

Parent Handbook

CAMP GAN ISRAEL - HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA

Summer 2026

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the 2026 season of Camp Gan Israel. We are delighted that you are joining us and are looking forward to a wonderful camping experience together with your family.

At Camp Gan Israel we are committed to providing a highly stimulating and exciting camp season. Everything we do with your children is designed to enhance their self-esteem, teach cooperation, increase their level of responsibility, and ground them in a rich tradition of Jewish values and customs. The counselors have been selected for their talents, personal warmth, and their ability to care for each child. Together with exciting programming, camp spirit, and summer days filled with laughter and fun, we can count on CGI '26 to be remembered for years to come.

Please feel free to contact us with questions or concerns you may have throughout the program.

Looking forward to a safe and healthy summer,

Mushka Cohen
Camp Director
347.819.3772

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Rabbi Moshe Cohen
Co-Director, Chabad of Huntsville
256.886.8245

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Camp Location

Camp Gan Israel is back on the mountain for another awesome camp setting!

This year, we are continuing with how we switched things up last year.

Camp Gan Israel summer 2026 will be at the John Scoble Pavilion of Monte Sano State Park. This beautiful outdoor area is a covered pavilion with power, lights, fans, and private bathrooms.

To access our location: Stay on the main road when coming through the front gate of

B”H

Monte Sano State Park via Nolan Avenue. Keep straight, do not turn into the Lodge area. Eventually the main road forks. Keep right at the fork. Once past the fork triangle, take the second left. Keep right and you will see our CGI pavilion.

Summer Dates

Session I: June 22 – June 26, 2026

Session II: June 29 – July 3, 2026

Session III: July 6 – July 9, 2026 (Does not include Friday)

Camp ends on Thursday, July 9, 2026.

Camp Program Schedule

Monday through Thursday - 9:00 AM - 3:30 PM

Friday - 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Our programs are for children entering kindergarten through Grade 6. - Ages 5 - 12.
Limited CIT (counselor in training) positions for teens ages 13+.

Parent / Camp Communication

We strongly encourage close communication between parents and the Camp Staff. Please don't hesitate to call us should any issue or question arise. To reach Camp Gan Israel during summer operation call: 347.819.3772. Our daily captioned picture posts will summarize the day at past in full detail. Timely notifications include a detailed schedule for the upcoming week, including special events and trips.

Drop Off / Pick Up at Camp

Morning drop-off at Camp Gan Israel is at 9:00 AM.

You are welcome to drop off your child/ren as early as 8:50 A.M. but not prior.

A staff member will be right outside the lodge each drop off and pick up time, for parents who opt for drive through the carpool line and have their child/ren brought to

and from the car.

Pick-up is at 3:30 PM.

A late charge of \$1 per minute will be charged to parents who arrive after 3:45 PM. Please call Mushky ahead of time, if you will be running late.

Campers will not be allowed to leave with anyone not specified on the camp registration form or without prior notification to the Camp Director/Counselor. Please provide necessary car seats for your children if they are leaving with another parent/guardian.

If your child arrives at camp after morning line-up (approx. 9:20 AM), you must let a director know. The same applies if you pick your child up before dismissal.

Planned Field Trips

This summer, we are reintroducing indoor field trips, as well as outdoor ones. We try to have one of each during each session.

Please note this season’s trips, and prepare your child/ren accordingly.

Depending on weather, trips may be swapped around as deemed necessary.

The below trips are subject to change – and parents of enrolled campers will be informed.

- Tuesday, June 23: Flow Supreme Air Sports
- Thursday, June 25: Stars & Strikes
- Tuesday, June 30: Pontoon Boating on Lake Guntersville
- Thursday, July 2: Cooks Museum of Science
- Tuesday, July 7: Main Event
- Thursday, July 9: Point Mallard Water Park - Extra cold water bottles, swim gear, sun-screen etc.

Transportation Rules for Campers

For field trips

1. Remain seated at all times, with hands and arms inside the vehicle.

2. There should be no throwing of objects or other disruptive behavior.
3. Passengers should enter and leave the vehicle under the direction of a staff member and/or driver. If the vehicle makes an emergency stop, passenger should follow directions of staff member and/or driver.

