



Getting To Know Havaya

A Guide for Staff

Camp Havaya is all about the joy of summer camp with the freedom to be who you truly are. We're a lively, welcoming, and diverse community where kids explore Judaism in their own ways and become the best versions of themselves. It's no wonder that so many campers and staff call us home!

At a glance...

- Values 3
- What's up with the bee? 4
- Glossary 5
- Age Groups 8
- Food 9
- COVID-19 10
- Our Home 12
- Summer Calendar 13
- Diversity and Belonging. 16



Values

Someone once told us we don't just talk the talk – we walk the walk. It was the best compliment we've ever received! We're serious about living our values, taking responsibility for our actions, and building the world we want our children to inhabit and inherit. We named ourselves Havaya – which means “being” – in large part because it's a play on “how we be” and on the Hebrew word “*hoveh* / the present time,” as a reminder that being our best selves isn't something we aspire to in the future – it's something we strive to do every day. Our values, based on a framework from Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan, help bring this to life.

Belonging

קהילה *Kehillah*

Belonging is the “indescribable feeling of being welcome.”^[1] It's that moment of total comfort, warmth, and love – when we see one another, and are seen, for exactly who we are. At Havaya, this is the water we swim in; it's integral and infused into all we do. We are committed to representation and to celebrating lived experience, and we recognize the powerful and organic ways these can bring more dignity, justice, and joy to our work and our world.

Bee-ing

דרך ארץ *Derekh Eretz*

We cultivate an environment of respect and trust, where each of us is challenged and supported to explore and grow our skills, styles, abilities, and experiences. Our campers and staff stand up for themselves and their friends, take responsibility for their actions, and understand the part they each play in creating a joyful and welcoming community. We know we can't be everything to everybody and we won't always get it right; we're committed to being honest and transparent about this – even when it's not easy. We see ourselves as a family: laughing and celebrating together; crying and lifting each other up; cheering on successes and naming opportunities for growth ... not only over the summer, but all year round.

Believing

יהדות *Yahadut*

Judaism is alive and breathing for us – it's woven into the fabric of all we do. We are a community that lives Reconstructionist ideals; deeply rooted in Jewish values and passionate about making them boldly relevant for today's youth. We create intentional opportunities for campers to explore, define, and evolve their own Jewish identities and beliefs; because it's personal, the connections they make to a global and diverse Judaism are lasting.

Becoming

הויה *Havaya*

We're committed to excellence and are always pushing ourselves to be, and do, better. We expect the same of our campers and families, our staff and leadership, and our donors, alumni, and friends. This means being willing to engage in difficult conversations, challenge ourselves, and own up to our mistakes. It's about becoming our best selves and actively supporting those around us to do the same. We do this from a place of strength, proud of what we already do well and passionate about continuing to grow.

**Put simply,
it's how we be.**



What's up with the bee?

Bee-longing.

Bee-having.

Bee-ing part of a community.

Bee-ing your best self.

Meet our friend, Howie Bee.

At Camp Havaya, we stand up for ourselves and our friends, take responsibility for our actions, and understand the part each of us plays in creating a joyful and welcoming community. We call this “How We Be” – and Howie is always there to remind us to be our best selves.

Glossary

Havaya: In Hebrew, “havaya” (with an ‘h’ sound at the beginning) means “being.” A name is central to an organization’s identity and choosing this particular name serves as a powerful statement that, at our core, we’re all about creating an environment where kids have the freedom to be who they truly are. We love that it’s a play on “how we be”; on the Hebrew word “khavaya” (with a ‘kh’ sound at the beginning), which means “experience”; and on the Hebrew word “hoveh / the present time,” reminding us that being our best selves isn’t something we aspire to in the future – it’s something we do right now.

Day-to-Day

Eidah: Camper unit, based on age. Much of the day is experienced with the eidah, allowing campers to create deep connections with friends and participate in activities at an age-appropriate level. Each eidah is named after part of nature: Ilanot (trees), Nehalim (rivers), and Harim (mountains).

Rosh Eidah: Unit Head. Staff member responsible for supporting and ensuring participation of all campers and counselors in an age group.

Motzi and Birkat Hamazon: Blessings we say before and after every meal. Throughout the course of the day and week, we sing both traditional and contemporary versions, helping campers explore different ways of expressing gratitude for the delicious food we eat!

