challah bread that he/she shapes and bakes.
- To increase the camper's network of friends and community..
  - By virtue of the fact that the campers are attending a Jewish camp they meet many new Jewish friends
  - Reunions and holiday activities are scheduled periodically throughout the year to maintain friendships.

#### **PERSONAL PROPERTY REGULATIONS (AD.16.1.1)**

- Alcohol and drugs may not be brought on camp property.
- Camp cannot take responsibility for personal property brought to camp.
- If campers bring iPods, cell phones, digital cameras, or any other expensive item to camp, and they are brought out while camp is in session they will be confiscated and returned to the parents at the end of the day.
- If campers or staff bring potentially dangerous articles to camp, such as skateboards, slingshots, etc. they will be confiscated by the Director.
- The Director will either return to camper or staff at the end of the day or call parents.
- Animals are not allowed on campus.
- Weapons are prohibited on campus. Any staff member or camper who brings a weapon (including a gun, large knife) onto premises will be immediately dismissed from our program.

