



*Florida*

*Dovi's*  
**Gan Yisroel Florida**  
- Parent Handbook -

## Welcome to Dovi's CGI Florida Boys Division!

Camp Gan Yisroel was established by the Rebbe with a vision that forever changed what a summer camp could be. The Rebbe saw the summer not as a break from learning, but as a precious opportunity to reach children in a setting filled with warmth, chayus, and kedushah. Gan Yisroel would be a place where a child's neshama could shine — where playing ball and swimming would go hand in hand with davening, learning, and growing in Yiras Shomayim and Ahavas Yisroel. What began decades ago has grown into a worldwide network of camps, where thousands of children experience the joy of being a Yid in an atmosphere infused with Chassidishe values, hiskashrus, and simcha. Every laugh, every farbrengen, every niggun carries the warmth and direction of the Rebbe — whose guidance continues to illuminate the path of every camper and staff member.

The summer of 2024 / 5784 marked a powerful new chapter with the opening of the new Fruitland Park campus: "Dovi's Gan Yisroel." Named in loving memory of Sholom Dovber Fellig, a"h — a bochur known for his radiant smile, boundless warmth, and deep chayus in Yiddishkeit — the new 100-acre site is a dream realized. Complete with a lake, Olympic-size pool, gymnasium, ropes course, and state-of-the-art facilities, the campus blends modern amenities with the tranquility of nature and the ruach of Chassidus. Rabbi Yosef Biston, together with the Fellig family and other dedicated donors, turned a vision into reality, transforming personal pain into a living legacy. Dovi's Gan Yisroel is more than just a place — it stands as a tribute to a neshama whose light continues to illuminate the path for hundreds of campers, bringing joy, growth, and inspiration to generations to come.

Rabbi Yossi Biston, Executive Director  
Rabbi Yossi Goldblatt, Director

## Camp Location

Summer Address: 36540 Vía Marcia, Fruitland Park, FL 34731

Office Address: 7170 Loxahatchee Road, Parkland, FL 33067

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## Communication

### Phone Calls

- Campers will call home once a week using camp-provided flip phones.
- We will provide a general schedule of expected call times.
- Phones do not accept incoming calls. If a call is missed, your child will try again.
- Campers with separated parents may call each parent individually.
- International campers will be provided WhatsApp-compatible phones for calling home.

### Emails

- Emails are printed daily at lunch.
  - No attachments, pictures, sports updates, or jokes will be printed.
  - Put your son's full name in the subject line.
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## Camp Guidelines & Items Not Allowed

At camp, it is our mission to give your son an incredible summer filled with Chassidishkeit, learning, fun, and lifelong memories. In order to maintain a healthy and focused environment, there are important camp guidelines and items that should not be brought to camp.

### Books

Campers are busy most of the day, but there are times to relax. We encourage campers to bring books or magazines with Jewish content.

Only books written by frum authors on Jewish subjects will be allowed.

### Music

We select music that reflects our Chassidische atmosphere. Therefore, MP3 players, iPods, or personal music devices are not allowed. If brought, they will be stored and returned at summer's end.

## Electronics

We ask that the following items **not be brought to camp**:

- Cell phones, smartwatches, tablets, iPods, iTouches, PSPs, MP3 players, radios, laptops, etc.
- **Valuables or sentimental items** that cannot be replaced.

Electronics needed for travel may be brought but must be **turned in upon arrival**. Small digital cameras are allowed and encouraged for capturing special moments.

## Prohibited Items

To maintain safety and the camp atmosphere, the following are **not allowed**:

- **Water guns, Orbeez guns, or similar toys**
- **Playing cards, non-Jewish books, or inappropriate materials**
- **Boxes of nosh, bubble/chewing gum, or junk food**
- **Food products containing nuts (Camp is nut-free)**
- **Plastic drawers, storage containers, or mini fridges**
- **Cases of water (Available in the canteen)**
- **Push scooters, electric scooters, or similar items**
- **Toasters, sandwich makers, or any appliances (fire hazard)**
- **Fans** – not necessary, all bunks are fully air-conditioned

## Please Do Not Send Boxes of Nosh

We kindly request that parents **do not send large quantities of nosh or junk food** to camp. It:

- Attracts rodents and bugs
- Causes mess and food waste
- Is unnecessary — camp provides plenty of snacks and treats throughout the day

Thank you for helping us maintain a clean, safe, and wholesome environment.

## Property Damage Policy

Campers are expected to respect camp property and each other's belongings. **Any damage, theft, or "raiding"** of other campers, staff, or property will result in **immediate dismissal** from camp.

If you're unsure whether something is appropriate, feel free to reach out before packing.