Pontubing: Once a session, campers go tubing and on a pontoon ride on nearby Lake Wallenpaupack. (Pontoon + Tubing = Pontubing. Pretty creative, right?)

Camp Sing: Our end-of-session performance extravaganza! Each cabin creates a dance to a popular song and shows off to the rest of camp. Being crowned the winner is a moment that stays with kids for years!

Havaya Arts in the Poconos: Offered exclusively during the first two weeks of the Best session, this unique opportunity is perfect for young artists who want to tailor their Camp Havaya experience to include significant time each day specializing in musical theater or ceramics.

To see a typical daily schedule, check out
CampHavaya.org/typical-day

Aseyfah: We begin the day with a pre-breakfast gathering. Sometimes there are morning games where general silliness is the rule. Other mornings we have a short musical service. Once a week, campers choose their own ways into prayer. Whatever happens, it's a great way to get the blood flowing and prepare everyone for a fun and exciting day.

Nikayon: Time to clean up in our cabins. Campers make their beds, organize their clothes, sweep the floor, take out the garbage, and do other "chores" ... all in hopes they'll get a "10" on their daily scorecard.

Middot: Literally meaning "virtues," this is our name for experiential Jewish educational programming. Throughout the summer, campers focus in fun and engaging ways on values, tikkun olam (social action), Israel, and "hot topics" that impact their lives – both in Camp and throughout the year.

M'nukhah: With such a busy day, we all need a rest! After lunch, campers and counselors return to their cabins for some quiet time to read, write letters, play quiet games, relax, and get ready for a great afternoon ahead

Breira (plural, Breirot): During electives, campers choose from nearly 30 different activities, which rotate weekly.

Hofshi: Free time. Campers of all ages gather together to hang out, swim, play ga-ga, or just sit under a tree and read. And it's a good time for...

Nishnush: Snack!

Peulat Erev: During evening programs which are typically unit-based, campers run around for capture the flag or a scavenger hunt, have a pool party or a talent show, play silly relay races, sing their heart out at a concert, or participate in some other amazingly fun activity to round out the day.

Zman Tzrif: As each day comes to a close, campers and counselors have some cabin time to reconnect, review the day, and start looking forward to another great day ahead!

Shabbat Unplugged: Our weekly all-camp talent show, which takes place after dinner on Saturday night.

Havdalah: This service of the senses ends Shabbat with singing, arms around each other, and an always energetic, multilingual singing of "Everybody Loves Saturday Night."

Medurah: After havdalah on Saturday night, we gather around a campfire in the Eco-Village to sing folks songs and welcome in the new week.

Hadar Okhel: Dining Hall, where we eat all of our delicious meals together as a community.

Tzrif: Cabins are named after trees, rivers, and mountains in Israel.

Eco-Village: Harim campers (entering ninth and tenth graders) live up the hill in this multi-award-winning village, complete with yurts, an incredible bath house, and lots of space to hang out and build community.

Kikar: The lawn in front of the Dining Hall is our central gathering spot.

Migrash Katan: Our “small” field, between the pool and lake, where we play soccer, ga-ga, volleyball, and have free time every afternoon.

Migrash Gadol: Our “big” field, where we host an annual Ultimate Frisbee tournament, play lacrosse and football, and have all sorts of other all-camp activities.

Etgar: Literally meaning “challenge,” this is our amazing high and low ropes course – including a climbing wall, Jacob’s Ladder, and zipline over the lake (always a camper favorite!).

Teatron: Our beautiful indoor/outdoor theater, where we gather together for services, movie nights, Camp Sing, and more.

Beit Tefillah: Our awe-inspiring outdoor sanctuary, built by campers and staff many years ago.

Shuk: At our canteen/store, campers are given funds to “purchase” Camp Havaya gear such as sweatshirts, stuffed animals, and water bottles, along with toiletries and any other needed items. No food is sold at the shuk!

Mirpa’ah: In our Wellness Center, nurses and other medical staff are always present to support campers’ medical needs.

CORE: This room at the back of the Dining Hall is a space for campers to “Chill Out, Relax, and Energize.” And we have private rooms for campers to have scheduled calls with home therapists, as needed. Our Director of Emotional Wellness and Support, along with other members of our community life team, are available throughout the day to help campers with their mental, emotional, and social health needs.

