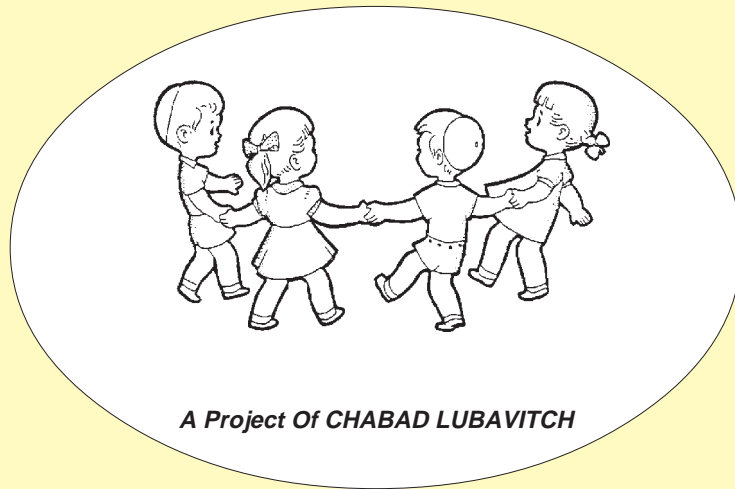




An Early Childhood Program

Parent Handbook



Gan Gani Preschool
14535 Blanco Road • San Antonio, TX 78216
210-493-9263

GAN GANI & CONTACTING SCHOOL

—Gan Gani Preschool

This booklet is designed to communicate the policies necessary to make our preschool a safe, healthy and productive learning environment.

Our educational methods encourage students to become independent, responsible, resourceful and creative learners. The role and function of the staff is to maximize the possibilities for successful learning by providing a stimulating environment, combined with individual guidance and support.

—Contacting the School

The preschool office and director can be contacted at:

(210) 493-9263 or
through Chabad Lubavitch of South Texas at
(210) 492-1085, fax (210) 493-9460.

Rivkie Block can be reached at home at:
(210) 479-7989, cell phone (210) 363-3210.

The preschool's mailing address is:

Gan Gani Preschool
14535 Blanco Road
San Antonio, Texas 78216
(210) 493-9263

Visit us at www.ChabadSA.com.

E-Mail RivkiBlock@ChabadSA.com

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FACULTY, ADMISSION, VISITORS & HOURS OF OPERATION

—Faculty

Administration

Rivkie Block, Director

Teachers

There are eight teachers on staff in this school. Each of the four classes has a lead teacher and an assistant teacher.

—Admission

Prior to initially enrolling a child, parents are encouraged to visit the school and meet with the Director to learn about the school's philosophy, curriculum and operational policies. The completed application form and required fees are due at the time of registration.

Children are enrolled and placed into their respective classes according to birthdate. All children must be 2, 3 or 4 years old by September 1st of year of enrollment. We will accept children into Shorashim when they turn 18 months.

AGE	CLASS
• 18 mn	Shorashim (Roots)
• 2 yrs	Ahlim (Leaves)
• 3 yrs	Nitzanim (Blossoms)
• 4 yrs	Pericha (Flowers)

It is LAW that every student enrolled have a current emergency card on record and immediately available to the staff. No child will be permitted to remain at Gan Gani or attend school events without a separate and current Emergency Card. This is for your child's safety. Please see that these cards are legible and properly filled out.

—Visitors

Gan Gani Preschool has an open door policy, and parents are always welcome to visit the school to observe their child, the centers of operation and program activities.

All visitors, other than partners, must report to the school office before being admitted to a classroom.

In order to maintain our low child/faculty ratio, an enrolled child's friend or relative may accompany him/her to school only when space is available and when prior arrangements have been made. The cost per morning is \$25.00. Please call the school at 492-1085.

—Hours of Operation

Gan Gani Preschool is in Operation from mid-August to the end of May Monday-Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Early stay is available from 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and Late stay 12:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. on a as needed basis at an additional charge.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

—Arrival

Arrival time for the preschool program is 8:50 to 9:00 a.m. During that time, staff members will greet the two, three and four year olds, and help them out of their cars.

