



# Derech HaTorah of Rochester

The Path of Respect and Excellence

ג'ס"ז

April 8, 2022  
ז' ניסן, פרשת מצורע, תשפ"ב

## April Calendar

Wed. April 13 - Fri. April 22: **Pesach Break - No School**  
April 26th & 27th : **NYS Math Tests (3rd - 8th Grades)**

## From the Principal

*Dr. Lea Goldstein*

## Learning is fun at DHR!



## DHR Students Read 2022 Books!

We did it! The entire student body worked together to read 2,022 books! The celebration included a make-your-own reading snack mix bar and raffles for great prizes including clip on reading lights and super cool journals. Keep on reading! Special thank you to Mrs. Adina Dan for dreaming up this challenge, encouraging our students and for sponsoring the wonderful celebration!



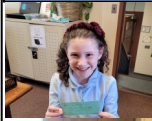
## Benching Superstars

Zeesa Aranov  
Shalom Ovadia Bashary  
Malka Burger  
Adina Herman



Liba Mittel  
Aliza Sloviter  
Hannah Ulloa  
Shmuel Winograd

## Middos Mentions!



Adina was mevater for a friend during Middos class. How thoughtful!



Chana cleaned up a spill that someone left in the classroom. Great job!

## Mazel Tov to...

...the following 5th - 8th grade boys for reaching Rabbi Shulman's monthly math homework incentive goal:

Chanoch Abrahamson  
Naftali Aranov  
Dovid Brea  
Shneur Caro



Ariel Kuyunov  
Yaakov Lagunov  
Chanoch Max  
Nosson Yaras

... the 7/8 girls for finishing parshas Balak this week!

## Thank you to...

...the Lapin family for their shiva collection box donation.

... Rabbi & Mrs. Dovid Ribakow for the donation of the Rabbi S.R. Hirsch Chumash!

### SUPPORT IS OK, IT'S NORMAL! IT HELPS!

I visited several classrooms this week to discuss the concept of students receiving extra support when needed. While our students are, for the most part, very kind and considerate, many of our students are still embarrassed to get help or support.

That is not surprising, since, for children and teenagers, there is powerful peer pressure to appear competent in front of friends and classmates. Additionally, kids often lack metacognitive skills when it comes to assessing their own learning and knowledge gaps. "Middle school students have a harder time asking for help because they're transitioning from the cut-and-dry thinking of elementary school," writes educator Penny Kostaras for Teach Thought. "Add to that the self-consciousness and insecurity of adolescence, and no one dares to ask for help for fear of being 'found out' or 'exposed'."

We also tend to underestimate just how much discomfort kids feel about asking for help. That can cause parents or educators to "sit back waiting for those in need to ask for help, or mistakenly attribute underutilization of available help to a lack of need rather than a lack of confidence," write Bohns & Flynn in a 2009 research article. "In each case, a likely outcome is that critical support is never provided." Bohns recommends "lowering the temperature" on the process so that **asking for help becomes a low-stakes, normal part of being a good learner**, something students feel comfortable and empowered to do regularly. "Students need to feel like they aren't the only ones struggling. They need to believe they won't be judged negatively for getting extra support."

Some recommendations:

**Teach Metacognitive Skills:** It's not uncommon for students to "sit in silence or confusion," instead of raising their hand to ask for help, writes educator Jennifer Sullivan. "Students must first recognize that they're struggling. This requires honesty and self-awareness—some students don't think they need help even when formal or informal assessments indicate otherwise." Therefore, we encourage self-reflection in students and help them develop the metacognitive skills to take at least some of the responsibility for monitoring their learning, rather than keeping that task the sole purview of teachers, or parents. As they learn, students should regularly check in with themselves, with basic questions like: "Do I need to ask for help?" and "Are there areas that are unclear to me?"

**Normalize It:** Part of lowering the stakes for students involves demonstrating how commonplace needing and asking for help can be. So talk about it and provide examples and share your own stories about seeking support or assistance from others. How did you overcome those obstacles? What embarrassed you?"

**Model Assertiveness:** Assertive communication is a hard but valuable skill for students to learn. "In the classroom, students who lack assertiveness skills may hesitate to share their thinking openly or ask clarifying questions when they're confused," writes educator Kristin Stuart Valdes. "But when people behave assertively, they stand up for themselves without diminishing or hurting others". Valdes explains that "it may seem that other people are ignoring or disrespecting our needs when in fact they're simply not aware of them. If we recognize this, we can address the problem by stating our needs calmly."

**Prove It Exists in the Wild:** Discuss ways that asking for help benefits people in their jobs and lives, Kostara suggests. "Revealing to younger students that getting help is the norm in the creative, scientific, and professional world makes them aware that receiving help is universal and OK," she writes. "Once they are aware of that, students can let down their guard and be open to receiving help earlier so that they can thrive."

Some content excerpted from <https://www.edutopia.org/article/how-kids-can-overcome-awkwardness-askin>