Age Groups

Campers experience the day primarily with their *eidah* (unit), allowing them to create deep connections with friends and participate in activities at an age-appropriate level. Units have approximately six cabins, all of which are multi-grade.

Ilanot entering grades 3, 4, and 5

At this age, we know campers are more conscious of friendships and interpersonal connections ... and we create space that allows them to learn about both. We also acknowledge that they have their own likes and dislikes and, as we expose them to different activities, we recognize the reality that not everyone likes every activity. We encourage campers to pick choice-based activities that they are interested in, with the notion that they can be friends with people who don't like all the same things as they do. Ilanot staff help campers focus on hygiene and how best to move through the day while maintaining organization for their own items and taking responsibility for their own actions. Bedtime is generally between 8:45 and 9:15 pm.

Nehalim entering grades 6, 7, and 8

By middle school, many campers have a picture of who they want to hang out with, which activities they want to dive into more deeply, and which parts of the day they will “tolerate.” Nehalim campers have a bit more unstructured time, but still follow a clear schedule. We encourage them to choose what they like during their choice-based programming ... and we also recognize that some kids just want to be with their friends, so we make sure there's a balance of both. Campers are encouraged to help lead younger campers in some activities, play competitive games (whether in sports or Magic: The Gathering), and share their passions at a much higher level in our weekly all-camp talent shows. Cabin cohorts can get a little larger (up to 14 campers) and campers are able to feel some “controlled” freedom – beginning to walk around camp on their own, share their ideas with camp leadership, and be responsible for their personal items without a lot of guidance from staff. (Well, we can hope!) Bedtime is generally between 9:15 and 10:00 pm.

Harim entering grades 9 and 10

High schoolers live in our award-winning Eco-Village. In addition to all the fun, there's a much larger emphasis on becoming who they want to be, how camp can help them learn more about their passions and their personal identities, and what it means to be part of a larger collective society both within camp and outside of our “bubble.” We talk about role-modeling behaviors for younger campers and we provide opportunities for being a leader in the camp community. There's more unstructured free time and a few times when Harim teens can “takeover” their daily schedules, expanding camp's offerings to meet their own needs in ways that are authentic to who they are as individuals and as a group. Campers travel campus on their own, are expected to know (and follow!) the schedule, and are personally responsible for their belongings and actions. Bedtime is generally between 9:30 and 10:30 pm.

Food

Kids love the food at Camp! Why? It's not just because we don't serve bug juice, but because we're committed to serving food that is fresh, varied, and full of flavor. Our menus have been reviewed by a nutritionist to ensure they are healthy and well-balanced. All of our food is kosher and we have plentiful vegetarian food as well as vegan, lactose free, and gluten free options. (In a commitment to the environment, we generally serve meat no more than five times per week.) We strive to run a nut-free program and we work closely with families to accommodate other food allergies and needs. Check out some of our favorite meals!

Arukhat Boker (Breakfast)	Arukhat Tzohorayim (Lunch)	Arukhat Erev (Dinner)
Warm croissant sandwich with fried egg and cheese	Grilled cheese, tomato soup, and homemade kale chips	Chicken marsala, mashed potatoes, and steamed vegetables
Shakshouka (Israeli breakfast of tomatoes, onions, peppers, and eggs)	Vegetable quiche, chickpea salad, and quinoa salad	General Tso's tofu, jasmine rice, vegetarian spring rolls
Breakfast burrito	Cheese pizza with topping bar (including sauteed onions, mushrooms, and peppers)	Fish tacos, jicama and cabbage slaw, cilantro and lime rice
Waffles and syrup	Potato latkes and cheese blintzes, served with applesauce and sour cream	BBQ with chicken breast, hot dogs, baked beans, macaroni salad, green salad, and watermelon
Scrambled eggs and hash browns	Salad bar	Curry tofu, aloo ghoobi, basmati rice, naan
Our breakfast bar is available daily, including cottage cheese, fresh berries, hot and cold cereals (with dairy and Soy milk), hard boiled eggs, and cheese		Salad bar

Soynut butter, jelly, and whole wheat bread are available throughout the day, as is fresh fruit. At most dinners, we offer plain pasta with red sauce for campers looking for a more simple meal.