To enable teachers to prepare for the day's activities, children may not be brought to the classrooms before 8:50 a.m.

An important way to help your child learn responsibility and consideration for others is to bring him/her to school on time. When a child enters a classroom late, it is disruptive to the teacher and to the other children. It is also difficult for the child who is late. In addition to missing an unhurried greeting from the teacher the child may miss the formation of peer play groups and valuable information about the day's activities.

—Dismissal

Dismissal is from 12:20 to 12:30 for preschoolers. Staff members will bring the children to their cars and buckle them in. Parents of Shorashim children should park in the designated areas and pick up their children in the classrooms.

Dismissal for children in the Pericha Enrichment Program is 2:00 pm.

Studies indicate that children are safer when placed in a restraint system in the back seat. To assure the well being of your children, staff members are required to put them in restraint systems. In addition, they are required to put children in the back seat if the car is equipped with an airbag on the front passenger side.

To allow another person to transport your child, the school must have written notice, dated and signed by you, stating the name of the individual you authorize to pick up your child and the date you are authorizing that person to do so. No child will be entrusted to an individual not authorized in writing.

If you need to take out or place a child restraint system in your car during drop-off or pick-up, please park in a designated parking place (not in the pick-up/drop-off lane) before making the transfer.

To expedite the drop-off and pick-up process, these policies are to be followed:

- While in line, parents should remain in their cars. Please do not hold up the line by stopping to visit with other parents.
- If an individual parent is picking up more than one child, the parent assists the staff member in putting the children in car seats or seat belts.
- **No cars are to be parked in the pick-up/drop-off lane as this is also the Fire Lane.**
- Children can be unpredictable. Drive slowly and carefully around the school. Hold your child's hand at all times when walking near the driveway.
- After 12:40 p.m. you must park and pick up your child from the classroom.
- Late stay children are to be picked up in their respective classrooms.
- We adhere to the policy of charging \$10.00 per half hour, or any portion thereof, for late pickups.

SUPPLIES

Each child needs the following supplies by the first day of school each semester.

- A large backpack, labeled on the outside with the child's name. The backpack should be large enough to allow a lunchbox to be placed inside.
- A lunchbox, labeled on the outside with the child's name. A thermos or drink box must also be marked with the child's name.
- Toddlers who drink from *sippy* cups are to bring one to keep at school. Write the child's name on the outside of the cup and lid with a permanent marker.
- Two boxes of Kleenex or similar tissue.
- Two full-size rolls of Bounty paper towels.
- Two disposable indoor/outdoor cameras or two rolls of 35mm 200 film.
- One complete change of clothing (with the child's name written inside each piece) in a labeled plastic bag. If unused the change of clothing will remain at school until the season changes. If it is necessary to use the change of clothing, it should be replaced by the next class day.
- Children in diapers are to bring a package of disposable diapers and a box of baby wipes with his or her name written on each package. The teachers will use the diapers and baby wipes for your child only, The teacher will inform you when more diapers are needed.

CLOTHING, SNACK & SHARE A FRUIT

—Clothing

Dress your child for active play and learning. This means casual, washable clothes and sturdy, rubber-soled shoes. Flip-flops and sandals are not recommended for active play; your child will be playing in sand and small pebbles, and near dirt, small sticks or other natural irritants.

The children participate in art activities daily. In spite of wearing protective aprons, they sometimes get paint or other supplies on their clothing, so please dress your child accordingly.

Your child must be able to easily manage his/her clothing during toileting. A young child's self-esteem is enhanced when he or she can be independent.

This year Gan Gani Will have a school T-shirt. Children are encouraged to wear school T-shirts on Fridays. The shirts may be purchased from the PTO.

—Snack

A snack is served daily. It usually consists of Cheerios, graham crackers, pretzels, or crackers. Juice or water is also served.

—Share A Fruit Program

Each Wednesday, one child is asked to bring fresh fruit, **uncut and unpeeled**, for his or her entire class.

