

The Lola Stein Institute invites you to
professional enhancement workshops over dinner.

FOOD for THOUGHT

Learn, dine and digest it all !!

The workshops will be held monthly. Some workshops invite teachers from all elementary and junior high schools across Toronto and the GTA. Others are directed to Jewish educators in the day and supplemental school systems.

❑ Democratic Citizenship From a Jewish Perspective Monday January 26, 2009

Can we foster civic responsibility among students using Jewish sources and democratic dialogue? In this workshop, explore how to nurture moral decision making, using religious text while engaging students in experimental learning.

- ◆ Presenter: Eli Savage
- ◆ Intended for Language Arts, Social Science and Rabbinics teachers

❑ A Critical Thinking Approach to Numeracy Monday February 23, 2009

How do we make sure that students truly understand the math they are doing while they are doing it? What effective strategies build mastery? When should we teach them? How can we get students to reflect on the strategies they choose? Participants will answer these questions and take home strategies and games ready for classroom use.

- ◆ Presenter: Greg Beiles, Malka Regan
- ◆ Intended for Math Teachers

❑ Teaching Jewish Texts Through the Arts Monday March 30, 2009

How do the arts bring Jewish text to life? Find out how students can study original text through the integration of drama, script writing, music, and visual arts. The techniques apply to many Judaic narratives. Explore them through a model based on Shemuel Alef/Bet and the Pesach Haggadah.

- ◆ Presenters: Greg Beiles, Ken Rabow and Ehud Viner
- ◆ Intended for Hebrew Teachers Grades 5-8

For more information or
to register, www.lolastein.ca

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❑ Social Studies Through the Arts Monday April 27, 2009

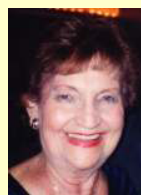
Are you ready for new ways to teach history, geography, and culture? Explore "The Spirit of Canada," a model unit where the student becomes a virtual tourist through Canada. Use this model to learn how to integrate song and art into social studies units that engage students in doing and presenting research.

- ◆ Presenters: Betty Lazebnick, Edna Sharek
- ◆ Intended for General Studies Teachers

❑ Ancient History and Me Monday May 26, 2009

How does our past inform the present? Explore a unit of history that focuses on the interface between the rise of Ancient Greece and the Jewish encounter with Hellenism. Discover how to use primary sources to connect tensions of the past to conflicts in today's world. Investigate how to structure a culminating task that allows for students to express and consolidate their learning.

- ◆ Presenter: Dana Cohen
- ◆ Intended for Language Arts and History Teachers Grades 4-8



Lola Stein z"l was grandmother to 4 students at The Toronto Heschel School and great-grandmother to a 5th as of September '08. She was one of the early female pharmacists in South Africa, probably the first Jewish one, but her very special talent was in hospitality and friendship. She cared for her friends and family, at home and across the globe, individually, uniquely and lovingly. When she passed away, one friend chose to honour her memory in a way that would also reach around the world. This was seed of sharing educational materials developed here in Toronto.

The Lola Stein Institute - Journal

Leadership in Education Issue No. 4, December 2008



- p. 1 MISSION CONTROL
What Does Excellence in Education Look Like?
Gail Baker
- p. 3 EDITOR'S DESK
Pam Stein
- p. 4 AWE AND WONDER
Identity and Learning
Greg Beiles
- p. 6 NURTURING NATURE
IN OUR CHILDREN
Redefining Our Identity
Ellen Kessler
- p. 8 What Does 'Jewish' Look Like?
Dr. Rachael Turkienicz
- p. 11 FICTION- SUDOKU LEVENE
Part IV
Marlee Pisker
- p. 12 FOOD for THOUGHT
Workshops

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What Does Excellence in Education Look Like?

Mission Control GAIL BAKER DIRECTOR

A school that promotes excellence in education must understand the needs of a child in the 21st century. In its classrooms you will see an emphasis on ways of thinking geared to develop creative, collaborative problem solvers, students who know how to think effectively. You will also find an ethically based approach to teaching and learning which permeates all that is happening. The winning combination is the right mix of attention to thinking skills and to values clarification. This is inspired teaching and this is inspired learning.

The inspired teacher uses a myriad of planned classroom activities to provoke student thinking, questioning and reflection. The inspired teacher perceives each student's developmental needs, has thorough knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and then crafts carefully constructed learning opportunities to engage students in a process that leads to their understanding of the academic discipline at hand.