Our fresh and plentiful salad bar is out at every lunch and dinner. What we offer changes daily: romaine lettuce, spinach, carrots, cucumbers, peppers, tomatoes, olives, beets, baby corn, edamame, cheese, avocado, mushrooms, black beans, mandarin oranges, tuna, and hummus are some of the most popular offerings.

COVID-19

In early May, the United States declared the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency. With this in mind, the American Camp Association (ACA) and Alliance for Camp Health (ACH) recommend including COVID-19 as part of a larger communicable disease plan, which focuses on the various ways we can support the individual and communal health of our campers and staff. At the same time, they – and we! – recognize the importance of clear communication with families about our plans specifically around COVID-19, as it continues to be a presence in our daily lives.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) suggests that, “when deciding which prevention measures to implement, camps should consider the local context and balance the risks of infectious disease with the educational, social, and mental health outcomes.” Following this guidance, and with input from members of our COVID-19 Task Force, we anticipate the following guidelines for Summer 2023:

- All eligible campers, staff members, volunteers, and visitors should be fully vaccinated against COVID-19, meaning they have received at least two doses of the Pfizer, Moderna, or Novavax, or one dose of the J&J, vaccine. We strongly encourage all community members to be up-to-date according to CDC guidelines, which includes the most recent booster; while this is not a requirement, it is highly recommended.
- In general, mask wearing will not be required this summer – except if there is specific concern of community spread.
- All campers and staff members will participate in symptom screening upon arrival. Anyone who presents with signs of respiratory infection (including sore throat, cough, or runny nose), body aches, conjunctivitis, and/or loss of smell will be given a rapid antigen test. Should campers or staff present with any of the above symptoms throughout the session, we will have rapid antigen tests on-site; as a matter of course, we will not test asymptomatic individuals.
 - Following current CDC recommendations, if a community member tests positive for COVID-19, they must isolate for five (5) days. If symptoms are improving and they are fever-free for 24 hours, they may return to the Camp program at the end of those five days; if symptoms are not improving, the isolation will extend to ten (10) days. When possible, families will be encouraged to bring their children home for the duration of the isolation period.
 - If a camper or staff member tests positive, we will closely monitor for symptoms amongst their cabinmates and, depending on a variety of factors, may limit cross-bunk interaction for a few days.