Kosher Food and Lunch Policy

Camp Gan Israel is proud to serve a Kosher, nutritious hot lunch daily. Additionally, we will be providing a snack during the camp day. Breakfast is to be eaten prior to arriving at camp.

The below menu will be repeated throughout the weeks of camp.

Mondays – Macaroni and cheese. Garden Salad or veggies

Tuesdays – PB&J / Tuna Sandwiches. Cherry tomatoes, baby carrots and hummus.

Wednesdays – Pizza and Fries with ketchup.

Thursdays – Eggs, rice and Israeli salad.

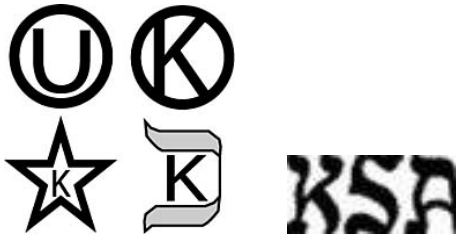
Fridays – Franks and blanks, mashed potatoes, veggies strips and dipping sauce.

Each day, bread and dairy free butter is served alongside the specific lunch menu. The children ritually wash and bless their hands in preparation for the bread.

For children with diets that require them to bring their own lunch; Please avoid sending any reusable containers to camp for your child’s lunch. Everything should be in disposable containers and easily opened and eaten by the children with little counselor help.

If your child cannot have all served foods, we encourage you to send bread or other alternatives that can be easily defrosted and served.

If you choose to send lunch for your child, it must be dairy or Parve. No meat products are to be sent to camp. If sending snacks, please try to send snacks that have kosher symbols on them, such as:



We provide freeze pops at the end of the day and cold water throughout the day. Nevertheless, we recommend that you send along 2 water bottles daily, one of them frozen so that it will still be cold in the afternoon.

What to Send to Camp

Send the following to camp (daily, unless otherwise noted) with your child. Please label everything; hats, towels, sunscreen, etc. Do not send valuables to camp. Camp Gan Israel cannot be responsible for lost or stolen items. On water trip days, please make sure to send water shoes. Check the weekly newsletter for specific trips and dress-up days.

- Sunscreen SPF 30 or more is recommended
- Sunhat or baseball cap
- Athletic shoes
- Swim shoes (Mon./Wed./Fri.)
- Swimsuit and towel (Mon./Wed./Fri.)
- Life jacket, mandatory for Pre-K campers, and if camper is not yet water safe (Mon./Wed./Fri.)
- Tzedakah, a coin or two for charity
- 2 water bottles, one frozen
- Change of clothes for Pre-K campers to remain in camp throughout the summer.
- Booster seat for children ages 6 and younger.
- Mitzvah notes for children ages 7 and younger. (Highlighting in writing a good deed your child did).

Overnight

We are so excited to be resuming our annual CGI overnight for campers ages 9 and above. If you registered your child, we will send you specific information about the overnight experience. This summer’s overnight is from Tuesday, June 30, to Wednesday, July 1, 2026. We will be camping at Honeycomb Campgrounds in Grant, AL.

Health Policy

If your child is sick, do not send them to camp. If your child contracts a contagious condition, notify the camp.

To assist in the event of an emergency or illness, it is imperative that proper phone numbers (cell or otherwise) are entered on your child’s application. If you and/or the emergency contacts will be more than 30 minutes away from camp during camp hours, please notify camp director.

Parents/Guardians will be notified by camp staff in the event of the following circumstances relating to your child:

1. Fever or any signs of illness that would prevent your child from having a positive camp experience.
2. Non-emergency injuries requiring medical attention.
3. Injuries requiring emergency medical treatment (after emergency personnel have been called).

Note: In the event of emergency, CGI will contact emergency medical services, and the parent to discuss transport to emergency facilities.

Medications

If your child needs medication administered during camp, it can only be dispensed under the specific directions of a licensed physician. Please send the medication in its original bottle, with camper’s name, correct dosage, and name and number of physician. Please send in at least 3 days’ worth of medication. A separate note containing dosage instruction and parent’s signature must be sent as well. If your child has specific health concerns or limitations, you must discuss them with the director.