A schedule of each child's turn is published and distributed at the beginning of the year. Families who have more than one child in school have been scheduled simultaneously for your convenience.

LUNCH

—Lunch

Nutritious lunches are important for the efficient functioning of your child's body and intellect, so we request that you carefully select his/her foods and avoid *junk food*.

Since you provide your child's lunch and drink, we rely on you to help us adhere to all the Jewish dietary laws.

The basic symbols that indicate Kosher foods are \textcircled{K} and \textcircled{U} .

Beef, chicken and fish products must have a kosher symbol on the label. Pork and shellfish are not permitted in any form.

All fruits and vegetables are acceptable. Eggs are pareve, which means they can be part of any meat or dairy lunch.

Meat and dairy products are not to be packed in the same lunch. Examples of lunches that are not permissible are:

- Salami with pudding or cheese
- Chicken with yogurt
- Bologna with milk

These items can cause young children to choke. Please do not include them with your child's lunch:

- Nuts, popcorn and hard candies

Please do not send Gogurts (drinkable yogurts) for lunch.

Children may not share or trade lunch items.

— After lunch, all leftovers and trash are placed in a trash can. When possible and appropriate, uneaten food will be kept in the lunch-box and returned so parents can see what was not consumed.

Children say a blessing before eating lunch and snacks.

HEALTH & IMMUNIZATION POLICY

—Health Policy

The school must have on file within one week of admission evidence that each child physically is able to take part in the school program. Any of the following constitutes compliance:

1. A written statement from a licensed physician who has examined the child within the past year.
2. A signed statement from a parent giving the name and address of a licensed physician who has examined the child within the past year and states that the child is able to participate in the program. This must be followed within 12 months by a document by the physician.

The school must keep current immunization records for each child. The school must ensure that each child's immunization record includes the child's birth date, the number of doses and the types, and the dates (month, day, and year) the child received each immunization. The school's compliance with the standard is measured by one or more of the following for each child:

HEALTH & IMMUNIZATION POLICY CONT'D

1. A dated record that the child has been immunized against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, measles, mumps and rubella. There must be
 - A. A record with a rubber stamp or signature of the physician or health personnel, or
 - B. A machine or handwritten copy of the immunization record. Staff copying the information must sign the handwritten copies.
2. A dated statement from a licensed physician or other authorized health personnel that immunizations against at least one of the above mentioned diseases have begun. The immunization cycle must be completed as soon as is medically feasible. The school must have a current immunization record on file.
3. A certificate signed by a licensed physician stating that the required immunization would be injurious to the health and well-being of the child or a member of the child's family or household.
4. an affidavit (notarized statement) signed by the parent that the immunization conflicts with the parent's religious beliefs and practices.
5. A dated statement signed by the parent that the child's immunization record is current and is on file at a regulated facility the child attends. The parent must include the name of the facility in the statement.

—Tuberculin Testing

In the event the TDPRS should require that the child be tested for tuberculosis according to the Texas Department of Health or if the local health authorities or the regional office of the Texas Department of Health recommends a test a dated statement signed by the parent that the child's tuberculosis test record is current and is on file at a regulated facility the child attends also complies. The parent must include the name of the facility in the statement.

—Hearing and Vision Screening

All children enrolled at Gan Gani Preschool are required to have a Hearing and Vision Screening done at 4 years of age. The results are recorded on the medical form by the physician performing the test. Forms will be provided to you prior to your child's 4 year old checkup to update the medical history with test results.

—Illness Policy

The health of preschool children is a concern of both parents and faculty. It is the parents' responsibility to determine if their child is well enough to come to school. If your child is not feeling well, please keep him/her at home. This will protect his/her health as well as the health of the other children in the class.

Our health policy stipulates that a child is to be kept home:

- If he/she has a fever or has had one during the previous 24 hours.
- If he/she is fussy, cranky, and generally not himself/herself.
- If he/she has symptoms of a possibly communicable disease. These include sniffles, red and/or runny eyes, sore throat, or abdominal pain.
- If he/she has diarrhea.
- If he/she has a runny nose that requires wiping at least every 10 minutes. (If your child has allergies, please submit a note from your pediatrician.)

