

Interview: Lorraine and Alan Sandler
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(Lorraine)

And then I called by Holy Blossom, to say that one of their staff were having surgery and they were desperate and would I come in to help them. I was interviewed, and we discussed the fact that maybe it was a good idea to earn something and contribute to the family and it changed my life. Very soon after entering the school I was asked if I would take over the supervisor ship and I suddenly realized that my life was changing. I became a teacher of teachers and I became a writer of curriculum and Rabbi Plaut, who was still there when I arrived, told me to take the nursery school and to mold it into the school that I felt it should become. The reform movement was becoming more traditional and he wanted grass roots affect with the early years. I started to go to conferences, I started to meet Jewish colleagues across North America, I became part of a large *chevrah* and I began to learn and to grow. And I realized that I could affect a great deal of change in the early childhood world in actual fact in Canada, if I help the synagogues and the congregations look at the fact that Jewish early childhood it was indeed the portal to Jewish identity. And we formed an early childhood directors committee and we went into bat with the synagogues to ask them to not use the early childhood departments as cash cows but to allow them to grow and to flourish. And in actual fact the school that I took over at, took over at thirty-five children, grew into one hundred and seventy-nine children. And there was a flourishing of Jewish early childhood education throughout the city. It was actually rich, and beautiful and wonderful. It was just a very special moment in my life. I met thousands of parents and children. And it changed my life in Canada. And I will again be forever grateful and thankful for that opportunity. I found my voice — I found a strong Jewish voice. I knew I had but I was allowed to articulate it as well. And I'm just grateful to whomever allowed that passage and that journey.

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