

# Welcome to Hidden Sparks Without Walls.

## We will be starting at 8:30pm.

To alleviate background noise and ensure a quiet session, your audio connection has been muted.

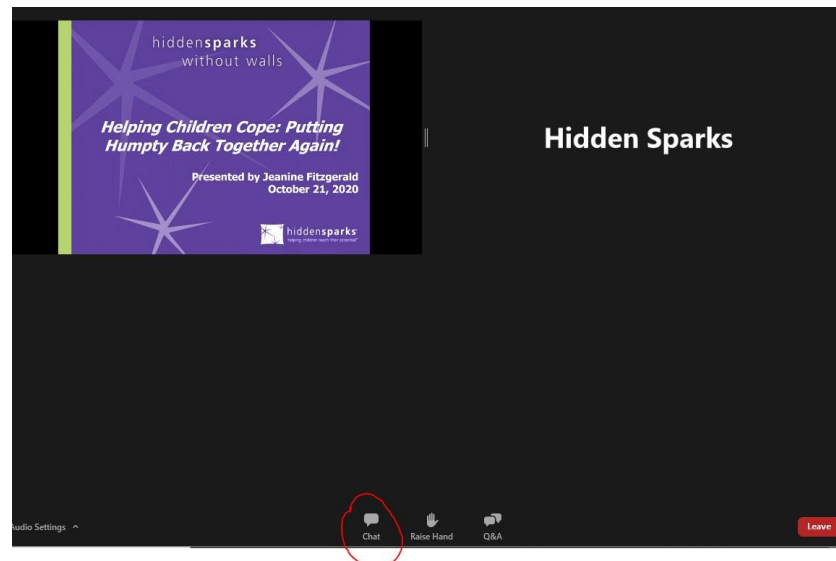
### Chat: Asking Questions & Sharing Thoughts

You are encouraged to ask questions and share your thoughts on the chat.

Please activate the chat feature on the bottom of the screen. You may choose to chat to panelists and all attendees or just panelists.

### Audio:

If you would like to call in via phone for audio, please look up the call in number, webinar id, and passcode information on your webinar invite.



# ABOUT HIDDEN SPARKS

*Hidden Sparks is a non-profit that helps educators and schools nurture the Hidden Spark within each student. We do this by developing and facilitating professional development programs for Jewish day schools to help increase understanding and support for **diverse learners**.*

*Hidden Sparks provides an award winning **professional development** program in understanding learning and behavior, conducting classroom **observations**, **coaching teachers** and developing **peer coaches**. By helping teachers meet the needs of struggling students, **ultimately all students benefit**.*

- ***125 Jewish day schools** across the country with **hundreds of teachers** participate in PD programs annually.*
  - *Impacting over **7,000 students** every year.*
- *Over **400 school peer coaches** have received training and mentoring.*
- *Hidden Sparks Without Walls international webinar program has reached thousands of teachers and parents.*

**Please be in touch to find out how to bring Hidden Sparks programs to your school!**

hiddensparks  
without walls

# *Helping Your Child Make and Keep Friends*

**Presented by *Dr. Rona Novick***  
***September 16, 2025***



**hiddensparks®**  
helping children reach their potential™

# Our Guest: Dr. Rona Novick



Rona Milch Novick, Ph.D, Co-Educational Director of Hidden Sparks, is the Dean Emerita of the Azrieli Graduate School of Jewish Education and Administration at Yeshiva University and held the Raine and Stanley Silverstein Chair in Professional Ethics and Values. She is a trained cognitive behavior therapist with her own private practice and the author of *Mommy, Can You Stop the Rain?* a picture book about the role adults can play in helping children face challenges and become resilient and *Daddy, Can You Make Me Tall?* As one of two educational directors for Hidden Sparks, Dr. Novick provides training, supervision and ongoing mentoring to the Hidden Sparks teams of coaches, principals and Internal Coaches. Dr. Novick has been featured in an ELItalk