HEALTH & IMMUNIZATION POLICY CONT'D

Notify the school if your child has any communicable illness. In turn, we will inform you about what's going around.

After an illness, a child must be symptom-free and strong and active before returning to school. Remember that children tire more easily in group situations.

Since staff members go outside with their classes, we cannot keep one child inside during outdoor play time. Please keep your child at home if he/she is not well enough for outdoor play.

MEDICATIONS

—Medications

If your child requires medication during the school day:

- The medicine should be clearly labeled with the child's name, time of dosage, and amount of dosage.
- If it is a prescribed medicine, it must be in the original container. We will adhere to the expiration date.
- An *Authorization to Give Medication* form must be completed by a parent, signed, and sent to school on the first day that the medication is to be administered.
- Staff members may not dispense Tylenol nor aspirin nor apply any ointment sent from home without written parental authorization.
- Medications are stored in a locked cabinet, in the refrigerator, or in the office.

EMERGENCY INFO & WEATHER

—Emergency Information

It is important that parents supply the school with their daytime telephone numbers and the telephone numbers of relatives or friends authorized to act for the parents (in case the parents cannot be reached). If emergency numbers change during the year, notify the preschool office so our records can be updated.

In the event of an emergency, the following procedures will be followed:

- Depending on the severity of the emergency, the child may be taken to the emergency room for treatment or 911 may be called.
- An attempt will be made to notify the parent.
- If the parents cannot be reached, an attempt will be made to notify the emergency contact.
- If the emergency contact cannot be reached, an attempt will be made to communicate with the child's physician.

The school has staff members who have been trained in first-aid and CPR.

—Inclement Weather

The decision about closing the preschool for inclement weather will be made by the school director. Parents will be informed by the office or through a chain call.

MISCELLANEOUS

—Field Trips

On occasion Gan Gani has planned off campus field trips. In order for your child to participate in the trip the following applies:

1. Each child must have a signed permission slip on file which will state destination of trip, departure and return times and emergency contact number.
2. Parents must provide emergency cards to the office with emergency contact information and emergency medical consent.
3. All parent chaperones must have a communication device (cell phone, pager, two-way radio) available in case of an emergency.
4. All parent chaperones must adhere to the transportation plan and not deviate in any way from the pre-planned route.

—Tzedakah

One of the most beautiful mitzvot in Judaism is charity. Two, three and four-year-olds are encouraged to bring a coin (any denomination) each day to put in the Tzedakah box. This experience in giving helps develop compassion and an awareness and commitment to share with others who are less fortunate.

—Toys

Play guns, sword, and other toys that encourage aggressive behavior are not allowed at school. Help your child learn to leave these toys at home since they may keep him/her from the open-ended activities that we offer and from the equipment and materials we provide.

—Birthdays

We celebrate your child's Hebrew and secular birthdays. On your child's Hebrew birthday (we will inform you of the date), you may purchase a kosher cake, cupcakes or cookies from H-E-B #42 on Huebner at NW Military, 210-492-8287, or from Delicious Foods for the birthday celebration. Delicious Foods is located at 7460 Callaghan Rd., 210-366-1844.

—Photography Policy

The Gan Gani preschool reserves the right to take photographs of classrooms and students for educational, promotional, archival and fundraising purposes. If you prefer that your child not be photographed, please advise the school director in writing.

—Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

The PTO is an organization of parents and teachers that support the school and sponsors school-related activities. Parents are encouraged to join and actively participate in the PTO.

HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS & COMMUNICATION

—Helpful Suggestions

- Set a reasonable and consistent bedtime.
- Allow sufficient time for breakfast and morning routines so your child arrives at school feeling relaxed and secure.
- Help your child arrive at school on time.
- Inform the teacher if something is going on at home (illness of a family member, extended absence of a parent, etc.) that might affect your child.
- Inform the school when you will be away from home and your child will be in the care of another adult. This is important in the event of transportation problems or emergencies.

