



Rena Staub Fisher, LCSW

Silver Academy student 1990 - 1994

Growing up in Harrisburg, I attended the Silver Academy (then, the Yeshiva Academy) from kindergarten through fourth grade, before moving on to middle school at the Harrisburg Academy, high school at Susquehanna Township, and college at Barnard in New York City. After Barnard, I earned a degree in social work from NYU and am now a practicing psychotherapist, focusing exclusively on the mental health challenges faced by millennials. I live in Park Slope, Brooklyn, with my husband Sam Biele-Fisher.

Reflecting on my education, it's very clear to me that the Yeshiva Academy was truly foundational. Said simply, the skills I developed while a student there stayed with me throughout all of my academic pursuits. Most importantly, I learned about what it means to be a critical thinker. From a very young age, I was encouraged by my teachers to engage deeply in my own learning. I have fond memories of Rabbi Stein and Rabbi Gewirtz training me not only to answer their questions, but more importantly, to find the ability to formulate my own. My Yeshiva teachers helped me find my own voice in the classroom-- and to trust it. This critical lesson-- that my own questions, observations, and opinions are valid, important, and worthwhile-- gave me the confidence I needed to find academic success in many classrooms later in my life.

And yet, the skills I learned at the Yeshiva weren't just academic. In my years as a student there, I discovered what it means to be part of a Jewish community. The friends I made at the Yeshiva have become lifelong companions, as we went on to celebrate bar and bat mitzvahs, high school graduations, weddings, and even baby namings together. And when my mother, Janet Frankel Staub (z'l) died in 2015, my Yeshiva friends were right there by my side. No matter what happens in my life, I feel strengthened and comforted by the knowledge that my Harrisburg community will always be there for me. I will be forever grateful to the Yeshiva for adding so much richness to my life.