# Overview of the Session

- **The importance and benefits of friendships**
- **Developmental and temperamental considerations**
- **Parents' roles and opportunities**
  - *Value*
  - *Live*
  - *Teach*

# Session Goals

- **Improve our understanding of friendships**
- **Become more sensitive to our children's temperament and friendship/social needs**
- **Consider best ways to support our children's social growth**
- **Learn practical tools and strategies**

# Friendships Matter

*Benefit  
children's  
development*

*Provide  
insulation for  
life's challenges*





# Friendliness Matters Too

*Not everyone is a friend, but we can be friendly to all*

*Contributes to a caring, welcoming social environment that benefits all community*





# Friendship Facts

- Children need one or two good friendships
- Nature of friendship changes dramatically over childhood years
- Making and keeping friends depends on some amount of luck and large amount of social skills
- Families can create some amount of luck, and contribute in large amount to social skill development

# Friendship Across the Ages

## Preschool

- *Transitory and based on present and geography.*

## Elementary

- *Mutual interests, some permanence. Often develop best friend.*

## Early Teen

- *Peer group becomes important – need to fit in and belong. Friendships can survive distance, become enduring, but can also be volatile.*

## Teen

- *Peers remain important, but may be more able to distinguish self from group. Concepts of what a friend is become important for healthy friendships.*

# Friendship and Temperament

- How much social engagement does your child need or want?
- What type of social interaction is most comfortable?
- Consider shyness, tolerance for novelty, emotional intensity



# What do you Value, Live and Teach?

*Do you children know you value friendships and friendliness?*

- *How have you communicated this value?*

*Do your children see you engaging with friends and being friendly?*

- *You are a role model 24/7*

*Do you directly teach the skills of being a friend?*

- *This can be done both directly and indirectly and requires ongoing review.*

# Valuing Friendships and Friendliness

1

*Talk about it. - a lot! In your life and your child's.*

2

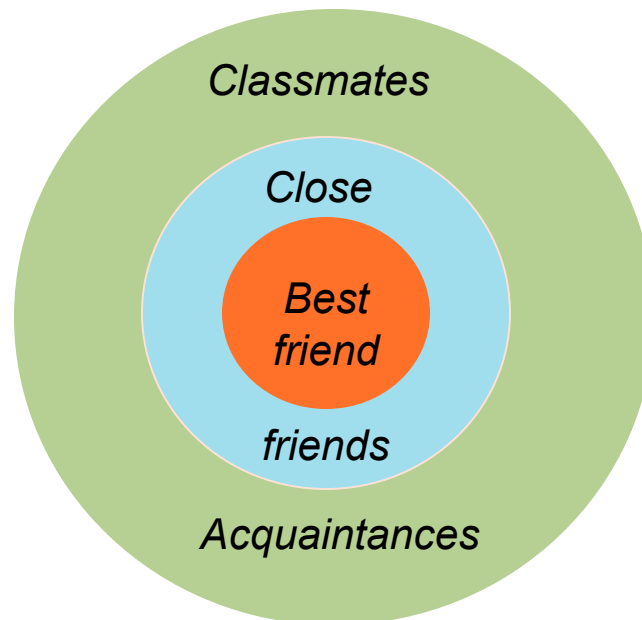
*Plan for it in advance— discuss the etiquette of invitations, etc.*

3

*Celebrate all actions and movement in the right direction*

# Valuing Friendships- Defining Friendships

- **Help children/teens understand what friendship is**
  - *Not ownership, not control, not exclusive*
- **Help children/teens develop empathy**
  - *What would you want to happen, how would you feel?*
- **Help children understand concentric circles of friendship**



# Living Friendships: Creating the “Luck”

- Put child in right place at right time
- Use your social life to provide social opportunities for child – Model friendships and friendliness
- Structure social opportunities to have greatest chance for success