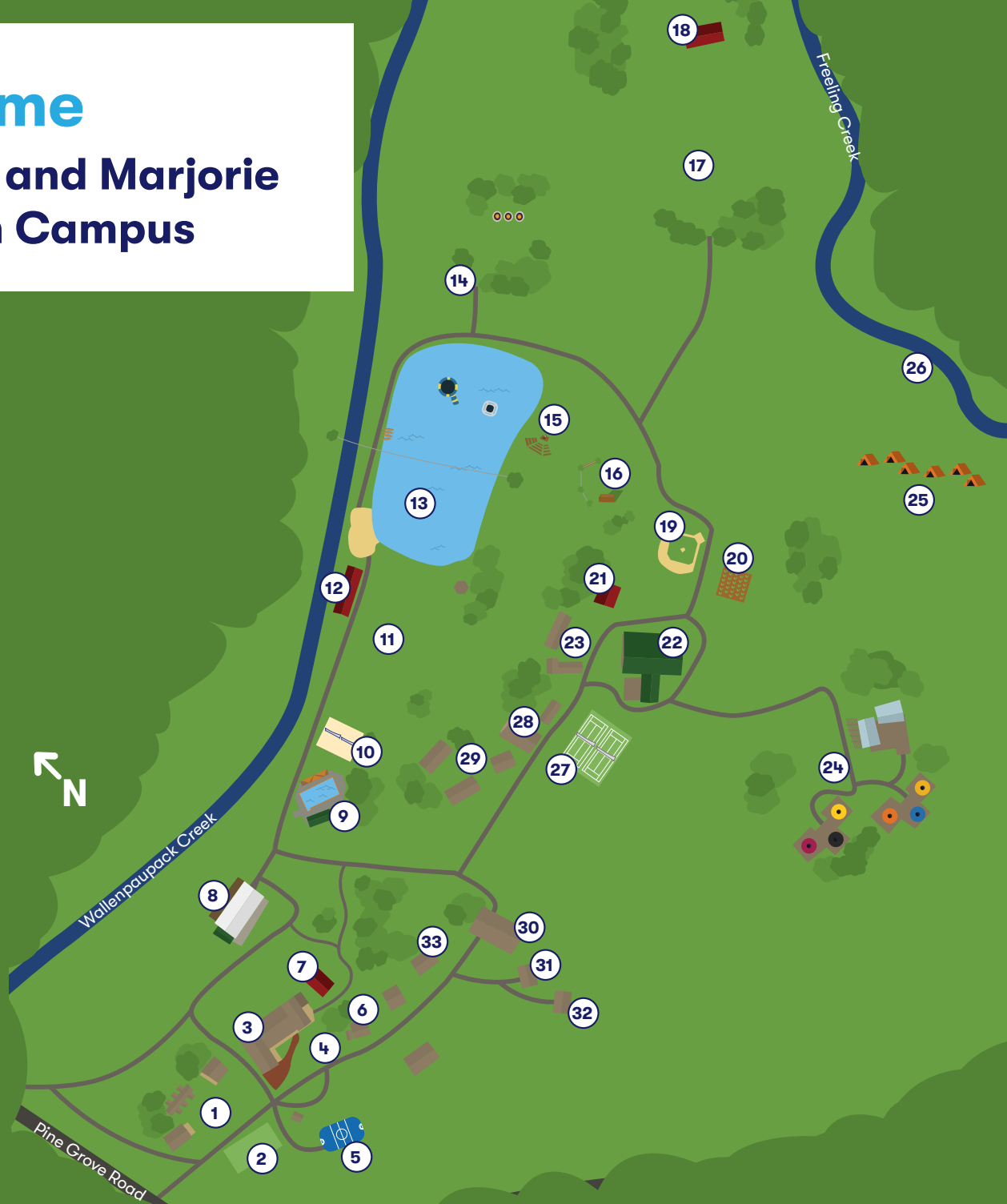
- As has been the case throughout COVID, meals will be served in one seating for all of Camp ... and we will return to serving buffet style, with each *eidah* using its own buffet line.
- Out of an abundance of caution, we anticipate most programming for the first five days of each session – with the exception of meals – will be done by *eidah* (age group). Presuming there is no cause for concern, all of Camp will be together beginning with Kabbalat Shabbat the first Friday night and continuing through the rest of the session.

Especially after the last few years of restrictions, we're excited to return to a greater sense of openness and connection this summer. But if we've learned anything from the pandemic, it's that things can (and do!) change quickly. Please know that the health and safety of each member of our Camp community continue to be our top priority; the guidelines we set and the decisions we make are – and will continue to be – in service of this goal. Thank you, in advance, for your understanding and support as we strive to provide the possible experience for your kids!



Our Home

The Aaron and Marjorie Ziegelman Campus



- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1) Camper Cabins | 9) Breikhah (pool) | 17) Migrash Gadol | 26) Waterfall |
| 2) Migrash Kadur-Sal (basketball) | 10) Volleyball Court | 18) Makhtesh | 27) Migrash Tennis |
| 3) Hadar Okhel/Merkaz/Misrad (dining hall) | 11) Migrash Katan | 19) Migrash Kadur-Basis (baseball) | 28) Teatron (theater) |
| 4) Kikar | 12) Tel Aviv | 20) Farm | 29) Camper Cabins |
| 5) Hockey Rink | 13) Agam (lake) | 21) Jerusalem | 30) Staff Moadon |
| 6) Camper Cabins | 14) Archery Range | 22) Barn | 31) Mirpa'ah (wellness center) |
| 7) Haifa | 15) Beit Tefillah (outdoor chapel) | 23) Camper Cabins | 32) Staff Housing |
| 8) Ulam (arts and sports) | 16) Etgar (challenge course) | 24) Eco-Village | 33) The Coop |
| | | 25) Campsite | |

Summer Calendar

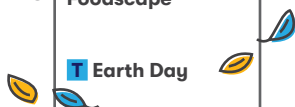
Camp is all about having fun and laughing with your friends! We do this in so many ways over the course of the summer...including special program days, dress-up theme nights, field trips, and more. Over the years, we've found that many campers and staff like to pack special clothes or costumes for different theme nights. There's no need to go out and buy anything special; the best costumes are those made from things you may already have around the house. And if kids come without anything special, we'll make it up. Trust us – their counselors are experts!

