

Jewish United Fund/Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago
TOV Volunteer Network/TOV Teen's

B'nai Mitzvah Tikkun Olam Manual:

A Guide to Making Mitzvot Part of Your Bar or Bat Mitzvah



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Mazel Tov on Your Bar/Bat Mitzvah!

You are entering a new stage in your life, and celebrating this accomplishment comes with responsibility. As your friends and family honor you, we hope that you remember the importance of *tikkun olam*, repairing the world one good deed at a time. Volunteerism comes in many different forms—whether you choose to give your time, raise money, or host a collection drive—this project can and will make a difference in your community. This manual will guide you towards finding the right fit.

Making your Mitzvah Meaningful

- 1) We've listed some ideas and suggestions to get you started. To begin your planning, call Jennifer Lande, Teen Volunteering and Planning Associate at 312-444-2867 or email her at BnaiMitzvah@juf.org.
- 2) Think about whether you want to have a hands-on volunteer project or if you want to collect items on behalf of your interest.

A Note to Parents:

Do you remember how you felt after your Bar or Bat Mitzvah? I still remember the sense of pride, accomplishment and the feeling that I was really special on this day for what I had achieved. I had studied Torah, learned new skills, and entered a new stage of being an active member of the Jewish community.

For your children, a Bar or Bat Mitzvah may be about anticipation of the future and the wonderful, but at times difficult and perplexing experience of being a teenager. I encourage you to talk to your children and ask questions such as, how can they take their Bar or Bat Mitzvah experience and build upon it as Jewish teenagers? How can they contribute to helping others? What actions can they take that expresses their Judaism beyond the temple or synagogue walls? What can they do now that is *tov*—that is good for others and at the same time helps themselves grow into lives infused with mitzvah/commandments and deeds of purpose and meaning?

Our community has many opportunities where your child, and even your whole family, can participate and create something *tov*. These actions and deeds will create a lasting impression of how they made a small, but genuine, difference for somebody in need.

Rabbi Michael Balinsky
Executive Vice President, Chicago Board of Rabbis

Socializing with People with Disabilities

Project Ideas:

- Arrange a friendly visit to a special needs facility
- Partner with a special needs child and play a sport or create crafts
- Help organize a wheel chair wash
- Read a book with a special needs person
- With your parent, provide respite care for a family

Collection Drive Ideas:

- Sports or aquatics equipment
- Art supplies
- Toys

Monetary Donations:

- Sports equipment
- Funding sports activities



Working to Eliminate Hunger and Homelessness

Project Ideas:

- Volunteer at a food pantry
- Serve meals to those in need
- Help organize a food/clothing warehouse
- Sort and pack emergency food packages
- Organize a collection drive at your school, synagogue, or neighborhood
- Deliver food boxes during Rosh Hashanah and Passover
- Sponsor a Shabbat luncheon
- Grocery shop for needy families

Collection Drive Ideas:

- Canned and non-perishable food
- New full and travel size toiletries
- Bikes and sports equipment
- Clothing
- Furniture and houseware
- Bedding and towels
- Toys/presents for holidays
- Transit cards

Monetary Donations:

- Soup kitchen meals
- Food pantries
- Food for holiday boxes



Keeping the Elderly Active

Project Ideas:

- Participate in a social event with a Holocaust survivor
- Plan and participate in an event at a senior center
- Sponsor and volunteer at a holiday party
- Volunteer at a birthday party, make cards and donate gifts
- Organize an ice cream social
- Help during religious services
- Plan friendly visits with a senior (Ex. play board games, make art projects, sing, play an instrument, etc.)
- Help at a Shabbat luncheon
- Assist with pet therapy
- Garden at a nursing home or health care facility
- Organize a wheel chair wash

Collection Drive Ideas:

- Winter clothing
- Bingo prizes
- DVDs
- Large print books

Monetary Donations:

- Counseling
- Groceries
- Medication
- Transportation
- Home-delivered kosher meals
- Sponsor social gatherings



Caring for Animals



Project Ideas:

- With a parent, work with animals at an adoption center
- Organize a group to do take-home animal care-related projects
- Raise money for animal rights organizations
- Walk a neighbors' dog

Collection Drive Ideas:

