



CHOVERET CHINUCH #4 5784

GROWING
TOGETHER



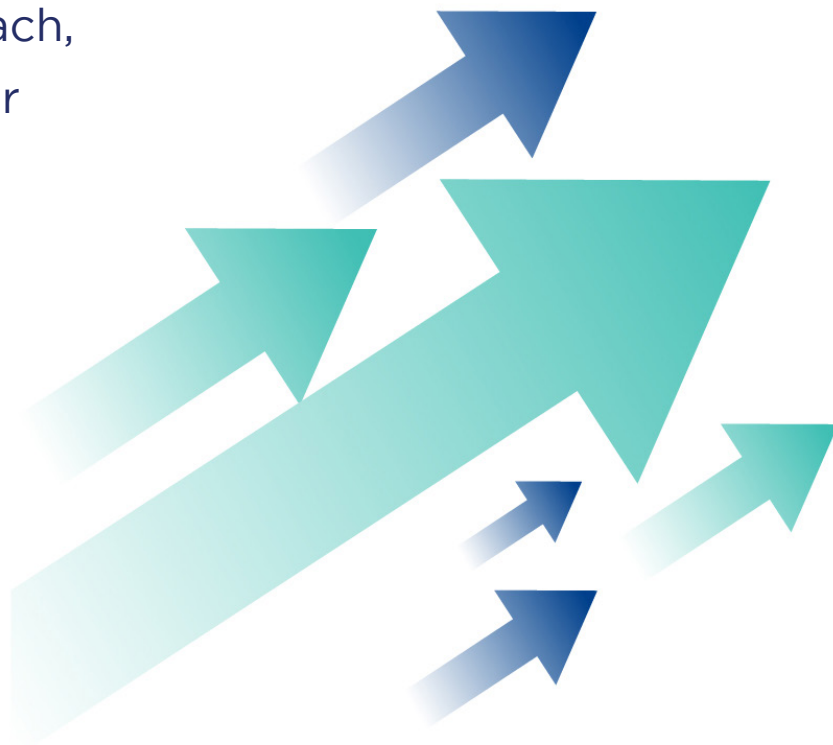
The Choveret Chinuch is a project of Bnei Akiva of the US and Canada's Chinuch department. For comments or questions, please reach out to Rav Avishai Berman at aberman@bneiakiva.org

Dear Madrichim,

Over the next two weeks we'll be looking at different ways that people's expectations of us, and our expectations of ourselves affect us.

We will first talk about the name that was given this week to the new Shevet in Bnei Akiva, and then we will learn about Chanukah, exploring how it's a time not only to bring light to those around us but also an opportunity for self-improvement. Our focus will be on discovering ways to enhance ourselves and learn about various techniques for personal growth and development.

Chag Sameach,
Shani Becker



Week One



Welcome to the newest Shevet in Bnei Akiva - Shevet Rei-im!

What does the name mean?

The name 'Rei-im' (רעים) in Hebrew means friends, people to whom we feel close. We are instructed in the Torah about one of the most basic laws- ואהבת לרעך כמוך, to love our friends or neighbors as much as we love ourselves. This name was chosen at this time, during the ongoing war in Israel to express hope and strength through our youth, that we are unified at this time, that Jews in Israel and Jews around the world love each other and stick together, and that we are united as one nation.



If you break down the word Reiim in Hebrew, you get the word Ra-u-ah (רעוע), meaning a broken piece. When something is broken, it can be difficult to fix. For example, imagine a clay flowerpot that dropped on a hard floor, and splintered into many pieces. It can be fixed, however, if all of the broken pieces can be found and glued together, to make it whole again

Fun Fact:

There is a special art called Kinsukuroi that was developed in 15th century China which uses gold resin to glue broken pottery back together creating a new and even nicer vessel. More info at: <https://growthmarriage.com/blog/the-art-of-being-broken>).

The same is true of the Jewish nation. We need all of our different pieces, all of the different types of Jews, Jews in all locations around the world, to join together to make a whole unit, to make our people complete. Each individual in עם ישראל is needed to help create a whole nation.

The power of a name:



When parents give their children names, they usually choose to name after someone, or they choose a name related to a momentous occasion, either personal or national.

The parents have high hopes for their children, to live up to the name they gave them.

Did you know? There is a concept in psychology called ‘The Pygmalion Effect.’ This means that if someone believes you can do something amazing or thinks you might struggle, those beliefs can actually affect how well you do. According to this theory, when people expect great things from you, you might just do an even better job or be more successful!

For more info:



Discussion points:

- Why did your parents choose your name? Do you know the meaning?
- Have you ever wished for a different name? Why?
- Can you think of a time when someone expected you to do really well, and it made you feel more confident?
- Do you think having friends who believe in your abilities makes a difference in how you approach challenges?

