



Dear Ramah Families,

We can't wait to see your *chanichim* (campers) stepping off the buses in Ojai in just a few short months. This is the first in a series of emails called **Hachana L'kayitz**, which means "Preparing for Summer," to help you and your children get ready and get excited for camp. These emails will include both technical information, along with some ways to help prepare emotionally and explain why we do what we do. This is a holy partnership and we are excited to share it with you!

Nearly one year ago, Camp Ramah in California's Board of Directors approved a new five-year strategic plan as part of our preparations for our 70th anniversary celebration in 2026. As part of that process, Ramah also adopted a new mission statement.

We are so proud to see that in many ways, Ramah continues to live up to our own high expectations. The values articulated in our mission statement are mirrored in the reflections we received from parents, campers, and staff last year.

The infographic features a background image of the camp entrance gate. At the top left, the text 'Our mission says...' is written in orange. Below it, a white box contains the mission statement: "Camp Ramah in California creates lifelong relationships through joyful, welcoming, and immersive Jewish experiences rooted in Torah, Avodah, and Gemilut Hasadim. Ramah is committed to the future of the Jewish community and betterment of the world". Below the mission statement, the text 'Survey says...' is written in orange. Four circular callouts display survey results: 97% say their campers had positive relationships with counselors; 92% likelihood to recommend; 93% feel a sense of belonging at camp; and 95% say Ramah creates an atmosphere where kids feel proud to be Jewish. The infographic also includes the Camp Ramah in California logo in the bottom left and the Foundation for Jewish Camp logo in the bottom right. A small photo of two campers in green shirts is at the bottom center.

**Our mission says...**

"Camp Ramah in California creates lifelong relationships through joyful, welcoming, and immersive Jewish experiences rooted in Torah, Avodah, and Gemilut Hasadim. Ramah is committed to the future of the Jewish community and betterment of the world"

**Survey says...**

- 97%** SAY THEIR CAMPERS HAD POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH COUNSELORS
- 92%** LIKELIHOOD TO RECOMMEND
- 93%** FEEL A SENSE OF BELONGING AT CAMP
- 95%** SAY RAMAH CREATES AN ATMOSPHERE WHERE KIDS FEEL PROUD TO BE JEWISH

\*According to results from the 2023 Camper Satisfaction Insights Survey by Foundation for Jewish Camp. Percentages are based on 4/5 ratings on a scale of 1-5.

As we incorporate the feedback we received after *kayitz* (summer) 2023 and look ahead to 2024 and beyond, we celebrate these wins while simultaneously acknowledging the work that remains to be done.

While Ramah continues to confront the ongoing impacts of COVID on our enrollment and stability, our families likewise continue to experience the consequences of the pandemic on their childrens' development and behavior. And we know our campers continue to feel the loss of missed opportunities and milestones at camp.

As we now find ourselves in a new, post-October 7 world, we know that a Ramah summer is vital - now perhaps more than at any other time in the past seventy years - to offer campers and staff a safe and secure place to feel like they belong, to find their place in the Jewish community, and to develop the skills they need to grow into the next generation of Jewish leaders.

Read on for a small glimpse into our plans for the rapidly approaching *kayitz* 2024...

## **PROGRAMMING**

We will reinvest in and expand access to fan favorites, like woodworking, ceramics, jewelry, basketball, and cooking, and we are looking forward to adding options like fencing, hiking, and wellness into the camp schedule.

Rather than dividing our camp community into "older" and "younger" cohorts, we will create three cohorts, referred to as *tzad alef*, *tzad bet*, and *tzad gimmel*. This will allow our staff to plan more targeted, developmentally appropriate activities for these smaller groups.

We are piloting two new, two-week programs for 8th-10th graders: T.A.G. (Torah, Avodah, and Gemilut Chasadim), a social justice oriented specialty camp, and *Chavaya Adventure Camp*, which will include a two-week hiking and biking trip to Yosemite.

## **CULTURE**

We are establishing a *toranut* program, where campers of different ages will be responsible for helping to keep our camp community beautiful and working smoothly. Responsibilities will include helping to set the tables in the dining hall, keeping our prayer spaces clean, or helping to pack and organize snacks for another *edah*. This will help our *chanichim* (campers) gain a sense of independence and responsibility while learning what it means to be a part of a community.

## **ISRAEL**

With immense gratitude to our partners at the Foundation for Jewish Camp, the Jewish Agency for Israel, and the Jewish Federation of Los Angeles, we are privileged to welcome nearly fifty Israeli campers this summer, including twenty from communities in the Gaza envelope and twelve through our partnership with NOAM (the Masorti youth movement). We are open to welcoming additional Israeli campers.

We are thrilled to welcome twenty-five amazing *shlichim* who will be joining our Israeli staff and five Israeli families, including Rav Na'ama, our Senior Israel Educator, and Ron and Nirit Zohar, who are instrumental to our *chinuch* (education) and *hadracha* (counselor training) programs.

We hope this gives you a taste of what we have been up to this year and please see the links below for some more important information - our Passover community day, who's who at camp, our packing list, orientation dates and all your 2024 needs in one place.

Wishing you all a *Chag Sameach*,  
Ariella  
Camp Director

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# PASSOVER COMMUNITY FUN DAY



Contact [michal@ramah.org](mailto:michal@ramah.org) with any questions

Join us for our last spring open house, April 28th from 10am-3pm!



A day of swimming, ropes course, art, a tour of camp and a Passover BBQ!

\$36 for Adults, \$18 for kids under 18 Register at [ramah.org/passoverfunday](http://ramah.org/passoverfunday)

# Who's who?

## at Camp Ramah

Meet the year-round team who will be at camp this summer

**What does my child to bring?  
How many outfits should I send?**

**Check out our packing list**

**Don't forget the labels**

### 2024 CAMPER ORIENTATION

Please join us on May 16th at 7:00pm to hear from our year-round team about what's in store for Kayitz 2024.

First-time families are invited to stay on from 7:30-8:15 pm to have all your questions answered about all you need to know to prepare for your child's first summer at Ramah.

This session will be recorded and distributed afterward

If you are planning on attending, please RSVP at [www.ramah.org/orientation](http://www.ramah.org/orientation)

P.S stay tuned for virtual edah gathering dates coming soon!

For our parent handbook, packing list, FAQs, camper care videos, and more, check out [ramah.org/2024](http://ramah.org/2024)



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