



Chinmaya Mission Tristate Center Bala Vihar / Adult Study Circle Goals, Guidelines and Expectations September 2007 – June 2008*

Goals of the Chinmaya Bala Vihar Program:

1. To provide to individuals from any background, the wisdom of Vedanta and the practical means for spiritual growth and happiness, enabling them to be positive contributors to society. – mission statement of the Chinmaya Mission
2. To develop good conduct, emotional refinement, intellectual finesse and spiritual awareness among our children through fun and play, and through stories and bhajans and other unique techniques by a team of specially trained, experienced, and dedicated parent volunteers serving as Chinmaya Bala Vihar Teachers
3. “Children are not vessels to be filled, but lamps to be lit’. The goal of Balavihar is to "wake up the sleeping giant" in our children and inspire them to reach their maximum potential by following the values expounded by saints and sages.” Swami Chinmayananda

What can participating families expect?

1. Active leadership from our resident Acharyas, Swami Shantanandaji and Swami Siddhanandaji.
2. Knowledgeable and helpful volunteers to assist with questions and concerns.
3. Vibrant, on-time and efficient operations of all Bala Vihar and Adult Study Circle classes with vedantic-based instruction.
4. Dissemination of pertinent information about Bala Vihar/Adult Study Circle and other programs via email, web posting (cnjbalavihar.org), and verbal announcements in a timely and efficient manner.
5. On-site availability of essential books and related items.
6. Celebration of some traditional Hindu Festivals and other events, in accordance with the rules of the facility.
7. Bala Vihar activities may be recorded using various formats (e.g., still/video camera, etc.).
8. The CMTC will make every reasonable effort to work with parents to try and accommodate their children with special needs. However, if a mutually acceptable solution still cannot be reached, the CMTC reserves the right to decline/rescind registrations.
9. The CMTC reserves the right to decline/rescind Bala Vihar registration if these guidelines are not followed.

What is expected of the children?

1. Please raise your hand when speaking or asking questions during class or speak with your teacher volunteer after class.
2. Please bring your copy of the “My Prayers” booklet, notebook and pen to each session (younger children may require crayons, etc. for arts & crafts projects), and any other required books/items requested by the Bala Vihar teacher.
3. Please actively and attentively participate in class and during scheduled festivals/other events.
4. Please make the necessary effort to prepare for upcoming class or event. (This will be limited so that there is no conflict with regular academic commitments).
5. Please be silent during appropriate times and participate in arati and pledge.
6. Chewing Gum, Toys, Electronic Games, Playing with Cell Phones/toys/electronic games, usage of iPods or other entertainment devices are not allowed in Bala Vihar.

What can parents/adults do to help?

1. Please bring prasada for Bala Vihar and related events.
2. Please volunteer for activities, e.g., functions, events, etc.

What is required of all parents/adults?

1. Please submit a completed registration form and paid dues within 2 weeks of joining the program. All children attending Bala Vihar must be registered.
2. Please arrive on-time (i.e., 9:50 AM for a 10:00 AM class start time) and stay through the program. Dropping off and picking up of children requires written consent from the CMTC. Any/all such requests must be explained to the CMTC.
3. Except in the classroom, at all other times children attending Bala Vihar are the responsibility of their parents or the emergency contact listed on the registration form.
4. Any request to decline participation in the recording of CMTC programs either by the CMTC or an approved third party must be made in writing for consideration.
5. Parents whose children have special needs must notify the CMTC in writing for consideration prior to submitting their registration.

What is requested of the parents/adults?

1. Please take an active interest in your children’s classes and support their participation in events.
2. Please make every effort to stay for arati, pledge, and prasada.
3. Please discuss any concerns or suggested improvements to the program with a member of the volunteer team (e.g., your child’s Bala Vihar teacher volunteer, Study Circle lead, or the Bala Vihar coordinator).
4. Please check the web site (cnjbalavihar.org) for any last minute cancellations due to bad weather (e.g., when there is significant snow, ice, hail, rain), other emergencies, etc.
5. Please treat school property with care, keep it clean and help your children understand the same.