Here's just some of the magic we have planned for this summer...









Legend

- Aleph Session
 - Bet Session
 - Havaya Israel
 - ▨ Family Camp
 - 📅 Field Trip
 - 📅 Theme Night*
 - 📅 Banquet*
- *Theme Night and Banquet descriptions are on page 9.



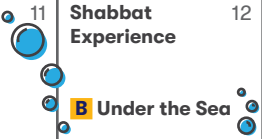
June 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21 First Day of Summer <i>(Summer Solstice)</i>	22	23	24
Aleph Opens 25	26	27	28	Foodscape 29 	30	
				📅 Earth Day		

July 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
Rookie Day 2 T Hometown Night	3	July 4th / Olympics 4 	5	Billy Jonas Concert 6 T Hair Bands Rock! 	7	8
Rishon Closes / Havaya Israel Begins 9	10	International Day 11 	12	T Super Mario Bros. 13 	14	L'chaim and Legacy Shabbat 15
16	F Harim Trip 17	F Ilanot/ Nehalim Trip 18	19	Camp Sing 20 	21	Shabbat Experience 22 B Oh, The Places You'll Go 
Aleph Closes / Bet Opens 23	24	Maccabiah Evening Program 25 T Glow in the Dark 	26	Tisha B'Av / Civ Day 27	28	29
Rookie Day 30 T Hometown Night	Ultimate Frisbee Tournament 31 					

August 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		International Day 1 	F 10th Grade Canoe Trip 2	F 10th Grade Canoe Trip 3 T Superhero Night	4	5
Havaya Israel Ends 6	F Harim Trip 7	F Ilanot/ Nehalim Trip 8	9	Camp Sing 10 	11	Shabbat Experience 12 B Under the Sea 
Bet Closes 13	14	15	Family Camp Opens 16	17	18	19
Family Camp Closes 20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Theme Nights and Banquet Descriptions

Aleph Session

Earth Day

Prepare for a night surrounded in green at our Earth Day celebration! Deck yourself out in earth tones and florals. Let's create a garden overflowing with all Earth's creatures!

Hometown Night

Wear your favorite hometown swag!

Hair Bands Rock!

Let's jam out! Flaunt your best 80's rock styles. Don some BIG hair, leather jackets, fishnet gloves, and loud patterns to channel your inner Bon Jovi. Get ready to rock your socks off!

Super Mario Bros.

Wahoo! Get your game on and power up with Mario! Grab those overalls and mushroom caps because we are having a Mario Party! Here we go!

Banquet: Oh, The Places You'll Go

Join us for a Seuss-tacular night of celebration! Show us your wackiest Who hair, your finest thneeds, and your biggest red bow ties. Don't forget those wockets in your pockets!

Bet Session

Glow in the Dark

Lights off, party on!!! Join us for an illuminating party under black lights and glow sticks. Pack your neon and white for our ultraviolet night!

Hometown Night

Wear your favorite hometown swag!

Superhero Night

Heroes assemble! Slip into your favorite super suit (if you can find it) and join us for a night of heroic adventures and fun!

Banquet: Under the Sea - JOshins and Sara's Night at the Aquarium

Get ready to make a splash with JOshins and Sara's night at the aquarium. Show off your best sea creature costumes during our Aquarium Extravaganza! (Come as a whale shark and you might just end up being their favorite.)

Diversity and Belonging

Belonging is the “indescribable feeling of being welcome.”^[1] It’s that moment of total comfort, warmth, and love – when we see one another, and are seen, for exactly who we are. At Havaya, this is the water we strive to swim in; we aim for it to be integral and infused into all we do. We are committed to representation and to celebrating lived experience, and we recognize the powerful and organic ways these can bring more dignity, justice, and joy to our work and our world.

This isn’t easy – and it doesn’t just happen on its own. It’s something we work on day-in-and-day-out. We don’t always get it right and, when we do, our successes are thanks in large part to the ways campers, staff, and families partner with us in the work. We know conversations about identity can be challenging, so we want to give you some resources to help frame these important discussions with your kids, both before and after the summer.

