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HOME TO THE HAPPIEST CAMPERS IN GREATER NEW HAVEN!

Parent & Handbook Information Guide



SUMMER 2026





WELCOME!



DEAR PARENTS,

Welcome to the 2026 season of Camp Gan Israel! We are delighted that you are joining us. The counselors and staff at Camp Gan Israel are eager to greet your child and share our exciting camp program. At CGI, your child will have the opportunity to bond with other children of the same age in a friendly and relaxed camp setting. During each day, the campers participate in activities, games, laughter, and plenty of camp spirit. A busy and well-rounded schedule awaits your child. Our counselors are wonderful role models who create meaningful friendships with the campers.

In this booklet, you will find useful information about schedules, policies, and regulations. Camp Gan Israel is fully licensed by the State of CT and is also accredited by the American Camp Association. You can be confident that at CGI, the staff will always put an emphasis on the safety and well-being of your child.

We have done our best to provide you with a clear, concise, and practical outline of what we have planned for the camp season. We are certain that all of our programming, as well as the warmth, spirit, and Jewish pride we impart, will add up to a wonderful camp experience for your child! We look forward to greeting you soon!

With heartfelt prayers for a safe, healthy, and enjoyable summer for our campers,

Rabbi Schneur & Chanie Wilhelm

Camp Directors

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|----------------------------------|----|
| Essential Information | 4 |
| Arrival/Pick-up | 4 |
| Necessary Items | 5 |
| Lunch | 6 |
| Communication | 6 |
| Our Staff | 7 |
| Transportation | 7 |
| Trips | 8 |
| Health Care | 9 |
| Safety | 10 |
| Preventing the Spread of Illness | 11 |
| F.A.Q.s | 12 |



MISSION STATEMENT

Camp Gan Israel is a summer camp dedicated to enriching the lives of children from diverse Jewish backgrounds and affiliations through a stimulating camp experience. Our camp is part of the largest and fastest-growing network of day camps, enjoying a reputation as a pioneer in Jewish camping, with innovative ideas and creative activities. Our program provides enjoyment and inspires children to try new things in a comfortable and caring atmosphere. Our goal is to build self-esteem and character in our campers by helping them develop different skills and encouraging the Jewish values of kindness, caring, and giving. Campers meet new friends and learn about their heritage in a fun, exciting manner.

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

DATES AND TIMES

Camp runs for six weeks. Camp begins on Monday, June 29, and runs through Friday, August 7. Camp hours are from 9:00 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. On Thursday, July 23, camp ends at 1:30 p.m.

Extended Care: Before-care is available Monday-Friday from 8:30-9:00 a.m. After-care is available Monday-Thursday from 3:30-5:00 p.m. Advance notice required; limited space available. More information regarding rates and reservations can be found online at www.GanIsraelNH.com/extendedcare.

OUR LOCATION

Camp will be held at the Southern CT Hebrew Academy campus, 261 Derby Avenue, Orange. The grounds include spacious playing fields, gymnasium, playgrounds, new outdoor enclaves, archery range, and air-conditioned bunkrooms.

OUR DIVISIONS

Mini Gan Izzy: Ages 3-5

Junior Division: Entering Grades 1-3

Senior Division: Entering Grades 4-7

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS & INFO

CAMP OFFICE: 203.701.9386

CAMP FAX: 475.241.0742

DIRECTOR'S CELL PHONE: 203.887.7603

CAMP WEBSITE: www.GanIsraelNH.com

CAMP EMAIL: info@GanIsraelNH.com

CAMP WHATSAPP: 203.600.5553

ARRIVAL & PICK-UP

Camp begins at 9:00 a.m. every day. Camp ends at 3:30 p.m. Please be prompt for arrival and dismissal so we can ensure a smooth transition into and out of camp. Late pick-ups are difficult for both the children and the staff.

