

July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2009

בס"ד

Dear Parents,

Time flies by and before we know it, our teenage kids will be off to college, taking their first steps on their journey into the real world.

As parents, we are strongly committed to providing our sons and daughters with a high level of secular education to give them the greatest chances for success and prosperity in life.

By the same token, we also know that a strong foundation of Jewish knowledge—going way beyond the basic Bible-stories they have already learned—will raise their level of Jewish education to be on par with their secular schooling, allowing them to explore and examine their own Jewish identity.

In that sense, they are not kids anymore. They are now ready to learn as adults. They are ready to be engaged, to be challenged, to ask tough questions about G-d, about creation and the world around them. They are ready to explore the relevance and meaning of being a Jew in the modern world.

Although young teens today participate in many classes and activities that leave little time for recreation and relaxation—not to mention additional learning—there is no doubt that a stimulating Jewish educational experience would definitely be worth their time and certainly draw their interest.

To that end, Lubavitch Education Center will be presenting the Talmud Torah Teens program for grades 8 through 10. This project will offer an opportunity for a serious Jewish study encounter which will be interesting, interactive and exciting.

The first course entitled "MySpace-YourSpace: Is My Life any of your Business?" was conceived, written and developed by the Jewish Learning Institute and addresses modern-day issues that teens often think about and question: Topics include abortion, suicide and self-harm, drugs and alcohol, extreme sports and avoiding danger, terrorism, the value of money and life, and one's obligation to strangers. The curriculum is fresh and scintillating; guaranteed to spark lively discussion and debate. The central theme is the contrast between our modern rights-based system of law and Judaism's ancient approach which focuses on one's obligations to others.

During the winter another JLI course entitled "How KOSHER is HOLLYWOOD? Jewish wisdom on fame, romance and getting high" will be presented. Secular interpretations of six key values will be introduced using several movie clips. Students will discover how every movie, every story, is inherently a message and commentary on life. They will be challenged to consider and think deeply about these messages, whether they really agree with them, and how these values compare with those of our Tradition.

An additional benefit for teens that are thinking about college choices would be to list attendance at this course on their college applications ("I took nine hours of Jewish Ethics from the Jewish Learning Institute - JLI") as this will certainly make their application stand out from amongst their peers. They will also receive an official certificate from the JLI upon completion of the course.

In addition to JLI courses the program will include both in depth discussion based on traditional texts, as well as meaningful activities to help the teens apply the learning to their everyday lives. Talmud Torah Teens will be held on Thursday evenings from 7:00 – 8:30 pm beginning September 3rd at Lubavitch Education Center, 6619 Sardis Road, Charlotte, NC 28270, at a cost of \$350 per year.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Avrohom Gordon  
Talmud Torah Teens