First, two overarching thoughts:

1. When people talk about diversity or difference, it is often framed as being about including “diverse people” in the community. Here’s the problem: people are not diverse, communities are. Aida Mariam Davis, Founder of Decolonize Design, suggests that this framework ultimately serves to “other” the very people it intends to support; it perpetuates an us/them model that is not at all in keeping with the world we want to create. She recommends thinking about diversity in terms of belonging, dignity, justice, and joy (BDJJ) – all things that speak to the core needs we all share, whether our identities have been historically centered or on the margins.
2. We are all works-in-progress. And the best way to continue growing is to be supported by those around us – and to support them in return. We’re not in competition with one another; pushing others down in order to puff ourselves up doesn’t showcase our values – it diminishes them. The way to make the biggest difference in this world is by helping other people walk their own path towards justice. Supporting each other to achieve individual successes will only strengthen all of us as a collective.

A number of years ago, a visitor described Havaya as a place where kids could be “who they are, as they are.”^[2] We’re proud to have community members of different races, genders, sexualities, religious backgrounds, abilities, and socio-economic statuses. For many of our families, this may be the most diverse community they are part of ... or, at least, the most diverse *Jewish* community. This opens up the possibility of **so** many interesting conversations with our kids. Here are some questions that may help spark those discussions (we encourage parents to answer them, too!):

- What about you is unique? Have you ever felt different, or like you didn’t fit in?

- Has someone asked you a personal question that made you feel uncomfortable? How did it feel? What would have made you more comfortable? (This is a great opportunity to practice how you might constructively tell someone they've hurt you. And it's also a chance to think about how to accept apologies with grace.)
- What's a time you made someone else uncomfortable – either with a personal question or by saying the “wrong” thing? How did it feel? If you could do it again, what would you do differently? (This is a great opening to talk about how to apologize with humility.)
- How can we help make our community (at Camp and at home) a place where everyone can feel comfortable to be who they are?

As we think about belonging writ large, it's important to highlight that conversations around race and around gender identity in particular are part of the current American zeitgeist. Not a day goes by without discussion in the news (and, often, in the halls of power) about racial justice and LGBTQ+ rights. For many of our families, this isn't theoretical – it's real life. For others, it's the focus of regular dinner table conversation. And for still others, Camp may be the catalyst for a deeper exploration of identity and belonging – regardless of your race, sexuality, or gender identity. Whether you're a pro or a novice, here are some things to consider:

- **It's all a social construct.** Race and gender may be social constructs, but that doesn't mean they are any less real – especially for our kids. (Isn't the whole experience of being a kid about learning to navigate the social constructs all around us? That's why middle and high school angst can be so painful!)
- **Language is important.** Choosing our words carefully, and knowing what they mean, is central to learning and growth. When talking about LGBTQ+ issues, here are a few basic definitions:
 - **Sex** (e.g., male, female, intersex) refers to the biology you were born with.
 - **Gender** (e.g., boy, girl, non-binary) is your emotional or intellectual identity. People who are transgender develop a sense of gender identity that does not align with their biological sex.
 - **Gender expression** is how you present yourself in the world; like gender, this lies on a spectrum – non-binary or genderqueer people may express a combination of masculinity and femininity, or neither.
 - **Sexual orientation** (e.g., straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, queer) tells who you are attracted to...and doesn't directly correlate to sex, gender, or gender expression.
- **Don't make assumptions.** Just because people express themselves differently than

the gender stereotype doesn't mean they are trans or non-binary; they might just have their own style. We suggest steering clear of phrases like "girls don't wear" or "boys don't do" because people of all genders wear nail polish, or suits, or have short or long hair, or like the colors pink and blue, or play sports, or knit, or sing, or (fill in the blank). The same is true about race or ability or anything else for that matter: make no assumptions. Just because you know someone's racial background, for example, doesn't mean you know what it means to them until you get to know them.