—Communication

Effective communication is essential to your child's education. Feel free to contact the school about any matter whatsoever. You are encouraged to discuss any questions or concerns with your child's teacher. If you have further questions or concerns, please discuss them with the school director.

Frequently, children are given school and community information in the form of notes or memos to be taken home. Please check your child's backpack daily to ensure that you don't miss out on any important information.

CONFERENCES & NEWSLETTERS

Our school policy states that we will distribute only flyers or brochures from non-profit Jewish organizations or from fundraising events that result in assistance for the school.

We cannot distribute personal communications such as birthday party invitations, gifts, etc. Please use the directory to contact other families.

—Conferences

Scheduled conferences for children in the twos, threes and fours are opportunities for the parents and teachers to discuss the development of the child. One scheduled conference and one optional conference are offered annually. Our staff is always available for additional conferences at the parent's request.

We are unable to assess a four-year-old's readiness for kindergarten before Thanksgiving vacation. We will be happy to complete a form for admission to one independent school. If you give us forms for additional schools, we will send a copy of the first one we completed.

The preschool and its employees maintain confidentiality of information.

Staff members cannot conference informally, e.g., in the carpool line or at social events. To enable teachers to have all needed information available, please set up a specific time to confer.

—Newsletters & Notes of Interest

At the end of each week, parents will receive a newsletter describing their child's activities for the coming week. It is hoped that this will keep you aware of and involved in the school's curriculum and activities.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

—Classroom Management

The goal of classroom management is to help the child become self-disciplined. This is viewed as an integral part of educating the young child.

- Discipline at Gan Gani Preschool will take the form of positive classroom management.
- The school recognizes that each child is a unique individual who behaves and learns in different ways.
- The school strives to help the child become self-controlled, that is, to help him/her experience the intrinsic pleasure in appropriate behavior as opposed to *behaving* just to please adults.
- The school encourages children to be independent and to solve their own problems. The teacher will lead the child to this point gradually, offering assistance and modeling along the way.
- The school takes into consideration behavior that is typical and developmentally appropriate and provides developmentally appropriate equipment, materials and activities.
- Expectations are stated in the positive form, such as *Please Walk* versus *Don't Run*.
- Faculty members use meaningful and descriptive praise.
- Faculty members respect the child.
- Faculty members do nothing to humiliate or shame the child.
- Faculty members speak to the behavior, not the child; e.g., *Hitting hurts. Let's find another way to solve this problem*, instead of *You're a bad girl for hitting*.

The child is allowed to experience the natural and logical consequences of his/her behavior whenever possible. For example: The natural consequence of playing too roughly with friends is that they will not want to play with you. The logical consequence of spilled paint is that you need to help clean it up. A natural consequence requires no outside involvement. A logical consequence needs an adult to follow through.

If necessary, in order to prevent a child from hurting himself or others or from doing damage to school property, a teacher may calmly but firmly hold a child to prevent such harm. The child will be held as lovingly as possible with a helpful attitude rather than a punishing or admonishing one.

The child is allowed to express anger, frustration, sadness, hurt or fear — all of which are honest healthy emotions.

Sit and Watch is used after other management techniques have been tried. During *Sit and Watch*, the child sits on a chair within sight of the teacher. The child may determine when he/she is ready to get up, or a short (2 or 3 minute) time limit may be set. In rare cases, a child will be asked to leave the classroom and sit in the office for a short time, always under supervision.

No corporal (physical) punishment is used.

Children with consistent behavior difficulties are taken through the above procedures, and the parents are counseled. If after appropriate efforts have been made, the child does not appear to be benefiting from the program, we will communicate our concern to the family and suggest that a more suitable educational setting be found. These actions are considered necessary when the health, safety or welfare of this child and /or that of another child (or children) in the group is at risk.