This is not a silent classroom where the only sound is the teacher's voice droning on at the front of the room. In an inspired classroom, students do listen as their teachers present mini lessons, but soon students move into small group and independent learning.

You will hear children's voices questioning and clarifying, articulating connections between what they are learning and their personal lives. You will hear them wondering about it all. In a Jewish day school classroom, you might see them studying Jewish texts first in Chevruta (with partners) and then in larger groups, delving first into text to discern detail and meaning and then discussing the relevance and implications to their lives as Jewish Canadians today.

In an inspired classroom, where learning is engaging and meaningful, there tend to be fewer discipline problems. In our junior high Civics



programme which frames the study of democracy and civil responsibility, students run the class themselves on Friday mornings. They decide how to make the decisions necessary to their class Tzedakah project, assuming the many roles inherent in working together, from facilitator to note-taker. As adults know, the process of team work and collective decision-making is fraught with pitfalls, yet is, without doubt, a very important life skill to master.

Understanding that conflict is a byproduct of relationships, the teacher guides students towards resolution and not punishment. The atmosphere remains lively and positive. In this way students learn to cooperate and collaborate, to listen to each other and to have themselves heard. The class motto might be "first seek to understand, then be understood." (Stephen Covey, *First Things First*) This is living a democracy.



*Inspired Teaching leads to inspired learning.
Inspired support and facilitating learning
signifies excellence!*

In a kindergarten class, the inspired teacher holds the children's rapt attention as she tells a story using puppets, perhaps a lesson from Chumash. Next comes an animated discussion around the ethics underlying the story with the teacher encouraging the children to ask ever more questions, nurturing their pursuit of clarification and elaboration. Having had the chance to internalize the story through questions and conversation, the students are then required to demonstrate their new understanding of the material through a variety of experiences that include paper/pencil tasks, art activities and dramatic play. Meanwhile the teacher carefully observes their efforts, lending support and facilitating higher order thinking.



In both these classrooms, the learning is deepened through students' personal interaction with the curricular material and the requirement of a subsequent "performance" of their new found understanding. In a Civics lesson on democracy, it may be through active group decision-making with a real goal in mind. To absorb the lesson in an ethical tale, the "performance" could be illustrating feelings that arise or dramatizing a plot line. In either case, the inspired classroom reveals students who deliver results thanks to a guided process that is engaging, relevant and challenging. This is excellence in education.

♦ **Gail Baker** is the Co-Founder of The Toronto Heschel School. She is past Chair of the Presidium of Principals of Jewish Day Schools of the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto. Gail nurtures a career long passion for reaching and teaching to the essential individuality in each child. This has grown to a parallel commitment encouraging and refining the unique talents of each teacher on her team and beyond.



there all alone until all the pictures fell off the wall because he never seemed to be around any more.

I know my Dad is writing me letters and mom is hiding them. She has these sneaky blue eyes, always wide open saying, "Sudoko, Sweetie, I love you." I know she's hiding the letters. For a while I tried to find them. Where did she put them? She can't get into my computer to block the emails. And I don't have any email address for Dad. I know he would have try to get in touch with me. So ... maybe she did find a way. She always finds a way to ruin my life. So ... maybe she found a way now, too. No letters. No emails.

Even Dad always said that Mom is smart. I bet she has found her way to lock him out of my life and I don't know how she does it.

Today she followed me to school, and marched right into Oy Gevalt's class and sat in a chair at the back of the room. Just like she once came out to the playhouse, and sat down, like she was Dad or something. What was she doing in Oy Gevalt's class? We were learning about Lech Lecha and it was the first time I wanted to tell anyone what had happened to me so I looked up at Oy Gevalt and spoke. Why did I say it? I don't know why I told her that I had to leave my house, too. Oy Gevalt looked surprised but she kept right on going and that's what you can always depend on from her. She's a tough one, not like one of those teachers who always are at you about your feelings. So I told her and she kept right on going.

How did it feel to tell her? Oy Gevalt was speaking about how Abraham and Sarah had to leave the houses they were raised in and their families and their communities to start on a spiritual journey. I was trying to figure out what that could be. I moved into a new house but then everything stopped.



No more playhouse. No more house. No more playing checkers with Dad. No more Dad. What kind of journey is that? What's a spiritual journey anyways? We aren't going anywhere and we just sit in this house staring at each other.

I don't know what happened. I never knew what happened. There was only that one fight, and he didn't ever hit her.