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## Packing & Logistics

### Packing List

- Please see the updated suggested packing list on the camp website to help ensure a smooth and organized packing process.
- Campers should pack enough clothing for 10 days, as laundry is done every 10 days.
- Each camper has limited storage space in their bunkhouse — please limit clothing and personal items to two suitcases.  
Label all items clearly using a permanent marker or iron-on/sew-in name labels.
- Suitcases should be clearly marked with a bag tag displaying your child's full name.
- Do not send valuables (phones, smartwatches, jewelry, electronics, etc.).
- Camp is not responsible for lost or damaged items.

### Laundry

- Younger bunks: laundry is done in-house.
  - Older bunks: laundry is sent out and returned clean the next day.
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## Travel & Arrival

### Bus Travel

- The price for the bus is \$65 each way.
- Bus is available from Miami (LEC).
- Strongly recommended for a smoother transition and reduced homesickness.
- There will only be one location for the South Florida bus:  
Lubavitch Educational Center (LEC Main Campus)  
17330 NW 7th Ave, Miami, FL 33169

### Not Sure if You Reserved a Seat?

- Search your email for:  
"Bus Reservation for" or look for an email from: [billing@cgiflorida.com](mailto:billing@cgiflorida.com)
- If you still can't find it, feel free to reach out to us.

### Final Confirmation Email

Closer to camp, before we finalize transportation, you'll receive an email indicating:

- Whether you registered for a bus
- If your child will be picked up from the airport
- Or if you're driving them to camp

### Procedure at the Bus Stop:

- Campers must check in by showing their camp entry pass.
- Luggage will be loaded by camp baggage handlers only – please do not assist.
- Only travel-worthy luggage (suitcases or duffle bags) will be accepted.
- Each child is allowed a maximum of two bags.
- Pre-packed plastic drawers will not be accepted.
- Cases of water will not be accepted. The canteen sells cases of water, soup, and other essentials.
- Refrigerators, plastic storage containers, and drawers will not be accepted on the bus and should not be sent to camp.

### PLEASE NOTE:

- Bus fees are not refundable.
- Buses will not wait for latecomers.
- Bus seats must be booked in advance.
- A separate form must be completed for each child.
- Please be on time for pickup. We will not have staff available to wait with your child.
- Please bring snacks for the ride to camp — lunch will not be served.
- Only arrive 15 minutes before the departure time.
- Each bus will have chaperones.

### Driving to Camp

- Drop-off: Around 2:30–3:00 PM.
- Camp Address: 36540 Via Marcia, Fruitland Park, FL 34731
- Parents may not enter bunkhouses, choose beds, or unpack—this is part of the camper's experience.

### Flying In

- Camp staff will meet your son at the gate (escorted through security).
- Details (staff name and contact info) will be emailed the night before.
- If you fly with your child, camp staff will meet you at baggage claim.

### Phones for Flying Campers

- If your child is flying with a phone, please ensure they know to turn it in upon arrival. It will be safely held and returned before departure.

## Bunks & Requests

### Bunkmate Requests

- Use the form in the **parent portal** to submit:
    - Who your child wants to room with
    - Who they should not be roomed with (handled confidentially)
  - Assignments will be posted online **after camp begins**, once counselors are matched to bunks.
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## Kitchen & Food

### Chef Nissen Pewzner

Chef Nissen and his dedicated kitchen crew provide **high-quality, nutritious, and child-friendly meals** that appeal to both campers and parents. Camp meals are **certified and regulated by the State of Florida**, and prepared with an emphasis on **healthy nutrition and variety**.

At lunch and supper, there is a **fully stocked salad bar** with fresh vegetables, pasta, and sauce, plus cheese or tuna for campers who prefer alternative options.

### Mealtime Experience

Mealtime at CGI Florida is much more than just food — it's an experience. The dining room is filled with energy, **chayus**, and **camp spirit**, often accompanied by **singing and dancing**.

It's also a space of daily inspiration, where campers hear:

- The daily Hayom Yom
- A teaching from Sefer Hamitzvos
- A Moshiach thought of the day

Chef Nissen and his team provide **three nourishing meals daily**, along with a daily snack.

### Allergy Accommodations

- CGI Florida is a **nut-free camp**.
  - If your son has any **allergies**, please inform the office **before camp begins** so proper accommodations can be made.
  - For **lactose-intolerant campers**:  
Please send **labeled rice or soy milk** with your son or order via Amazon. It will be refrigerated and made available at meals. Cheese substitutes will always be provided.
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## Packages & Deliveries

### Sending Packages

- You may send packages to camp via USPS, UPS, FedEx, or Amazon (standard shipping).
- Please clearly label packages with your son's full name and bunk (if known).
- All items sent should reflect the ruach and values of camp. When in doubt, please ask before sending.

