



# A YEAR-BY-YEAR OVERVIEW OF YOUR CHILD'S EDUCATIONAL JOURNEY AT TEMPLE SINAI

“TOT SHABBAT” – The journey starts with a **once-a-month** Saturday morning service for toddlers and families, featuring singing and stories with the Rabbi and the Cantor.

“MY FAMILY AND ME” – This monthly session is for three-to-four-year-olds and the adults who love them. Each session features cooking and eating a treat related to a Jewish holiday or theme. Then, while the kids play, parents discuss issues related to raising Jewish children with the Rabbi.

**KINDERGARTEN** – **Children start attending Sunday mornings**, learning about Judaism through hands-on activities and practicing basic prayers and blessings. This “official start” of a child's Jewish education is also marked with a beautiful Friday night Consecration ceremony for the whole family.

**1<sup>st</sup> GRADE**– 1st grade curriculum includes Bible stories and recognizing Hebrew letters. A special highlight is every family getting at least one visit from “Shabbat Spot”, a take-home stuffed animal who brings with him everything a family needs to celebrate a Friday night table service.

**2<sup>nd</sup> GRADE** – Students begin studying Israel, starting with a simulated airplane trip for which they pack, make passports and learn about the sites they'll be “visiting.” They also learn all about their synagogue by conducting interviews with clergy, staff and lay leaders. And they commence a three-year Bible curriculum, which starts with the Torah and concludes with the passing of Moses.

**3<sup>rd</sup> GRADE** – A stronger emphasis on the Jewish calendar and all the festivals, including both the historical and the agricultural connections for each holiday. A highlight is every student making their own fired Seder plate for families to use at Passover. Third graders also continue learning Hebrew letters and vocabulary, move on to the early prophets in their Bible studies, and begin to think about how they can be partners with God in creating a better world.

**4<sup>th</sup> GRADE** – As their study of Hebrew intensifies, **students start attending Wednesday afternoons in addition to Sundays**. They also learn about the distinctive Jewish customs related to major life-cycle events. The year culminates with the whole class participating in a mock Jewish wedding in the sanctuary with families in attendance, including a real reception afterward!

**5<sup>th</sup> GRADE** – This year the curriculum refocuses on Israel, and also on the Jewish value of *Tikun Olam* (healing the world). One highlight comes at Mitzvah Day, when the class prepares and serves a meal at Ascencia, the local homeless shelter supported by Temple Sinai for over 30 years. **Get out your calendars – this is also the year that B'nai Mitzvah dates will be scheduled.**

**6<sup>th</sup> GRADE** – A deeper study of Jewish history, covering the first 3000 years or so (whew!). Students' understanding of their history is enhanced by a wonderful field trip to the Skirball museum. A unit about comparative Judaism helps them begin to learn how different schools of Jewish thought view the Torah and many other aspects of Jewish life.

**More on B'nai Mitzvahs...** *In the winter of 6<sup>th</sup> grade, students and their parents attend an in-depth orientation with the Rabbi, Cantor and Religious School director. This is also the start of the **Monday afternoon B'nai Mitzvah preparation class** for some 6<sup>th</sup> graders. Start date is according to age; all students will complete two semesters of this prep class by the end of 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Lastly, **individualized tutoring** begins six months out from the date of the Bat or Bar Mitzvah.*

7<sup>th</sup> GRADE – Get ready for a busy year, one not only full of preparation and parties, but also full of *meaning*. Becoming a Bat or Bar Mitzvah marks the moment your child becomes a Jewish adult, which means, among other things, that she or he will be able to lead and participate in a Jewish service anywhere in the world. During this important year, students are expected to strengthen their Hebrew skills considerably. Meanwhile their Judaica curriculum focuses on American Jewish history and a mature exploration of important ethical issues.

8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, & 10<sup>th</sup> GRADE -- With their B'nai Mitzvahs behind them, **students are ready to participate in our Sunday afternoon “Metivta” program**. Named for an Aramaic word meaning “argument”, this program digs deep into thought-provoking subjects. Every quarter students sample courses such as “Sex in the Bible”, “Conversational Hebrew” and “Cooking through Jewish History.” By completing an appropriate variety of Metivta classes over the course of 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, & 10<sup>th</sup> grade, our young adults will finally reach the pinnacle of young Jewish education...

***CONFIRMATION!*** Celebrated in front of the congregation at the end of 10<sup>th</sup> grade, this is a powerful moment in which our young women and men publicly affirm their commitment to Judaism. During this special Shabbat service our confirmands not only read from the Torah, but also deliver individual speeches expressing what their religion means to them personally and how they intend to lead a Jewish life going forward.

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DON'T MISS OUT ON THESE OTHER GREAT OPPORTUNITIES  
FOR YOUR CHILD DURING THEIR TEMPLE SINAI JOURNEY..

**CAMPERSHIP**– Starting in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, students can earn scholarships for a Jewish camp of their choice by volunteering at various temple events. It's a great way to help pay for summer camp, learn new responsibilities, and bond with their peers!

**G.T.Y.**– Kids get to partake in a plethora of fun social events through our Glendale Temple Youth program, affectionately known as “Gitty”. Activities are programmed for kids as young as kindergarten, but its during the teen years that the real fun begins.

**TEEN ASSISTANT**– 8<sup>th</sup> graders and up can work in the religious school in a variety of capacities, including being classroom teaching assistants to the younger grades. It's a wonderful way to give back to the temple and stay connected with their community, plus students can earn service hours required by their high schools.

**“WHAT’S NEXT?” PROGRAM** -- Even more educational and experiential opportunities await our 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders. One of the most exciting is the “L'Taken” seminar, where Jewish young people from all over the country fly to Washington D.C. to learn first-hand about the lobbying process. Then they actually petition their own congressional representatives about the causes most important to American Jews.



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