ARRIVAL/DROP-OFF

MINI GAN IZZY Please enter the campus and drive around the parking lot in the back and then pull up alongside the building. Each Mini Gan Izzy group will have a designated outdoor spot for drop-off until 9:10 a.m., at which point they will enter the building. A CGI staff member will meet you and escort your child to his/her group. Please do not leave until your child has been picked up by a staff member. If you wish to walk your child to his/her group area, please park along the side of the building. **On Fridays, drop-off will take place inside the building, in each group's room.**

UPPER CAMP Please enter the campus and drive around the parking lot in the back, until you reach the "Drop-off Zone" (near the downhill ramp). Your child may then exit the car and proceed to the line-up area. Follow signage, and for safety reasons, please do not drop off your child until you reach the Drop-Off Zone.

LATE ARRIVAL If arriving after groups have gone inside, please park in the front circle and walk your child inside the building to your child's bunkroom.

PICK-UP

Parents should enter the campus and drive around the parking lot in the back and then pull up alongside the building. Campers will be escorted to their cars by their counselors after line-up. Please wait in your car until your child is brought to you.

EARLY PICK-UP: In the event that you wish to pick up your child early from camp, please call our office or send us an email so that we are aware of your plans. **You may also send a WhatsApp message to the camp WhatsApp number.** A staff member will bring your child to the front lobby, where you will need to sign out your child.

CAMPER RELEASE: Parents have informed the directors of who is allowed to pick up their children. If someone other than listed will be sent to pick up your child, please contact the office by phone or email indicating permission for pick-up. If someone other than listed arrives at camp to pick up your child and we have not been notified, the camper will not be released until a parent has been contacted.

WHAT YOUR CHILD NEEDS IN CAMP

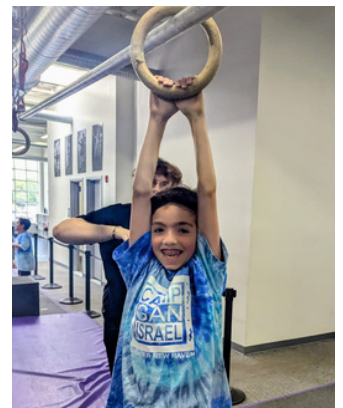
CLOTHING: Clothes should be comfortable, washable, and appropriate for camp activities. For safety, children must wear appropriate shoes. Croc style shoes and flip-flops, although comfortable and trendy, are not appropriate for athletic activities.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS:

1. **Mini Gan Izzy** Please send a bathing suit and towel each Monday, and we will send them home to be washed at the end of the week, or earlier if need be. Please replace towels/bathing suits if we send them home. Water shoes should be sent on the first day of camp and will be kept at camp. Mini Gan Izzy children should bring a complete change of clothing to be kept at camp. Little Explorers and Explorers groups should bring a sheet, blanket, and pillow for rest time in a small plastic bin. Additionally, for children who are not yet toilet-trained, please send in a sufficient supply of diapers and wipes.
2. **Upper Campers** (Jr. & Sr. Divisions) will need to bring a bathing suit and towel on swim days and water activity days (noted on calendar).
3. Please send a labeled bottle of sunscreen with your child on the first day of camp, which will be stored in his/her cubby. First layer of sunscreen should be applied at home. When reapplying sunscreen in camp, campers in Upper Camp will do so unassisted; campers in Mini Gan Izzy will be assisted by a staff member.
4. Please send a filled water bottle with your child every day.

MARK CLOTHING & ACCESSORIES: Swimwear, camp T-shirts, water bottles, and any outerwear should be clearly marked with your child's name.

T-SHIRTS: T-shirts will be available for sale at the camp orientation on Friday, June 26. T-shirts are worn on all trip days. T-shirts are \$10/each. All campers who registered during our opening week in February will receive a complimentary T-shirt.



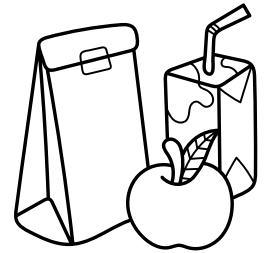


LUNCH/SNACK

Lunches are brought from home. We will refrigerate all lunches in the morning. Everything should be able to be easily opened and eaten by the children with little counselor help. Lunches should be dairy or pareve (no meat, please). On trip days, please use only disposable bags/containers and avoid perishable items.