—Aggressive Behavior

Children do not always have the verbal skills necessary to express anger, frustration, sadness, hurt, fear, etc. These emotions may thus be expressed through aggressive behavior, including hitting pushing, and/or biting. As the child grows older, with help and guidance, he/she will learn to replace aggressive behaviors with appropriate verbal responses.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT CONT'D

One of the most difficult things about handling aggression is dealing with the other adults involved. If your child bites or hits, you may feel embarrassed even if you acknowledge that the behavior is not an uncommon phenomenon among young children. If your child is the victim, you may feel anger at the teacher, the other child's parents, or the child himself for the hurt caused to your child.

At school, we use a variety of techniques to deal with these situation, including determining if there is a pattern as to when the behavior occurs, if there is a cause/effect relationship, and/or if the aggressor is gaining negative attention or experiencing frustration. We tell the aggressor (with our voice and facial expressions) that the behavior is unacceptable, and we teach him/her the acceptable way to handle the situation e.g., *Use your words to tell your friend what you want*. We also give help and comfort to the victim and teach him/her proper assertive skills with which to respond. We also provide very close supervision so we can prevent aggression as much as possible and use the opportunity to *practice* the proper social skills needed.

Understanding and support for the other parents, children, and teachers can help. No one wants his/her child to bite or to be bitten, to hit or be hit, or to be pushed, shoved, or scratched. These are all normal children with normal problems, and one of the best things we can do is work together and help one another while the children grow past these stages.

CURRICULUM

—Curriculum

Gan Gani Preschool provides a curriculum that incorporates all areas of a child's development (physical, emotional, social, and cognitive) through an integrated approach.

The curriculum emphasizes learning as an interactive process. Teachers prepare the environment for children to learn through active exploration.

Opportunities are provided for children to choose from a variety of activities, materials, and equipment with time to explore through discover and involvement. Adults facilitate children's engagement with materials and activities and extend the children's learning by asking questions or making suggestions that stimulate children's thinking.

To promote the child's total development, the following activities will be included in his/her school experience:

Creative Art	Cooking Projects
Language Experiences (oral & written)	Puppet Play
Storytime	Water/Sand Play
Dress-up	Housekeeping
Construction Activities	Games
Block-Play	Creative Movement
Outdoor Play	Fingerplays & Rhymes
Manipulatives	Prewriting Activities
Reading Readiness Activities	Playing with Friends
Dramatic Play	Playing with Toys
Flannelboard Activities	Music and Rhythms
Math Activities	Puzzles
Books	Woodworking
Computers	and more.

CURRICULUM CONT'D

While participating in the above activities, each child will have opportunities to:

- Play with his/her peers and alone
- Share and take turns
- Explore and discover
- Learn new concepts, ideas and tasks
- Develop creativity
- Expand interests and abilities
- Learn about the world around him/her
- Develop gross and fine motor skills
- Learn and practice the social skills needed to make friends and play/work cooperatively
- Construct with materials that may otherwise be unavailable
- Use *messy* art materials
- Learn from others while broadening his/her horizons
- Develop a healthy sense of self-worth as well as respect for others

FINANCIAL POLICIES & ADD'L FEES

—Financial Policies

- 1) All registration fees, tuition, and September's monthly tuition must be paid before the first day of school.
- 2) There are no refunds or credits for illness, holidays, or family vacations, and there are no make-up days.
- 3) Tuition is due on the first day of each month. If payment is not received by the 10th of the month, a late fee of \$25 is charged. If no payment is received by the first of the following month, a registered letter will be sent explaining that the child will be unable to continue attending preschool after the tenth of the month unless payment for the two months outstanding and previous month's late fees are paid in full.

—Additional Fees

- 1) There is a late pick-up charge of \$10.00 per half hour or any portion thereof.
- 2) A \$25.00 charge will be added to all accounts for a returned check.
- 3) A \$25.00 late fee will be added to payments that are made after the tenth of the month.

PLEASE NOTE: You are paying to reserve a space whether or not your child attends. Refunds or credits will not be given for illness, holidays, vacations, etc., and there are no make-up or substitution days.

—Policy Changes

Parents will be notified of all policy changes in writing by formal memo from the Director.