- Animal supplies (Ex. Food, toys, pill pockets)
- Cleaning supplies (Ex. Bleach, paper towels, used towels)

Monetary Donations:

- Adoption programs
- Outreach efforts
- Clinics

Helping the Sick

Project Ideas:

- Make get-well cards to send to hospital patients
- Be a pen-pal with a sick child
- Make holiday crafts
- Make fleece blankets or quilts

Collection Drive Ideas:

- Books
- Magazines
- Board games
- Crossword puzzles
- Movies

Monetary Donations:

- Medication
- Medical supplies



Supporting the Jewish Community

Project Ideas:

- Write letters to IDF soldiers
- Deliver food packages on the Jewish holidays to local families in need
- Organize a fundraiser to support local agencies
- Volunteer in your community at JUF's Israel Solidarity Day
- Serve a meal at a local Jewish organization

Collection Drive Ideas:

- Sleeping bags for camp
- Swimming supplies
- Toiletries

Monetary Donations:

- Raise money for the JUF Annual Campaign
- Scholarships for Jewish overnight camp and Israel experiences
- Sponsor an Israeli child to go to camp
- Raise money to help support programs for Jews around the world



Making a Child Smile

Project Ideas:

- Beautify a student center
- Participate in special events with children
- Become a one-on-one sports or aquatics coach
- Volunteer at a community center during family programming
- Read to young children
- Volunteer to be a babysitter in your neighborhood

Collection Drive Ideas:

- School supplies
- Gift cards
- Bedding
- Journals
- Hygiene products
- Art supplies
- Board games and toys
- Clothing
- Sports and aquatics equipment
- Electronics
- Holiday gifts
- Winter clothes
- Infant/Toddler products (Ex. Diapers, formula, toys)

Monetary Donations:

- Camp scholarships
- JCC Programs



Going Green



Project Ideas:

- Volunteer at an arboretum
- Set up a green campaign at your school
- Pick up trash around your community
- Beautify a local park
- Clean up a local beach
- Help at a local farm
- Decorate and use reusable bags

Collection Drive Ideas:

- Seeds, mulch, gardening tools
- Reusable shopping bags
- CFL light bulbs

Monetary Donations:

- Carbon offsets
- Planting trees in Israel

Just a reminder...

Connecting with teens in Israel, especially in our P2G (Partnership2Gether) region of Kiryat Gat, Lachish and Shafir, is a truly meaningful experience. Many teens want to support wonderful organizations such as Smiles Club and the Elem bus. These organizations and many others are valuable resources to the communities they serve, and many have a genuine need for supplies and equipment. *However, we do NOT recommend collecting items for donations to Israeli organization.*

Why Not?

- ⇒ It is extremely expensive to ship items to Israel (often more than the cost of the items being sent).
- ⇒ Once in Israel they are processed through customs often incurring a duty fee or tariff.
- ⇒ Customs is located near Ben Gurion airport, a long drive from our P2G region. This means the organizations must send a staff person during business hours to drive a minimum of 90 minutes round trip, and they often must pay a significant fee to pick up the items you have shipped.

So, how do you support these organizations?

Raising money to support specific programs is a great way to provide organizations with the equipment and supplies they need, while making your dollars and time go the furthest. By sending a designated monetary gift, you also support the Israeli economy because the items are purchased there!

To learn more about the organizations mentioned above, find out about our current needs and more, please email: Partnership2000@juf.org

Items that are always in demand:

School Supplies: chalk, crayons, pencils, markers, paper, notebooks

Sports Equipment: soccer balls, basketballs, goal posts and jump ropes

Uniforms and Shoes: for sports and school

Just a reminder...

Make sure all donations are of good quality — i.e. gently used clothes with no stains, non-expired food, and un-used toiletries

Think BIG! — You can also find projects such as building a playground, upgrading medical equipment, painting and maintenance and other on-going projects.



Make your Giving Last Longer

By opening a Donor Advised Fund at the Jewish Federation you can repair the world long after your mitzvah project is over.

You can give to multiple organizations that work on issues you feel passionate about, such as hunger, homelessness, animal welfare, special needs, elderly, illness, the environment, poverty, Israel advocacy, and more!

HOW DOES IT WORK?