Snacks are provided by camp twice daily.

ALLERGIES: If there is a camper in your child's group who is allergic to certain foods, you will receive an email notification. We request that you do not send any food containing those allergens to camp.



COMMUNICATION

Look for our weekly newsletter every Friday (Mini Gan) highlighting the happenings of camp that week, along with any reminders we need to convey. **A weekly email will be sent each Sunday** with important information and reminders for the week ahead. To speak with your child's teacher/counselor or a camp director, please call the camp office. You can also email info@ganisraelnh.com with any comments, questions, or concerns. Email is an excellent way to communicate with us!

Daily notifications & reminders will be sent via WhatsApp group chats. This way, you can receive instant reminders and updates about pertinent camp information.

TO JOIN CGI WHATSAPP GROUPS:

1. Make sure WhatsApp is installed on your phone.
2. Text "Join" + your name to 203-600-5553.

For a peek into the camp day, follow all of the fun on our daily stories on Instagram [@ganisraelnewhaven](https://www.instagram.com/ganisraelnewhaven). You can also connect with us on Facebook at www.Facebook.com/ganisraelnh. Photo galleries will be posted on our website at the end of each week. Make sure to check them out!



OUR STAFF

CAMP DIRECTORS: Rabbi Schneur & Chanie Wilhelm

OFFICE MANAGER/FIRST AIDER: Michele Champagne

Each Camp Gan Israel staff member undergoes extensive pre-camp training through MyGanIsrael.com, which is endorsed by the ACA. Mini Gan Izzy teachers are all CPR certified, and all staff members are trained in first aid. Our counselors are known for the love and warmth they show each child in their care. They work at CGI because they are dedicated to giving the children a great summer experience. We conduct background and reference checks on all of our staff, and we take pride and full responsibility for each member of our team.

For a sample daily schedule and details of our special programs and instructors, please see our website.

JUDAIC THEME/ACTIVITIES

MINI GAN IZZY

The camp theme for Mini Gan Izzy is “On the Go.” Each week, campers will explore a different way vehicles help us travel and discover the world around us. Campers will bring the weekly themes to life through crafts, sensory play, activities, and circle time. Good deeds and Mitzvot, kind words, and positive interactions are emphasized and encouraged at camp.

UPPER CAMP

This summer’s camp theme is “Traveling Through Time.” Each week, campers will journey to a different era in history, and even to the future! Campers will discover what life was like during each time period while exploring the values and Mitzvot that connect us across generations. Every Friday, the campers will enjoy a Shabbat celebration. As always, they will get their hands into the dough for challah baking!

GENERAL POLICIES

PERSONAL PROPERTY Camp assumes no responsibility for loss/damage to personal property, including sports equipment and vehicles. We provide everything the campers may need for all of their activities and special programs. Please do not send phones or any electronic devices with your child to camp. If your child does come to camp with an electronic device, it will be kept in the office until the end of the day.

ABSOLUTELY NO alcohol, drugs, or weapons of any kind will be allowed on camp grounds. No animals or pets may be brought to camp. Personal vehicles may not be used for transportation of campers, except with written consent of parents. Camp reserves the right to conduct searches when we feel necessary.

NO SMOKING Please be advised that there is no smoking allowed on camp grounds.



TRANSPORTATION

For all trips (as noted on calendars), campers ride on school buses provided by Chris Sorensen Bus Co., LLC. The bus drivers and bus company are licensed, insured, and informed of our safety and accident procedures and transportation requirements. If available, seat belts must be worn. Campers must remain seated while the bus is in motion. Campers’ health information and important numbers are with the staff on all trips. A complete file of our transportation policies and accident procedures is available upon request.





