

Mechaneches Training 5780

Overview

This year-long training program is intended to empower educators with the ability to meet students' non-academic needs, especially those who are specifically tasked with that role. Through monthly webinars, individual and small-group mentoring, and follow up, participants can explore the range of social-emotional and other needs that students have and how to best serve them.

While intended as a supplement for basic teacher training in academics and pedagogy, not a replacement, the objective of this program is simple: **that every student receives the attention and help that she needs in her formative years.** This program is directed by Mrs. Dena Gorkin together with the Menachem Education Foundation.

ועיקר העיקרים שבזה הוא... יחס מיוחד והתקשרות, שזהו הצמור הכי מתאים להחדרה בהילדים אהבת ה אהבת התורה ומצותי.

The primary foundation is that... a special connection and relationship [with your students] is the most appropriate means for imbuing children with Ahavas Hashem, and love of Torah and Mitzvos.

אגרות קודש כ"ק אדמו"ר, ח"ק ע תכד, From a letter to a teacher,

Program Description

Program Structure

This program consists of:

- **Webinars:** 9 monthly workshops via live webinar technology, covering a wide range of topics from normative student needs to crisis management. These webinars will be interactive and targeted, presented by Mrs. Dena Gorkin as well as professionals in mental health and student counseling.
- **Follow-up:** After each webinar, participants will be given a follow-up task which helps them apply their new skills in the context of working with a student. This task can be further discussed in the mentoring or in subsequent sessions, and allows

participants to ensure that they are integrating what they learn into their practice.

- **Small Group Mentoring:** Mrs. Gorkin will lead small group mentoring / consultancy sessions to discuss actual experiences and participant challenges in a sensitive and professional way. Participants will be able to share their questions challenges, and to learn both from Mrs. Gorkin's responses as well as the experiences of others in their group. These sessions will take place monthly, but *each participant will be assigned to three such sessions throughout the year to ensure small group size.* (Scheduling requests are welcome if a participant has a timely challenge that that she would like to pose in this setting.)
- **Individual Mentoring:** In order to more effectively deal with specific or sensitive challenges that participants may encounter over the course of the year, each participant is entitled to one personal consultation (a phone call of up to one hour) with Mrs. Gorkin. If additional consultation is needed, the participant/school will be able to arrange this for an additional hourly fee. All mentoring will be arranged and scheduled through the MEF office.
- **Networking:** A participant WhatsApp group and other opportunities will be utilized for further networking, sharing, and growth of the program cohort.

Program Participants

To participate in this program, applicants need to fulfill the following requirements:

1. **Employment:** Be currently employed as a teacher, school leader or other role for grades 6-12.
2. **Role:** Have weekly, individual interactions and discussions with students. This could take place in an official capacity as the school Mechaneches or Shlucha, or unofficially as a Mashpiah or otherwise.
3. **Responsibilities:** Be committed to filling all program requirements, including:
 - Attending at least 6 out of 9 webinars live, and making up any that are missed by watching the recording on your own time.
 - Completing follow-up tasks.
 - Participating in three small group mentoring sessions during the course of the program.
 - Committing to confidentiality and professional conduct, both with regard to what students confide in you, as well with regard to what fellow participants share over the course of the program.

- Maintaining requirements 1 and 2 (employment and individual interactions with students) over the course of the program, and notifying program management if any of this changes.
- Paying the full program fee in a timely fashion, as specified by MEF.

The program will be limited to **18 participants** who meet these requirements and display potential for positive impact on their students and schools.

Curriculum

Monthly webinars will cover the following topics, ה'בעזרת ה':

1. Forming and maintaining a connection with your students
2. Different personality types and temperaments
3. Kids in pain
4. Social-emotional well-being (normative challenges)
5. Spiritual growth and Hashkafa
6. Mental health and what can go wrong
7. Crisis identification and intervention
8. Helping students make it academically
9. Confidentiality and professional boundaries

And more. These topics will be presented by Mrs. Gorkin and other professionals in these respective fields, who will be identified as the program progresses.

Program Director

Mrs. Dena Gorkin is the founder and principal of Bnos Chomesh Academy in Crown Heights. With a background in Special Education, a New York State certification in Substance Abuse Prevention Counseling, and over 35 years of experience, Mrs. Gorkin has impacted the lives of hundreds of young women and their families.

Mrs. Gorkin started out on this path as a Mechaneches in Bais Rivkah High School, and is passionate about helping Mechanchos attain the tools and mindsets needed to reach every student. She is sought after for workshops, lectures and consultation throughout the country, and has presented extensively for the Menachem Education Foundation and other organizations.

Program Details

Cost

The program cost is \$500 per participant, including monthly webinars, three small group mentoring sessions, and one individual consultation as needed. (Additional consultation can be arranged at a rate of \$75 per hour.)

Limited scholarships are available for small schools, schools sending multiple participants, or other circumstances.

Schedule

Webinars will take place one evening each month, beginning in either Elul or Cheshvan, depending on when the cohort is full. Small group mentoring will take place monthly between these webinars, of which each participant will be assigned to three such sessions throughout the year. You will be notified of program start date as soon as the cohort is filled, so please submit your application as soon as possible.

How to Apply

For any questions or inquiries, contact MEF at info@mymef.org / 718-663-7215. To apply for the Mechaneches Training Program, fill in application details on this google form: <https://forms.gle/TWcVTfEPq6nz1a1CA>

Although the role of teaching material is also a very responsible task, it is not nearly as responsible as the role of education and guidance. When one teaches information, even if he is not effective, at least he does no damage. However, not so with education and guidance... in which if one does not cause improvement than one automatically does damage. And therefore... one needs to follow general principles and necessary guidelines [in this work]...

מאמר כללי חינוך והדרכה, פרק ב