OPEN A FUND: Open a fund at the Jewish Federation with an initial contribution of \$1,000 before your Bar or Bat Mitzvah (after is OK, too). With the help of your friends and family you can build your fund even more.

NAME YOUR FUND: Name the fund after yourself or give it a name that's meaningful to you, such as the Repair the World Fund.

TELL ALL YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY: Put an insert into your B'nai Mitzvah invitation telling your friends and family about your fund. Ask them to contribute to your fund for your Bnai Mitzvah project so you can donate money to the causes you are most passionate about. Contributions to your fund are tax-deductible!

BRAINSTORM CAUSES: Before you start to use your fund make a list of charities you'd like to give to. Work with your parents, grandparents and friends or call your own personal contact at the Federation to help you do research on areas that interest you!

REPAIR THE WORLD: Your funds can be distributed all at once or a little at a time. You can recommend grants of \$100 or more from your fund to multiple organizations, Jewish or secular, and the Federation staff will do the rest, including sending out the checks every month.

To find out more about the Donor Advised Fund program, contact legacies@juf.org or call (312) 357-4853.





Finding Your Mitzvah Match Project Inquiry Fax Form



Call: (312) 444-2867 · Email: BnaiMitzvah@juf.org · Fax: (312) 444-2086

Today's Date: _____

General Information:

Teen's Name: _____ Address: _____

Parent's Name: _____ Phone number: _____

Bar/Bat Mitzvah date: _____ Email address: _____

What Interests You?

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Homelessness | <input type="checkbox"/> Sick children |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The environment | <input type="checkbox"/> People with disabilities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The Jewish community abroad | <input type="checkbox"/> Hunger |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The local Jewish community | <input type="checkbox"/> Animals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Israel | <input type="checkbox"/> The elderly |

Project Information:

Interested in volunteering?

- How often? How many people will participate?
- How many hours during the week can you spend on this project?
- At home, going to an agency or interacting with clients?
- Specific neighborhoods

Interested in a donation drive?

- What items?
- How will you let people know?
- Population (s)/areas of interest (Israel or local)?

Interested in raising funds?

- For what cause?
- How do you plan on raising funds? At school? Synagogue? Family?
- Population (s)/areas of interest (Israel or local)?
- Goal?

Party Information:

- Will the project be included in the invitation?
- Will you be incorporating centerpieces?
- Will the project be part of the celebration, with family/friends or only done by the teen?

The Fun Doesn't Stop Here!

Getting involved after your B'nai Mitzvah

TOV Volunteer Network

The Tikkun Olam Volunteer (TOV) Network is JUF's connection point for people who want to donate their time to help others in need. In accordance with *tikkun olam*, the Jewish concept of repairing the world one good deed at a time, TOV places members of the Jewish community with Jewish United Fund/Jewish Federation affiliated agencies and with community service projects that need volunteers.

Whether you are interested in volunteering once a week or once a year, in the city or in the suburbs, with the elderly or with children, by tutoring or by serving food to the homeless, TOV's volunteer advisors will work hard to find the best match to meet your needs and interests.

Learn More: <http://www.juf.org/tov>

TOV MTV:

Monthly Hands-On Volunteering

Every month, TOV MTV gives Jewish teens a chance to make the world a little better. Whether you want to help the environment, brighten a senior's day, fight hunger and poverty, or lend a hand to people with disabilities, there's an opportunity waiting for you. Spend a couple of hours a month making a difference in the lives of others and in their community. You can do it once, twice, or every month.

MTV is for Chicago-area Jewish teens, grades 6-12.

Learn More: <http://www.juf.org/teens/mtv.aspx>



Camp TOV

Camp TOV is about making a difference while having fun. It's a week-long, interactive service-oriented day program on wheels sponsored by the Jewish United Fund/ Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago. Each day, campers head off on a new adventure, immersing themselves in volunteer projects that focus on poverty, hunger, environmental concerns, caring for the elderly, and more. In the process, they discover new issues, develop leadership skills, learn first-hand about giving back, and make new friends.

Camp Tov is for Chicago-area Jewish teens, grades 7-10.

There are two, one-week sessions in August to choose from.

Learn More: http://www.juf.org/teens/camp_tov.aspx