SWIMMING

CGI swims at McCann Natatorium Pool, 70 Park Circle, Milford. Swim days vary by week—please see our calendars for specific days. Our swim instructor, Kevin Quill, comes to us with over 30 years of experience and is back for his fifth summer instructing CGI campers. All swim activities are supervised by Red Cross-certified lifeguards. At all times, proper lifeguard to camper ratios are maintained. Counselors accompany the children to the pool and provide additional supervision. Each group is allotted one hour of pool time. Half of the time is free swim; the other half is instructional swim. All campers are swim-tested before using the pool for the first time.



FIELD TRIPS

Campers are required to wear their camp T-shirts on ALL trip days. Counselors have been trained in extra security and safety measures while in public areas off camp grounds. On trip days, please send a bagged lunch, as usual, along with a water bottle. Please do not send any perishable items. Caps to block the sun are helpful for outdoor trips.

MINI GAN IZZY TRIPS:

Week 2: Eisenhower Park & Splash Pad, Milford
Week 5: Perfect Playdate, Milford

JR. DIVISION TRIPS:

Week 1: Thrillz Adventure Park, Danbury
Week 2: Creative Jam Art Co., Bristol
Week 3: Xtreme Play, Danbury
Week 4: CT Science Center, Hartford
Week 5: Quassy Amusement Park, Middlebury
Entering Grade 3: Club Getaway (Overnight), Kent
Week 6: Johnson's Duckpin Lanes, Hamden
and Milford Ice Pavilion, Milford



SR. DIVISION TRIPS:

Week 1: Thrillz Adventure Park, Danbury
Week 2: Lake Compounce, Bristol
This trip is a late night. Campers will be served dinner and return to camp. Pick-up is at 7:15 p.m.
Week 3: Xtreme Play, Danbury
Week 4: CT Science Center, Hartford
Week 5: Club Getaway (Overnight), Kent
Week 6: Johnson's Duckpin Lanes, Hamden & Milford Ice Pavilion, Milford



HEALTH CARE AND TREATMENT PROCEDURES

Screening of all health records is done by the camp directors prior to the start of camp. Records are screened to learn of any medications, allergies, special requirements, and illnesses. A chart with any important findings is distributed to staff during training. All of our medical routines have been reviewed and approved by our camp doctor, Dr. Douglas Duchen.

All of our staff is trained in first aid, and most of our staff is trained in CPR. Health charts, emergency information, and first aid supplies are kept accessible to staff at all times, on and off site, including on buses. The closest hospital, mental care facility, fire station, and police department were notified of the dates, location, and number of participants in our program.

In case of emergency, we contact 911. Staff has been trained in emergency and accident procedures.

Chain of communication in emergencies:

911 → Directors → Parents (if unavailable, Emergency Contact) → Camp Doctor.

In non-emergency situations, a camp director will contact parents immediately if campers are ill or injured and will require further medical care. We encourage parents to pick up campers and bring them to their own doctors. Campers will remain in our first aid area until parent arrival.

For medical injuries not requiring further medical treatment, camp provides first aid. Parents will be notified by a staff member who will inform them of steps taken. All incidents are recorded in our health log, which is reviewed weekly by our camp doctor.

Our First Aider is Michele Champagne. She will respond to any medical issue that requires treatment for which she has been trained. Michele has also received medication administration training, and she will be the one to administer any medication with prior parental permission. All medication must be in its original box and clearly marked with camper's name. A separate form containing dosage instructions and doctor's and parent's signatures must be sent as well.





SAFETY & SECURITY POLICIES/PROCEDURES

Every staff member will be in constant communication with the main office via walkie-talkies.

Please call or email camp the day before if you know your child will not attend camp. We request a phone call or email by 8:30 a.m. if absence is unexpected.

If a camper is expected and does not arrive by 10:00 a.m., a staff member will call parents to verify that all is okay.

Prior to trips, all campers will be briefed on safety regulations and safety precautions applicable to the specific trip. Counselors will keep campers close and always in sight. A counting system and buddy system will always be in place during off-site trips to ensure safety.

Staff members are trained in security procedures for different emergencies, including fire, thunderstorms, missing child, and intruders.

Proper staff-to-camper ratios will always be maintained in public places.