Ideas for activities:



1. *This activity emphasizes the connection that the Chanichim have to their names.*
Name game: Have the Chanichim sit in a circle, and synchronize these motions together to the beat: tap your knees once, clap once and snap your fingers twice (making 4 different sounds). Once everyone is synchronized, the first Chanich calls out his own name twice (the first time when he taps his knees and the next when he claps his hands). Then he calls out another Chanich’s name twice (once to each finger snap). The Chanich who was called, follows just as the first did: saying his name twice and then someone else’s. If someone misses a beat or gets confused they are out.
2. *This activity comes to teach the Chanichim to pay attention to those around them. It also points out how they need each other in order to succeed and how each of them is important.*
Counting challenge: Have the Chanichim sit in a circle. They need to count

together as a group to the number 15, but only one Chanich can say the consecutive number at a time. If two Chanichim say the number together they have to start from the beginning.

- 3. This activity's goal is to work on positive reinforcement to emphasize to the Chanichim how positivity can go far.*

Positive reinforcement: Have one Chanich leave the room. The others decide together on some action the chanich must do when they come back in (stand on a chair, spin around 4 times, switch places with another Chanich.) The Chanich keeps trying out different actions. As he gets closer to the objective the others cheer loudly. The louder the cheers, the closer he is; the weaker the cheers, the further he is.

Week Two

During Chanukah, we light candles for eight consecutive nights. Each night, we add an extra candle, beginning with one candle on the first night, two on the second night, and continuing in this pattern, a concept called 'מוסיף והולך'.



As the light grows each day during Chanukah, we witness the growth of the miracle. The concept of progressively adding more light daily serves as a powerful lesson about our potential. It teaches us how, as individuals, we can grow, do good, and reach our own unique potential.

Growth mindset:

There are many reasons why someone may be scared to make mistakes. Maybe they're scared to ruin their reputation or because they have people relying on them. But for some people, they're scared to make a mistake because they fear they won't look smart. Professor Carol Dweck, a famous psychologist, noticed this and found that in reality, fearing mistakes is a mindset.



Some kids avoid trying new things because they're scared of failing and looking silly. Dweck called this a "fixed mindset" - they think you're either born smart or you're not, and they don't want to risk not looking smart.

Other kids see mistakes as a way to learn. They don't mind trying new things, even if it means failing sometimes. Dweck called this a "growth mindset" - they believe you can get smarter if you work at it. These kids don't worry too much about looking silly; they just want to get better.

For more info:



Quote by Rabbi Sacks:



"The heroes of Judaism aren't the ones who were *born* great. They're the ones who *became* great by taking risks, surviving trials, overcoming handicaps, staying firm in their sense of purpose and strong in their resilience. That's Moshe. That's David. That's Channah. That's Rut."

This quote comes to teach us that once we change our mindset, we can achieve incredible things. The great leaders in Judaism were not born with these skills, but they worked on them and succeeded greatly.

Discussion points:

- Can you think of a story from Jewish history where someone overcame challenges to become great?
- Do you agree that greatness is not about being born great but about becoming great through experiences and challenges?
- How is the idea of taking risks connected to the heroes' greatness?
- Do you think you can develop a growth mindset?
- Can you recall a time in your life when taking a risk led to personal growth, even if it was challenging?

Ideas for activities:



1. *This activity comes to show the Chanichim that going through a challenge is inevitable, but they can choose how to react to it.*

Blindfolded Guiding Pairs: Arrange the Chanichim in pairs. Have one of them put on a blindfold or close their eyes. The Chanich without a blindfold puts his hands on his partner's shoulders and has to guide their blindfolded partner safely around the room. The Madrich can place chairs and other elements strategically around the room to create a navigational challenge. Emphasize the importance of clear, verbal communication to guide without collisions. After a set time, switch the blindfolded and guiding roles within the pairs.

2. *This activity comes to demonstrate to the Chanichim that our life, the directions and choices we make are all in our hands.*

Directional Beat: Have your Chanichim sit in a circle on their knees, with their arms extended and crossed into the arms of their neighbors. Choose a Chanich to initiate the game by hitting one hand on the floor to start the directional beat. The beat starts by traveling around the circle, from one hand to the other, following the order to the right. When a Chanich decides to change the direction of the beat, they hit the ground twice, signaling the switch. After the change, the beat continues in the new direction, now going to the left of the circle. The Chanichim must be attentive to the changing directions; if someone gets confused and makes a mistake, they are out of the game.

3. *This activity comes to emphasize that we influence others through our actions. Each one of us serves as a leader, as an Indian chief; we live in a culture where everyone sees our actions, therefore we have to be aware of our behavior so that we can be a model to others in our lives (younger siblings, neighbors, friends).*

Indian chief: Select a Chanich to step outside. The remaining Chanichim choose an 'Indian Chief' from among themselves. The chosen 'Indian Chief' silently initiates a series of motions or actions that the rest of the group must observe and mimic. The Chanich who stepped outside is invited back inside.

The group, including the mimicked 'Indian Chief,' begins copying the actions of the chief. The Chanich who returned must guess which participant is the 'Indian Chief' by observing the movements.