He never would hit anyone. Well, maybe once, but not hard, just a little tap. I miss my Dad so much. He would never.

I really thought the movers would bring my playhouse. Then I wouldn't have had to leave my father's house, like Abraham and Sarah did, and go on a spiritual journey, because my father's house would have come with me.

TO BE CONTINUED

♦ **Marlee Pnisker** has been a teacher at The Toronto Heschel School since 1996. Her stories have been published in various publications and in her own book of biblical stories in the *Days of Sand and Stars*. Marlee believes strongly that stories are the vehicles for reflection as they allow the reader a private space to ponder the larger issues often sitting in unlit corners.



Sudoku Levene... as if (part 4)

GALLERY FICTION MARLEE PINSKER

♦ This story is the forth part of a continuing story. Read on to enjoy a sweet and agonizing soap opera and float through one family's saga.

Why did I have to lose everything? There was a lot of yelling and then I lost my dad. Then I lost my house. My bedroom looking out onto the backyard. But forget about the bedroom and the yard. I miss him.

When I was little Dad built a playhouse for me. He brought home the lumber and he made me stand far away while he hammered everything into place. First, there was a floor. Then there were windows and walls and he asked me what colour it should be. I yelled pink! No, purple! We painted it together, pink and purple. If I close my eyes I can see his face as he worked, his eyes a little crossed and his nose running.

He sneezed and sent me in for tissues. I ran in and ran out again, because who would want to miss this? The screen door banged shut behind me. And mom yelled. Every clunk with the hammer made the house grow up. I thought maybe he would come and live with me there. That was silly. That's what I thought though. I was so little



and stupid. Mom would make the meals and do the laundry in the big house.

My Dad would be playing checkers in the little house with me. I know he builds houses for people, but when I was little I thought it was, children's playhouses. When I'm sad I think that's what he's doing, building houses for other kids.

Who cares, anyways? When the moving van was ready to leave our house the little playhouse was still standing in back. The leaves were falling down and dry brown leaves were all over the ground so I had to rustle, rustle against them all the way across the yard. It was colder than it should have been everyone said, but so what? It's always colder than it should be. The door was open and I had to run back to close it.

My Dad was inside.

I mean, all right, he wasn't really inside but he was inside to me. The little curtains Mom made were blowing at the windows, and the pictures Dad and I had tacked onto the walls were kind of falling down by then. Like, peeling away and falling down. I could have taped them back into place I suppose. Or maybe I could have taken a hammer and banged them into place, and then bang, bang, crashed the hammer against everything until the whole place was a big pile of splinters, because now another little girl was going to play in my house. Another Dad was going to come and visit the house or say, "Honey, honey, it's time for dinner."

See, that's what my Dad used to say. Maybe another Dad would just not say it. Maybe the little girl would play out



Editor's Desk

PAM STEIN CHAIR

This newly branded issue of THINK, The Lola Stein Institute Journal, wraps itself around Chanukkah to celebrate the achievement of Jewish identity over assimilation, of resistance over apathy. We asked our writers to reflect on identity, on branding, perception and appearance. What's in a label? What does identity mean? How does it show itself? How does it grow? How do we view and know ourselves?

For example, we aim to differentiate this young journal by adding the title "THINK" to our name. We have two reasons. First we want you, our reader, to think about how our educational approach differs from others and why it prepares children for success. Second, the new title emphasizes that our entire educational approach is built on HOW TO THINK! We are developing the thinkers of tomorrow who will be prepared to grapple with challenges in any discipline or context.

We look first to a label, to what "excellence in education" means, a branding claimed by many. Gail explains what excellence looks like in the classroom. She describes how the inspired teacher interacts with students and how the deepest learning evolves through a process of receiving ideas, discovering relevance and performing understanding. The ways of thinking, ethical reflection and collaboration inherent in this process are further discussed by Greg when he reflects on how learning influences identity.

After reviewing education and learning generally, we move to the more specific. Ellen seeks out the identity of the young environmental protectionist. What does it mean for a child to stand for care of the world? How do we raise our children in a way that imbues them with a clear identity as thoughtful human beings, with sufficient self-respect to take care of themselves and where they live?

Dr. Rachael Turkienicz, one of the five founders of The Toronto Heschel School, brings her insights to the identity of a Jew. How does a Jew see and feel about herself? What does he do that reflects being a Jew? In the Chanukah story why do some people oppose assimilation but others do not? Where do thoughts, appearance, identity and social context intersect?