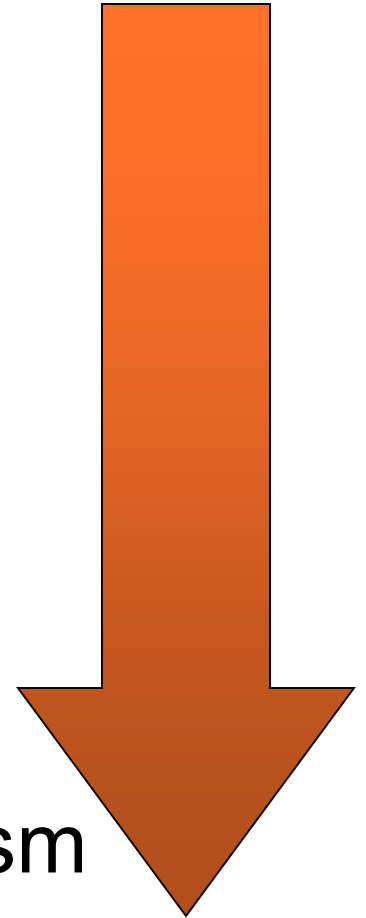
# Teaching Friendships: Social Skills

- Range from basic (making eye contact) to complex (competing, cooperating) skills
- All are teachable and learn-able
- Temperamental and cultural factors
- Requires practice
- Does not automatically generalize



# Social Skill Progression

- Eye contact
- Ear contact
- Conversation skills
- Cooperative skills
- Competition
- Accepting complements and criticism
- Conflict resolution



# Teaching Social Skills

- Define in 3-5 easy “rules”
- Provide examples and non-examples
- Provide practice with feedback
- Consider using videos, books and other indirect sources
- Never during crisis



# Creating Useful “Rules” for Social Skills

- Consider what types of actions and words usually cause difficulty in these situations
- Consider what types of actions and words are sought after/appreciated by peers in these situations

## *Example: Playing Games*

### ***Causes difficulty***

*Bossing, cheating, tantrums after loss, teasing losers*

### ***Appreciated***

*Fair play, turn taking, gracious winning/losing*

# Good Game Playing Example

## Rules:

- Know or clarify and follow the rules
- Wait your turn
- Be a good winner
- Be a good loser

## Activities:

- Tic Tac Toe
- Uno
- One on One basketball
- Any other quick game with turn taking and many opportunities for winning/losing

# Challenges in Raising a “Friendly” Child

- Not all are equally easy to be around
- Balancing friendship and friendliness
- Temperamental factors
- Other families’ attitudes and actions
- Larger culture issues
- Limited time
- Technology



# Our Community Challenge

- It takes a village
- We're a very small, insulated village
- Friendly vs. friend to all
- Concern even when it does not involve your child





## For Further Information

- Watch an ELI Talk at <http://elitalks.org/social-intelligence-foundation-jewish-living>
- Visit my blog – Life's Tool Box at [www.lifestoolbox.wordpress.com](http://www.lifestoolbox.wordpress.com)
- Free webinars on [www.hidden-sparks.org](http://www.hidden-sparks.org)

# Upcoming Hidden Sparks Without Walls Sessions

<b>Tuesday, October 21, 2025</b> <b>For Parents and Teachers</b>	<b>Perseverance: Helping our children get comfortable being uncomfortable</b>  <b>Presented by Yonina Lerner</b>
<b>Wednesday, November 19, 2025</b> <b>For Teachers</b>	<b>Cultivating Resilience—Tools for Regulation and Renewal for Educators</b>  <b>Presented by Inez Tiger</b>

**If you are interested in bringing Hidden Sparks to your school or city contact us:**

**[212-767-7707](tel:212-767-7707) or**  
**[rabbihus@hiddensparks.org](mailto:rabbihus@hiddensparks.org)**

# Contacting Hidden Sparks

## Contact Presenter:

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## Contact Hidden Sparks:

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[www.facebook.com/HiddenSparks](https://www.facebook.com/HiddenSparks)



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