- **Context is important.** Sometimes, when we're in spaces where we feel comfortable, we let our guard down and say things "just among us." The problem is: we never know how those things will be heard or (mis)understood. Especially in a youth-centered environment where kids of different ages are exploring the boundaries of social interaction, it's important not to use language or tell jokes or poke fun at others – even if they share our identity or we think they're okay with it.
- **Not all talk about race is racist.** "Racist talk" uses stereotypes, demeans people, assumes all members of a particular group are the same, and upholds a racial hierarchy. "Racial talk," on the other hand, is about identity, family, culture, struggle, and history – all things we can, and should, discuss more openly and explore more deeply. When done well, "racial talk" also helps us challenge stereotypes and racism.
- **We are not color blind.** When we say "I don't see color," we negate a central part of every person's identity. We all have a race and, even if we may not identify (with) it, we have to recognize the privilege it either confers upon or withholds from us.
- **Ask the right questions, in the right way.** Think before you speak: Are you using kind language? How will your question be received? (Remember: your tone is often more important than what you say.) How would you feel if you were asked a similar question?
 - It's never okay to question someone's identity. Asking someone if they're really Jewish, or telling them they don't look like their gender, just isn't how we be.
 - It's never okay to ask another person about which body parts they have – that's always private. (At Camp, where campers live in a communal setting, this means that privacy and modesty are particularly important.)
 - It's never okay to ask someone who identifies as transgender what their name "used to be." The way they introduce themselves to you is the name they want to be called.
 - It's always okay to ask someone what pronouns ("he/him," "she/her," "they/them") they use. If you aren't sure and can't ask, just use the person's name.
 - If you're not sure how someone identifies, and you find yourself curious, ask yourself: "Why does this matter to me?" And then, let it go. (Especially around race, gender, sexuality, and religion, these questions are almost always more about us than they are about the other person.)

- **Assume good intent.** Ok, we know we said above not to make assumptions. But this is different. If you're at Havaya, chances are you're values-aligned with most other people you'll meet this summer. So when something goes awry (and it always does!), we encourage you to remember that we all have room to learn and grow – and we all have room to teach and support.
 - Sometimes, something pops out of your mouth and you immediately wish you could take it back. It happens to all of us! The best response in the moment is to take a deep breath and apologize simply and sincerely. Then, commit to yourself that you'll do better next time ... and then move on.
 - It's crucial that we name trespasses and let people know when and how they can do better – and that we do so in a way that is as productive, supportive, and kind as possible. We want to call people in, not call them out.
 - We love upstanders – people who stand up for themselves, their friends, and their values. But we don't love “downpushers” – people who demonize, ridicule, and silence people who make honest mistakes.
 - Upstanders don't just stand up with and for others in the moment, they can also help people learn after conflict has occurred. If someone says something hurtful or offensive to another community member, that person might need someone to help them learn what was offensive and how to do better. Your support is a gift both to them and to the person who experienced harm, because it takes the burden of educating off of the harmed person. It's not helpful to marginalize people who cause harm without helping them learn; that can often make it worse.
 - You don't have to accept someone's apology just because they say they're sorry. If they're sincere about it, and they want to do better, you may want to think about how to help them do better next time. And if you choose not to engage with them, that's fine, too; it's ultimately up to you to know how best to protect yourself and your boundaries.
- **This is about all of us.** The National Education Alliance says that “valuing diversity means recognizing differences between people [and] acknowledging that these differences are a valued asset.”^[3] Being in a diverse community like Havaya means each of us has the responsibility to recognize and explore the ways we are similar and different from each other – no matter who we are or how we identify.

As parents and kids prepare for the summer, we encourage you to take some time out from packing to discuss what it means to take an active part in creating a community of belonging. Please feel free to reach out to us now, during the summer, and when your children return home if we can be helpful with these conversations or if you want to talk more about our values and how we be.

We're proud to say that, at Camp Havaya, our kids are both celebrated and challenged in ways that help them grow into amazing human beings – no matter who they are or where they come from. Thanks for being our partners as we create this joyful and welcoming Jewish youth community that, we know, will continue to transform the lives of our campers, staff, families, and – we hope – the world.

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[1] Aida Mariam Davis, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2021/02/diversity-equity-inclusion-have-failed-belonging-dignity-justice/>

[2] Rabbi Robyn Frisch, <https://18doors.org/how-we-be-our-day-at-camp-jrf/>

[3] National Education Association, <https://neaedjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Racial-Justice-in-Education.pdf>



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