Instilling strong identities in our children provides guideposts and a moral compass. This personal strength is needed to withstand external pressure and know who they are from the inside out.



All children crave individuality, relevance and significance and the following pages will show you how it's there for them already. At Chanukkah we can all light a candle to shine down new paths for new understandings.

♦ Pam Stein is the chair of The Lola Stein Institute and founding board member of The Toronto Heschel School. Her eldest three children are alumni, the fourth now in grade 5. She has collaborated on the Toronto Heschel team since 1996.



Identity and Learning

Awe and Wonder

GREG BEILES DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM AND TRAINING

The theme of Chanukkah is identity. Jews faced the choice between assimilating into Hellenistic culture or asserting their Jewish identity. A few of them started a rebellion and we are still celebrating. We usually think of their rebellion as relating to religious identity, to confronting idolatry, the defilement of the Temple and forcible consumption of non-kosher flesh. However, let's not forget the most odious prohibition of the time which was the prohibition that forbid study of Torah. Nothing shapes identity more than what we learn and how we learn.



"Nothing shapes identity more than what we learn and how we learn."

Oppressors, colonisers and tyrants throughout time know this simple truth. If you control the content and methods of education, you stand the best chance to reshape identity. In Canada, as elsewhere, the experience of Aboriginal people attests to what happens to a people's identity when they are robbed of the ability to teach their children.

As Jews, we faced this challenge at the hands of many oppressors and sometimes at our own hands. At times we naively and willingly abandoned our own sources of learning in pursuit of assimilation.

In the world of Jewish education, the traditional approach to instilling Jewish identity has been to teach Jewish content: Jewish history, Jewish texts, Jewish values. We now know that is not enough.

Constructivist theories of education teach that what really forms the identity of learners is not what we learn but how we learn. To be a Jewish learner means more than thinking about Jewish stuff; it means thinking in a Jewish way. As Rabbi A.J. Heschel puts it, "Judaism is a way of thinking, not just a way of living."

What does it mean to think in a Jewish way? How does Jewish thinking relate to Jewish identity? Two well known sources answer these questions. The first is the response by Rabbi Hillel to a gentile who promised to become Jewish if Hillel could teach him the whole Torah while standing on one foot. Hillel responded, "That which is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow. This is the whole Torah, and the rest is commentary, go and learn it." (BT Shabbat 31a)

People like to cite Hillel's response because it seems to situate ethics as the purpose of Torah. This take, however, overlooks the educational slant of Hillel's formulation. Hillel says that to truly learn how to respect others, one must first engage with commentary.

So the question arises; what is commentary? Commentary is conversation, dialogue, discussion and debate. To truly understand what is hateful or pleasurable to another person we must pursue active dialogue. If someone wants to identify as a Jew, Hillel felt that Torah study must involve the exchange of views, conversation and debate. For Hillel Jewish identity depends on dialogue that is directed at ethical action. To know what to do, first we must talk. Teachers nurture consultative thinking by encouraging learners to listen to one another, to interpret texts and images with their peers, to examine problems from various perspectives.



We are actor and audience, teacher and learner, leader and follower, subject to the created world yet charged to govern and repair. Every action contains confidence and purpose but scratch the surface and there is humility and worry. Assimilation, call it the threat of a disappearing identity, does not begin when we forget who we are but, earlier, when we compartmentalize and split ourselves unnaturally. We are told to light Chanukah candles in our home and then place them in our windows. Who we are inside, in our homes, must stay with us as we enter the world outside, as we learn of others through our windows.



"We accumulate knowledge through the windows of observation, action and reflection."

We accumulate knowledge through the windows of observation, action and reflection. We use this knowledge to empower us to be flexible personally, with each other and the world around us. We respond to situations with what they need, as opposed to with what makes us feel better. There is a beautiful ancient midrash that speaks of Judah, the Maccabee, and his followers entering the desecrated Temple. Having fought their way in, using the weapons they had, their spears, the victorious warriors enter the Temple to find darkness. Immediately they turn their weapons upside down, stick them upright into the floor and pour oil into the heads of the spears. The warriors ignite the oil and bring light to the Temple. Once no longer needed, the weapons transform into vehicles of light.

The Channukah lights shine for Jewish struggle and victory. They also illuminate the Jewish quest to engage with God. Our own lights, our Jewish identity and our



spiritual vocabulary enlighten our questions about God's function within the world, examine anger at seeming silence, and brighten shadows in our search for meaning. From the seeming elusiveness of the Divine to the harsh yet wonderful growth pains of the State of Israel, it all feeds and informs Jewish growth.