### No Instacart / Walmart / Shipt / Amazon Fresh

- Deliveries from third-party grocery and delivery services will not be accepted.
    - This includes Instacart, Walmart delivery, Shipt, and Amazon Fresh.
    - These services often arrive without names or identifying labels and are difficult to distribute reliably.
  - Only standard mail-based deliveries (e.g., USPS, UPS, FedEx, Amazon, Walmart Shipping) will be accepted.
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### 17 Visiting Day

- **Please note:** This summer, there will be no Visiting Day.
  - While we understand how meaningful it is to see your child in person during camp, the decision was made with the well-being, continuity, and immersive experience of the campers in mind.
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### Bar Mitzvah Division

- Located in a secluded area of camp called "The Hideaway."
  - Features:
    - Separate cabins
    - Dedicated shul
    - Dining section
  - Designed to give older boys an enhanced, age-appropriate experience.
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## Canteen

- Camp has a fully stocked lakefront canteen with snacks, drinks, and occasional hot food.
- Campers may purchase 1-2 items per day.
- The canteen sells a variety of nosh, snacks, and drinks, including healthy options.
- Iced water and fresh fruit are available all day in the dining room.
- Campers are also given:
  - Cookies and milk before davening
  - Fruit in the afternoon after sports

### Suggested Spending

- We recommend sending \$40–\$50 per session for canteen and trip money.
- Extra spending money for trips is optional—camp provides snacks and drinks on short trips, and meals plus snacks on full-day trips.

### Please Do Not Send Boxes of Nosh

We kindly request that parents do not send large boxes of nosh or junk food to camp:

- It creates rodent and bug issues.
- It results in messy bunks and food waste.
- The camp provides more than enough snacks and treats throughout the day.

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## Health & Infirmary

### Medical Care

Our camp medic lives on-site for the entire summer and is available to care for your son's medical needs. The infirmary is staffed by two full-time EMTs and is fully equipped to administer:

- Over-the-counter and prescription medications
- Growth hormone injections
- Emergency first aid

Parents will be notified if symptoms persist or if further care is needed, and will be consulted before any decisions are made regarding additional treatment.

### Medication Policy

All medications must be:

- Clearly labeled with the camper's full name, medication name, doctor's name, and dosage

- Brought to the infirmary at the beginning of camp
- In their original prescription bottles

Medications are referred to as “vitamins” to normalize the experience, and are securely stored and dispensed only by the camp medic. Every dose is logged with the date and time, and records are available if needed.

If your son requires daily medication or injections, please contact our office before the start of camp to coordinate care.

## Insurance Requirement

All campers must have **medical insurance that covers treatment in Florida.**

If your family does not have such coverage, a release form must be signed taking full responsibility for medical costs. Please contact the camp office for details.

## Hospital Access

In the event of an emergency or more serious medical situation:

- There is a hospital **10 minutes from camp.**
- We will consult with you immediately and keep you updated throughout.

## Dental / Orthodontics

If your child needs dental care or braces repair:

- We will **contact you first** and share local dentist information.
- With your permission, we will transport your child for care.
- Parents are responsible for any dental or orthodontic costs.

## Sun Safety

Florida summers are **hot and humid**, and campers spend a lot of time outdoors. Please prepare your son by discussing best practices:

- Drink plenty of water
- Wear sunscreen daily
- Wear a hat and find shade when possible

We regularly remind campers about hydration and sun safety throughout the day.

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## Camper Support

### Rabbi Lev & Dassi Cotler – Parent Liaisons

**Role:** Support your child throughout camp and serve as a contact for behavioral/emotional concerns.

- Homesickness is normal. They will speak with your child first and schedule a phone call home if needed.
- Set up a **WhatsApp** group including both Rabbi and Mrs. Cotler for quick communication.
- Please be respectful of their time—they're here to help, but serve many families.

### Camper Growth

- Camp is a place for personal growth and meaningful relationships.
  - We foster strong bonds between **camper and counselor**, and **camper and learning teacher**.
  - Many campers return home more independent, spiritually inspired, and socially mature.
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## Safety & Staff

### Staff Training

- All staff undergo intensive orientation including:
  - Child safety
  - Sensitivity
  - Abuse prevention (physical, verbal, emotional, and sexual)
- **Staff may never be alone with a camper.**
- Clear protocols ensure a **safe, secure environment** for all campers.

### Counselors

- Finalized assignments will be posted after staff orientation.
- Counselors are **very busy**, but you may request a callback through Rabbi or Mrs. Cotler.

