

## The Curriculum

**7<sup>th</sup> grade** connects the teachings of Torah to relevant personal issues, such as peer pressure and child labor laws. Students also study Shoah, including righteous individuals who gave light in dark times, and the importance of Israel yesterday and today.

**8<sup>th</sup> grade** centers on the lifecycle rituals of birth, B'nai Mitzvah, marriage, and death. Through these and other topics, they expand our students' knowledge of Reform Judaism and strengthen their sense of community within and outside Beth David.

**9<sup>th</sup> grade** compares Reform Judaism with other branches of our religion, developing a deeper understanding of all Judaism. Hands-on activities, such as planning a Kosher meal, add to the experience. In spring the comparison expands to include other religions.

"It's important that the students realize the core values we share with all Jews: the sanctity of life, respect for the earth we live in, the celebration of holidays, a connection to Jewish history and survival, and our link to Israel."

- Adrienne Tomlinson,  
teacher

**10<sup>th</sup> grade, Confirmation year**, is one of inquiry and confirmation, questioning and affirming. Classes begin by contemplating the High Holiday Services and conclude in the spring by leading, along with the Rabbi and Cantor, the beautiful and memorable Confirmation Service. The RAC trip and social action projects highlight the year.

**11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades** offer a program to intrigue and enlighten. Students take the lead as the curriculum follows their questions and passions about their Judaism and about Jewish life.

### *Benefits for teens now, in college, and beyond :*

- *confidence*
- *leadership*
- *responsibility*
- *language learning*
- *community service*
- *hands-on lobbying*
- *student teaching*
- *experience*

## Friendships and Connections

BethDY, Beth David's Youth Group for students in 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades, offers additional social and community outlets. Past events have included rock climbing, a South Street scavenger hunt, the AIDS Walk, and running the Purim Carnival . BethDY also hosts one Lounge Night per month in their own Youth Lounge, next to the social hall. Teens order in food and hang out watching movies or a favorite TV series.

### Sign Up!


Be a part of this transformative experience. For more information, contact us at 610-649-0272 or [www.bdavid.org](http://www.bdavid.org).



**Confirmation** · **Community**  
**History** · **Torah** · **Israel**  
**Values** · **Friendships** · **Pizza**  
**Art** · **Identity** · **Social Justice**



# Beth David Upper School



## Building Jewish Identities Beyond B'nai Mitzvah

### Beth David Religious School Mission Statement

To empower our students to establish a lifelong commitment to Jewish learning, living, and the practice of mitzvot, and to identify as Reform Jews; to inspire students to develop knowledge of culture, language, history, practices and values that will permit them to integrate Judaism into their daily lives and the lives of their families.

Spirit . **RUACH** . Questioning . Communicating . **TIKKUN OLAM** . Cooking  
 Thinking . Electives . Understanding . Mentoring . **Bonding**  
 Relating . Ice Cream . Social Justice . Lobbying Congress . Meaning  
**SOCIAL ACTION** . Washington, DC . Hot Topics . **Connections**

## Jewish Identity and Learning

Through classes and electives students contemplate the basic questions, "What is Reform Judaism and what does it mean in my life?" Methods include debate, discussion, and sometimes even arguments; art, music, journal writing, and cooking, all keeping learning lively and relevant. A pre-class pizza dinner, included in the program, offers time to socialize.

"The program has been widely successful because the kids love the teachers. They are what keep the students returning. The teachers make the lessons come alive."

- Susan Levey,  
 Religious School Director



## Responsibility

The popular Madrichim program employs interested Upper School students as teaching assistants in younger grades on Sunday mornings. This offers a wonderful experience of education, commitment, and increased responsibility.



## Social Action

All the grades take part in ongoing social action projects. The 10<sup>th</sup> grade regularly hosts dinner for the Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN) guests. Projects in other grades have included the Gladwyne Cemetery Cleanup, preparing meals for Aid for Friends, a car wash to raise funds for a variety of organizations, and a book collection to benefit the Philadelphia Public Schools.

"I really like working with the younger kids. They're enthusiastic and it's great to watch them learn. And it's cool to work in a job setting and feel like a real employee."

- Erica Hummel,  
 student

## Confirmation

The culmination of 10<sup>th</sup> grade is Confirmation. This sacred service signifies the transformation of our dedicated youth from students into involved, intelligent Jewish adults. As a congregation, our greatest accomplishment is ushering students through this change. Students participate in creating and leading the service, making it truly their own.

## The RAC Trip

The RAC (Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism) trip to Washington, DC, offers a unique and exciting experience. Beth David youth join Reform Jewish teens from around the country to learn about social justice issues and related pending legislation. Then they prepare and actually lobby in their own congressional offices about issues they select. Students also visit the Holocaust Memorial Museum and sample the vibrancy of Georgetown.

