

Webinar Helps Parents Cope with Bullying and More

By Sara Diament

DR. Rona Novick knows how eager parents are to better understand the issues that surround bullying. “There is nothing more important to parents than their children’s safety and happiness. Any parent who has witnessed the impact of their child being the victim of teasing or social exclusion or has seen their own child act in less than generous ways to another, wants to both understand why this happens and, most importantly, figure out how to make it better.” But, according to Dr. Novick, Dean of the Azrieli Graduate School of Jewish Education and Administration at Yeshiva University, this is easier said than done. “Unfortunately, bullying does not always follow the laws of logic, and what we think will be helpful can make situations worse.”

Hidden Sparks is a non-profit dedicated to helping children with learning differences reach their full potential in school and life. The organization has always recognized parents as being the strongest supporters of their children, and while its primary programs focus on professional development opportunities for yeshiva and day school-based educators, they also provide learning opportunities for parents via their Hidden Sparks Without Walls (HSWOW) webinar series, an important component of their mission.

“Empowering parents and providing them with the tools to become more attuned to their children’s needs and stronger advocates can have huge yields. We have always seen the parent programs as an essential parallel and partner to our work with schools,”

says Debbie Niderberg, Executive Director. The HSWOW teacher webinar series was initiated in 2008, followed by the Parent Connection series, established in 2012, and, to date, 16 webinars have taken place, all of which are currently archived and available for viewing through the Hidden Sparks website. Says local parent and speech therapist Racheli Teller, “Hidden Sparks webinars cover topics that are really geared to what I need to learn as a parent of elementary school children. [For example] I have gained so much insight into how to work one-on-one with my child to improve his reading skills and how to target his exact difficulties.”

The Parent Connection webinar series, supported by a grant from the Jewish Women’s Foundation, takes place in the evening and is free of charge to all participants. This year’s presentations, which will be later added to the Hidden Sparks webinar archive, feature speakers such as Chaye Lamm Warburg of Teaneck’s Pediatric Occupational Therapy Services discussing “Sensory Processing Strategies at Home,” and noted author and lecturer Michelle Garcia Winter presenting on social thinking in children (full schedule at sidebar). Presentations of this caliber are not easily accessed by parents. According to Mrs. Teller, “I have not found an organization which provides such easy access to relevant topics. There are some free seminars online but they make it difficult to access and often the topics are presented in a boring manner. The Hidden Sparks webinars are easy to access, interactive, engaging, and relevant.”

This year’s kick-off webinar will be presented by Dr. Rona Novick, also a Co-Ed-

ucational Director of Hidden Sparks, on November 12. Dr. Novick will be speaking about battling bullying in the community, and will present on anxiety in children later in the spring. On November 12, Dr. Novick plans on parents learning, “a lot about what bullying is, and what aggressive behaviors, despite being problematic, are NOT actually bullying. What I really want parents to take away is how important they are in modeling and supporting the positive social behaviors and choices that decrease bullying in schools and com-

munities, ways they can contribute to raising the next generation of socially responsible, and safe, happy children.”

Past webinars for parents and teachers are archived on the Hidden Sparks website HiddenSparks.org and are accessible through a link on the homepage, where parents and teachers can also add themselves to the Hidden Sparks mailing list and find out more about Hidden Sparks programs.

Sara Diament is the Director of School Services at Hidden Sparks and can be reached at Sara@HiddenSparks.org.

Hidden Sparks Without Walls Webinars 2014–15 Teacher Series and Parent Connection

TITLE	DATE	SERIES	PRESENTER
Sticks and Stones: Battling Bullying	Wednesday, 11/12/2014	Teacher/Parent	Dr. Rona Novick
Getting Leor on the Guest List: Boosting Social Success for Your Students	Wednesday, 11/19/2014	Teacher	Mindy Rosenthal
More Home, Less Work	Tuesday, 12/2/2014	Parent	Zipora Schuck
All Over the Place to Keeping the Pace: Understanding Executive Function at Home and in School	Wednesday, 1/7/2015	Teacher/Parent	Mindy Rosenthal
Are You Thinking What I Think You’re Thinking? Nurturing Social Thinking In Children	Tuesday, 2/17/2015	Teacher/Parent	Michelle Garcia Winner
The Art of Teaching Rashi to the Struggling Student: Demands and Strategies	Tuesday, 2/24/2015	Teacher	Sara Chaya Farbstein, PhD
Sensory Processing Strategies at Home	Tuesday, 3/17/2015	Parent	Chaye Lamm Warburg
Helping Boost your Child’s Self-Esteem	Tuesday, 4/14/2015	Parent	Mindy Rosenthal
She Said What? (Strategies for Communication with Students and Parents)	Wednesday, 4/29/2015	Teacher	Zipora Schuck
What, Me Worry? Understanding and Managing Anxiety in Our Children	Wednesday, 5/13/2015	Teacher/Parent	Dr. Rona Novick

Give Me Harmony: Bergen County Tribute to Reb Shlomo Carlebach on His 20th Yahrzeit

An evening celebrating Reb Shlomo’s songs, stories, and teachings, presented by the Bergen County Reb Shlomo Legacy Committee

**Saturday, November 15, 2014
6:30 – 11:00 PM**

Temple Emeth, 1666 Windsor Rd., Teaneck, NJ
(call 201-833-1322 for directions)



- Learning sessions on Reb Shlomo’s songs, stories and Torah with special guest teachers including Neilah Carlebach at 7:15 PM
- **Musical Havdalah led by Avram Mlotek at 8:30 PM**
- **Concert with C. Lanzbom of Soul Farm and Nochi Krohn at 9:00PM**
- Jam session with local musicians and refreshments at 10:00PM after the concert

Stop by our **SHUK** where vendors will sell Shlomo cds, books, and photos; see Reb Shlomo videos; and learn about the return of “Soul Doctor”

Learning sessions, Havdalah, concert, and jam session will be mixed seating and singing.

Tickets are \$18 for adults, \$10 for college students, and free for children high school age and younger

All proceeds will go to **Tomchei Shabbos**

For more information: Rabbi Gerald Friedman – rebyossel@verizon.net
OR Nancy Passow – nancy.passow@bisrael.com

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