Special Conditions

If your child has any special challenges, conditions, or limitations (i.e. social, behavioral), the knowledge of which would help us in caring for them and maximizing their camp

experience, please bring them to our attention. It will allow us to address these needs properly and eliminate unnecessary difficulties.

Payment and Refund Policy

Balance of camp fees must be paid in full by June 18, 2026, unless otherwise arranged with the director. If you need to cancel the registration, contact the director to discuss your needs. Once a session begins, tuition fees for that session are nonrefundable. A 20% service charge is deducted from all other refunds.

Personal Possessions

1. Camp Gan Israel does not assume responsibility for staff and camper’s personal possessions, including sports equipment, cameras, iPods, cell phones and electronic games. We advise campers not to bring these items to camp. Camp Gan Israel is not responsible if these items are lost or damaged.
2. Campers’ backpacks and lunches are to be kept in their designated areas.
3. Pets are not allowed on campus before, during, or after camp.
4. Weapons are not allowed on the campus.

Smoke Free / Drug and Alcohol-Free Campus

Camp Gan Israel remains a smoke free campus. This applies to all employees as well as to all guests. In adherence to State law, any person in possession of or caught abusing drugs or alcohol while at camp will be subject to immediate dismissal.

Dress Code

Boys are encouraged to wear a Kippah or baseball cap. CGI will provide kippot during prayer time. Camp T-shirts must be worn on all field trips. Camp T-shirts are given to campers on the first day of camp.

Tzedakah

Tzedakah (charity) is a concept, which is basic to Judaism. Our camp attempts to develop a commitment among our campers to share with others less fortunate than themselves by donating a few coins a day to charity. Parents are asked to provide young children with a coin/s daily for Tzedakah.

Mitzvah Note

For the younger groups, counselors may ask you to send in a Mitzvah note. This is a note that tells something special that your child has done. Children really look forward to hearing what their parents have to say. So please be sure to send one if it's requested.

Recapping the Moments

Follow us on social media for the C.G.I. daily photo captioned posts. It recaps the highlights of the day. As well, look out for emails that will include reminders for the upcoming day, and will keep you up to date with all the camp info on activities, trips, and special programming.

Instagram: @Chabadhuntsville

Facebook: Chabad of Huntsville

Swimming

We will be swimming off campus on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at a dear friend of CGI's beautiful new home pool. Swimming safety precautions are strictly adhered to. Please send in a life jacket if your child is not yet water safe.

Campers will be evaluated on the first swim day of each session to determine swim levels. Campers who are not able to swim the width of the pool will remain in the shallow end. You can take a swim test any day throughout the summer.

Programming

Camp Gan Israel aims to offer campers the widest array of activities, trips, and educational programs. Our camp calendar features the exciting camp activities, and dress-up days that we have planned for your child/ren.

Field Trips

Tuesdays and Thursdays are trip days at CGI. Campers can look forward to experiencing all the fun the Huntsville area has to offer. Camp Gan Israel T-shirts must be worn on all trips.

Do not send any spending money for trips. We will supply extra drinks and snacks. Campers will not be allowed to buy food on the trips.

Staff Appreciation

Our counselors are closely chosen for their care, compassion and love of Judaism. They invest their summer to come give your child an unforgettable experience. We encourage parents to convey their appreciation to your child’s counselor by giving them a tip at the end of your child’s session or double session at camp.

We recommend the following tipping per child: \$25 for one week, and \$40 if your child attends two weeks, and \$54 or more if your child attends the full season. The choice and amount are yours, but we highly recommend and appreciate all those who show appreciation to our counselors. This applies to our head counselor as well, who will be devoting so much energy to making each day the success it will be.

Family Shabbat Dinner

All Camp Families are invited to join in a Shabbat Dinner at Chabad of Huntsville on **Friday evening, June 26, 2026 at 7:00 pm.**

Camp Gan Israel Goodbye BBQ

All campers and their families are invited to join us for our end of the summer, CGI Goodbye BBQ. Each group of campers will perform a presentation with their bunk group. **Thursday, July 9, 2026 at 5:15 PM.** The location is at Chabad of Huntsville.

Please keep notice for details and RSVP information for the two above events.

On behalf of the entire staff at Camp Gan Israel, we are delighted to spend an unforgettable summer experience with you! Wishing you a summer of joy, love and friendship!