The Jewish person today looks like a person who responds to any situation with debate, flexibility, knowledge and spirituality and with a holistic integration of it all. To bear this identity was as challenging a goal in the days of the Maccabees as it is today. It raises the bar high and invites us to achieve. This journey is a blessing that identifies a Jew at any moment in human history.

♦ **Dr. Rachael Turkienicz** is Co-founder of The Toronto Heschel School and the Executive Director of Rachael's Centre for Torah Mussar and Ethics in Toronto (www.rachaelcentre.org). She holds a Ph.D. in Talmudic and Midrashic Studies from Brandeis University and is a Professor at York University in both the Faculty of Education and the Centre for Jewish Studies.



What Does 'Jewish' Look Like?

GALLERY DR. RACHAEL TURKIEVICZ

The holiday of Channukah raises age old questions of identity and reminds us of King Solomon's sage words: 'there's nothing new under the sun.' Feeling Jewish, looking Jewish, behaving Jewishly and creating a Jewish home all feed into a sense of unified identity and this was as hard to achieve in the ancient world as it is today. What does being Jewish look like? As with everything in Judaism, we are cautioned that looks are deceptive and things are never what they seem. To move beyond appearances, we have to ask more essential questions and in this interior realm, the question of identity begins to gain meaning.



"... as we heal the world,
we are part of it and therefore in need
of healing ourselves."

Judaism believes a beautiful harmony of body and soul exists within each human being. The merging of body and soul creates a dialogue between soulful yearning and physical desire. Often the dialogue becomes a debate, even an argument. The soul wants isolation and spirituality while the body wants physical involvement and gratification. Jewish identity emerges through this internal debate. With one ear trained inward, the Jew strains to hear the world within. With the other ear trained outward, the Jew listens to the world outside. Jewish actions occur when the internal debate is alive and well and prompts the person to make a decision. Making a decision entails temporarily holding off the continual back and forth between body and soul, while one

particular action is taken. For example, the urgency of charity and the demands of personal comfort fight back and forth, until a resolution is achieved.

A Jewish action, delivered into the world, reflects two intentions at once; a determination to improve a situation and a humility which understands we can never achieve perfection. Jewish action bestows the intent to heal on a given scenario. Within this intent lies the modest reality that, as we heal the world, we are part of it and therefore in need of healing ourselves.



The second Judaic source that speaks to learning and identity is the famous dictum from Pirkei Avot; "If I am not for myself, who will be for me; if I am only for myself, what am I? If not now, when?"

The teaching has three parts. The first reminds us to be resourceful and take responsibility for our own achievements. The second part teaches that our identity is bound up with how we think about others and respond to them. The third teaches us to be proactive. Taken together, these habits of mind and living – resourcefulness and responsibility, compassion and initiative – form a core of Jewish identity. Meaningful Jewish education is focused on developing these three important dispositions.

Another very important lesson in how learning strengthens identity comes, not from traditional sources, but from the vision of modern Zionists. This is the element of language. A culture that loses its language, quickly loses its identity. Witness the hundreds of aboriginal cultures worldwide who struggle to retain their native languages or regain lost ones. Witness also the flourishing of Jewish culture after the trauma of WWII with Hebrew as the official language of the State of Israel.

Culture is embodied in language. Cultural concepts are not translatable. Hebrew language is not merely a subject for Jewish students to learn. It is the medium

through which they understand their own identity. An obvious example is the word shalom which most dictionaries translate as "hello, good-bye, or peace" but which is more closely related to the notion of "completeness or wholeness."

To really get this, to understand key words and abstract notions, one must be immersed in the language and literature of a culture. The cultural nuances of Yiddish are perhaps most familiar to Ashkenazi Jews and similar nuances exist in Hebrew, indeed in all languages. They are gems of attitude, of context, of faith. Here lies the deeper reason for dedicating ample time to reading Jewish literature and conversing through the Hebrew language.

Chanukkah means rededication, referring to the rebuilding and spiritual consecration of the Temple. As we approach this celebration which recalls the preservation of Jewish identity, let's rethink the deep relationship between learning and identity. Let's reflect on how to dedicate our resources towards deeply felt Jewish identity in all our children.