### Security

- Campus is protected by **full-time armed security**.  
New **electronic gate system** at the entrance ensures controlled access.
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## Preparing for Camp & Emotional Readiness

Camp is a learning experience for all campers, whether it's their first time at overnight camp or they've been before. This growth includes both **spiritual and personal development**. Preparing your child in the weeks and months before camp can make a big difference in their success and comfort.

### Tips to Prepare Your Child for Camp

- **Overnights:** If your child has never slept away from home, plan sleepovers or short visits to relatives ahead of time.
  - **Personal Hygiene:** Teach and review independent routines—showering, brushing teeth and hair, keeping belongings organized.
  - **Packing Together:** Help pack and talk through how to unpack and organize once at camp.
  - **Camp Routine:** Review a **sample daily schedule** with your child so they can visualize what to expect.
  - **Problem Solving:** Remind your child that their **counselors and staff are there for them** and that asking for help is encouraged.
  - **Homesickness Preparation:** Discuss that it's common to miss home. These feelings are normal, often temporary, and can come and go.
    - Let them know there is a **designated staff member ("Camp Friend")** available for kids who want to talk.
  - **Encouragement:** Show confidence in your child's ability to thrive at camp.
    - Say things like:  
*"I'm proud of your effort,"*  
*"It's okay to miss home sometimes—you're doing great!"*
  - **Keep Goodbyes Short & Supportive:** A calm, confident goodbye at drop-off helps your child transition better.
  - **Set Communication Expectations:** Let your child know calls happen once per week, and emails can be sent anytime.
  - **Bring a Comfort Item:** A favorite pillow, stuffed animal, or family photo can help them feel grounded.
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### Homesickness Tips for Parents

Homesickness can happen even when a camper is having fun. Below are **tried and true tips** for helping your child manage:

- **Write Daily Emails or Letters:** Keep messages **positive and encouraging**—avoid suggesting they are missing out on something at home.
- **Validate, Don't Dwell:** Acknowledge their feelings, but focus on their strength:  
*"I know it's hard sometimes, but you're doing great."*
- **Phone Calls Can Trigger Emotion:** Even content campers may become tearful during a call. Help redirect to positive camp experiences by asking about:
  - Activities, counselors, friends, learning, food, trips.

- **Avoid Promises You Can't Keep:** Do not promise phone calls or pick-up unless discussed with camp leadership.
  - Unmet expectations can make homesickness worse.

## Sample Daily Schedule

Another helpful tip to help children adjust to the camp setting is to review what a typical day at camp looks like so your child knows what to expect.

*CGI Florida Boys – Grades 3-6*

Time	Activity
7:40 am	MBP / Cocoa Club
7:45 am	Reveille
8:15 am	Lineup
8:30 am	Shacharis
9:30 am	Breakfast
10:10 am	Bunkhouse Cleanup
10:45 am	1st Learning Class
11:20 – 11:35 am	Break (Younger Division)
11:40 – 11:55 am	Break (Older Division)
12:20 pm	Activity (Younger Division)
12:50 pm	Learning Never Ends
1:00 pm	Lunch
1:35 pm	Mincha
2:00 pm	Rest Period / Chitas Club
2:30 pm	1st Activity
3:30 pm	Break
3:35 pm	2nd Activity
4:30 pm	Break
4:35 pm	3rd Activity
5:30 pm	Wash Up for Snacks
5:45 pm	Afternoon Learning Class
6:30 pm	Lineup
6:45 pm	Supper
7:10 pm	Night Activity
7:55 pm	Ma'ariv
9:00 pm	Lights Out

## 7th Grade – Temimim Program

The *Temimim Program* is a dedicated division within Gan Yisroel Florida, designed specifically for our 7th grade campers. Rooted in Chabad values and the Rebbe's vision for *Chinuch* and *hiskashrus*, this program provides a meaningful and structured experience that blends *ruchniyus* (spiritual growth) with *gashmiyus* (physical activity).

Temimim follow a separate daily schedule which includes:

- Their own *minyan*
- Focused morning learning sessions
- Exciting trips
- Full afternoon sports and recreational activities

This program is designed to help each camper develop personal responsibility, strengthen their *hiskashrus*, and grow in their identity as young *Chassidim*.

Dress Code:

- For davening: button-down shirt, long pants, and closed shoes are required.
- Campers may change into comfortable clothing for sports and other activities following davening.
- Boys are expected to wear white shirts.

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## Contact Info

- General Inquiries: [direct@cgiflorida.com](mailto:direct@cgiflorida.com)
  - Billing Questions: [billing@cgiflorida.com](mailto:billing@cgiflorida.com)
  - Parent Portal: Check balance, submit forms, and make bunkmate requests
  - Emergency or Urgent Need: Use your WhatsApp group with Rabbi & Mrs. Cotler
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# Camp Grounds