Counselors will remain with campers at all times, including during special activities with supervisors.

Proper headgear will be worn during any activity that can result in a head injury.

Personal flotation devices are worn by all individuals participating in watercraft activities.

All staff members and special activity directors will be periodically evaluated for acceptable levels of job performance by camp directors.

A complete file of camp policies and procedures is available upon request.

PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF ILLNESS AT CAMP

We are confident that CGI will provide your child with an exciting and fun summer experience. At the same time, we must remain vigilant and do our utmost to prevent any spread of illness at camp. The health and well-being of our campers depends on all families communicating openly and honestly about any contagious illness in their households. This way, we can help prevent any spread and maintain a healthy camp environment.

SICK POLICY

- Keep your child home if s/he is showing any signs or symptoms of illness.
- Any child with a temperature above 100° will be sent home.

- Children must be symptom-free **without the aid of fever-reducing medication** for 24 hours before returning to camp.
- If your child shows any symptoms of illness (including fever, vomiting, diarrhea, or unexplained rash), we will ask that you pick up your child.
- If notified that your child is ill, you will need to pick up your child within one hour. Your child will be cared for by a staff member in our first-aid area until you arrive. A doctor's note may be required in order to return to camp.
- There will be no refunds for missed days due to illness or other reasons.

FOOD & DRINK

Please see lunch/snack section on Page 6.

- Please do not send any reusable containers to camp for your child's lunch. Everything should be in disposable containers or bags.
- Please send a large, filled, reusable water bottle each day to camp.
- Each bunk will have access to a water cooler for drinking and for refilling water bottles.

SANITIZATION/HYGIENE

Regular handwashing by staff and children with soap and water for at least 20 seconds will be done:

- Upon arrival each morning
- Before eating
- After excessive sneezing, coughing, or nose blowing
- After using the bathroom
- Before handling food

If, for any reason, soap and water are not readily available, alcohol-based hand sanitizers will be used. Use of hand sanitizers will always be supervised by adults.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

HOW DOES MY CHILD FIND LOST ITEMS?

Please mark all belongings with your child's name. Lost & Found items will be kept on a table outside the camp office and will be disposed of, if unclaimed, after several days. Pictures will be shared on WhatsApp groups so parents can be aware of missing items.

WHAT IF MY CHILD DOES NOT WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN A PARTICULAR ACTIVITY?

No camper will be forced to participate in any activity. However, we do encourage campers to try all activities and take advantage of the complete program offered at CGI. If a child does not want to participate, the parents and counselors will discuss a plan of action.

HOW RELIGIOUS IS CAMP GAN ISRAEL?

CGI is a totally non-judgmental environment made up of campers from all backgrounds. An individual's level of observance is not stressed. All children enjoy a shared Jewish spirit through songs and activities.

CAN MY CHILD BRING PRECIOUS ITEMS TO CAMP?

Campers should not bring expensive jewelry, toys, electronic devices, games/gadgets, phones, etc., to camp. CGI provides everything campers may need.

HOW OFTEN DOES MY CHILD DRINK WATER AT CAMP?

Please send your child with a water bottle each day. Each group will have a water cooler that can be used for drinking and refilling water bottles. Campers will be encouraged to drink often throughout the day.

HOW CAN I SPEAK WITH MY CHILD'S COUNSELOR?

A call to the camp office will answer most questions. Since counselors are constantly supervising groups and activities, messages will be taken at the camp office. Please leave your name and phone number, and the counselor will return your call as soon as possible.

HOW CAN I SPEAK WITH A CAMP DIRECTOR?

The directors are available to answer your questions and discuss your concerns during the day at the camp office. Please understand that the directors may be out and about during the time of your call making sure that everything is perfect for your children. If a director is unavailable, please leave a message. You can also send an email requesting a phone call, and a director will be sure to contact you.

ARE WE OBLIGATED TO GIVE A TIP OR GIFT TO OUR CHILD'S COUNSELOR?

Tips or gifts are appreciated but not mandatory in any way.

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CONTACT US WITH ANY OTHER QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE!