♦ Greg Belles is Curriculum Director of The Lola Stein Institute. Greg believes deeply that children are active builders of knowledge and empathy, and that a child's perspective is influenced more by the way in which learning is structured than by the specific content of the curriculum.



Rededicating Our Identity

as Inheritors of the Earth

Nurturing Nature in Our Children

ELLEN KESSLER ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

At this season, we celebrate those heroic Maccabees who overcame oppression and assimilation. They did not succumb to apathy. They stood up to be counted. They acted and made a difference.

I look through the lens of the environmental educator and find many parallels today. Science indicates our world is oppressed, threatened by climate change, species extinction, polluted waters, and more. We trample inherited natural treasures meant to sustain future generations. We feast while other nations starve. Have we assimilated into the identity of the oppressors? What can we do?



"Students Consider better Choices, Contemplating the needs of the many, not just their own."

Environmental educators have a new approach called "ecological literacy." It presumes broad understanding of how people interrelate, how they relate to natural systems, and how they might do so sustainably.¹ This "literacy" requires awareness and personal knowledge of how the world works as a system.

Steve Bibla, who creates curriculum for the TDSB EcoSchools program, suggests how to teach ecological literacy. Every one of our actions, every move we make, no matter how small, bears consequences to the Earth's natural systems. Steve helps us understand how schools can develop the ecologically literate child through a

sense of place, an understanding of human impact and a sensitivity to human dependence on natural systems.

Sense of place. Students must connect to where they live. They can explore their school's grounds, neighbourhood, history and geography. Our Grade-Six students discover the river that runs beneath their playground, learning where the underground water comes from and where it goes. A watershed system becomes more than diagram on a map. It's in their playground. They are connected to the waters of the world and this understanding binds them to the need to protect watersheds.

Human impact. We guide students to link their actions to local and global consequences. For example, to be aware of the quantity of natural resources we use,



requires rethinking details of how we conduct our daily lives. The learning starts very small, very personally.

In Grade One, at Chanukah, our students integrate the Ontario Science Curriculum strand, "Matter and Materials" with Jewish values. We call the unit "Matter, Materials and Miracles." It's a young student's look at objects, at what and who makes these objects special. We demonstrate how to look at simple everyday objects without taking them for granted. We wonder with awe about how we came to own insulated, water repellant clothing; plastic and metal objects; lunch bags that keep things cold and thermoses that keep things hot. If these are such "miraculous inventions," how can we throw them away? Students learn to ask; "How can we reuse things?", "Why don't we repair things?", "Do we really need more?", "Where are all these things coming from and going to?" They reflect on their behaviours. They consider better choices, contemplating the needs of the many, not just their own.

Sensitivity to dependence. Human beings are vulnerable and dependent. For students to understand human interaction with the natural systems that sustain us, we teach ecology as a scientific discipline. Students grasp how communities of living things depend on other living things and on non-living parts of the environment. In every grade, students learn the cycling of matter, the flow of energy and the interconnected web that is life.

The understanding is reached easily, for instance, by focusing on water usage at school and the financial and environmental cost of a leaky faucet. Dependence can also be taught through classroom recycling systems, plants on the windowsill, or care for a building. We assume an activist identity, conserving energy by turning off lights letting sunshine in, closing computer monitors after use, and turning off power bars at day's end. Small measures make a big difference.

Children today demonstrate behaviours generated by a lifestyle of instant gratification, screen time and market driven values. It's not their fault they are indoors, plugged-in to information technology. It's not their fault buying new is more convenient than fixing the old. Several generations are culprits in our indoor throw away lifestyle. The kids need our help!



"Students must Connect to where They live."

Parents can notice how the urban rush devours spare time for weekend and after-school outdoor play. Let's recall free play, kicking leaves and the sense of well-being that grows there. We need to remember that our children would love an autumn walk in a ravine forest. That this requires our time as chaperones, is actually a small blessing to our senses as well. Let's bring nature into our lives.

Can we help this generation rededicate the identity of humankind to be as it was in the Garden of Eden working and watching Creation, serving and preserving it for themselves and future generations?

Let's say, "This is not our way. We do not want to assimilate into a lifestyle inconsistent with a healthy peaceful future."

Like Mattityahu, let's rally a new generation of Maccabees to their authentic identity. Let's help our students understand their true role as inheritors of the Earth.

◆ **Ellen Kessler** is Co-founder of The Toronto Heschel School and leads its award-winning nature and ecological programmes. Ellen is a math and science teacher who blends commitment to Jewish observance with her love of the natural world and for children.