

Making



Your

Holidays

Holy



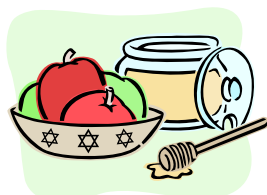
Ideas and Resources for
Social Action Activities for
Holidays (That Are Good for
Every Day of the Year!)

*1948. A huge banquet is held in Chicago.
A fund raiser for Israeli bonds.
Among the many hundreds of people who were
there, was Rabbi Mendel Kaplan.
A great Torah scholar who came to Chicago
after the war.
He devoted his life to teaching Torah.
From books. And by example.
... The next day he taught his students a very
important lesson.
He spoke about the impression the banquet had
on him.
... And it really was quite an impressive event.
People all over town were talking about things
like the size of the crowd.
And of course, how much money was raised.
... Rabbi Kaplan's perspective?
"It was so inspiring.
Watching Jews stand on line in order to give
Tzedakah".*

This is a workbook full of holiday ideas from the website areyvut.org — home of the "A Kindness a Day" calendar. It is meant as a jumping-off point for you and your grandchildren as you seek ways you can help make the world a better place — to do your part for *Tikkun Olam*.

Ideas for Rosh Hashanah

- Organize a *Rosh Hashanah* dinner through the Synagogue for people who may not have family or friends to share the holiday with.
- Make a New Year's resolution relating to improving yourself.
- As a family determine an organization that you would like to support and have everyone in the family make a contribution.
- As the prayers discuss life and death, sign up for a CPR course in your area so that you will have the ability to save someone's life.
- Visit www.friendlyvisiting.org to find an organization in your area that promotes friendly visiting programs for the elderly that may have a program specific for the holiday. If you can't find an organization, start one!
- Go apple picking and donate the apples with honey to nursing homes.
- Make New Year cards for terror victims, the elderly, or hospitals.
- Make *tzedakah* boxes and give *tzedakah* daily in the days between *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur*- as it says "Repentance, Prayer, and Charity removes the evil decree (*Midrash Raba Bereshit* 41:15)."



My Notes

Notes from My Grandchild

Ideas for **Yom Kippur**

- Arrange a clothing drive in your community.
- Encourage the entire community to stay in the sanctuary- if you do not already do so- for the communal *Yizkor* for those who died in the Holocaust and in defending the State of Israel.
- Arrange and sponsor a meal before the fast or a light break-fast afterwards.
- Choose one person and do something nice for them everyday for the next week.
- Call your grandparents or an elderly friend or relative.
- Get in touch with your out-of-town friends or reacquaint yourself with old friends.
- Prepare a *Tefillah* booklet for those who may not know as much as you do.
- Teach people how to read Hebrew so that they will be able to follow along with the prayer service.
- Contribute the money you would have spent on food for that day to a food pantry or donate that money to Mazon, a national, nonprofit agency that allocates donations from the Jewish community to nonprofit organizations providing food, help and hope to hungry people of all faiths and backgrounds. You can reach Mazon at 310-442-0020 or on the web at www.mazon.org.
- Set up a barrel where everyone in your congregation can donate a can of food before the start of *Yom Kippur* that will later be donated to a food pantry.

My Notes

Notes from My Grandchild

Ideas for Sukkot

- Have your school or synagogue partner with Habitat for Humanity and build a house for someone less fortunate. Visit their website www.habitat.org for more information about building homes as well as the other projects they offer.
- Promote homelessness awareness in your community. Find out what local agencies deal with homelessness and how you can help them.
- Offer to share your *lulav* and *etrog* to someone who does not have one.
- Arrange an event to decorate your synagogue's *sukkah*.
- Have a decoration drive for people who cannot afford to beautify their *sukkah*.
- Arrange a community wide event (you can call it "Pizza in the Hut") for *chol haMoed* (the intermediate days of the holiday).
- On *Simchat Torah* after all the area synagogues complete their individual *hakafot* hold a communal *hakafa* to celebrate *achdut* (Jewish unity).
- Use this as an opportunity to study environmental issues and encourage recycling.
- Plant a garden at a shelter, nursing home, hospital or synagogue.
- In the spirit of the *Ushpizin*, the tradition of inviting one of the seven biblical leaders (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Joseph and David) to our *sukkah* each night of *Sukkot*, invite people to your *sukkah* who are alone or need a place to eat.
- Ask around if anyone needs help building their *sukkah*.
- Contact the chaplain of the local hospital to get the list of Jewish patients, and go around to them during *sukkot* with a smile and *lulav* and *etrog*. Ask if they would be interested in reciting the blessing on the *lulav* and *etrog* and shaking the four species.
- Collect canned goods for a shelter.
- Prepare a meal for someone who is sick or elderly.

My Notes

Notes from My Grandchild

Ideas for Chanukah

- Send Chanukah care packages to Israeli soldiers! Cheer them up as they are away from family for the holidays. Care packages include items such as a *menorah*, candles, *dreidel*, as well as a Chanukah card. Care Packages are \$8 per soldier. Have your class or school or synagogue sponsor a whole troop. For more information contact: KeverRachel@aol.com.
- The idea of *Chanukah* is to shed light on the world. Therefore, think of ways that you can add light to the world.
- Learn and teach about Jewish communities around the world that don't necessarily have religious freedom. Consider adopting one such community.
- Adopt a pet from an animal shelter.
- Arrange a benefit concert to increase the joy of *Chanukah* and donate the proceeds to *tzedakah*.
- Arrange a bake sale.
- Promote education on fire safety before the holiday begins. Visit www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson026.shtml or similar websites for more information.
- Make *menorahs* as an art project and distribute them to people who may not have one of their own.
- Fulfill our goal of being a light onto the nations and meet with people from other religions to spread Jewish knowledge.
- Arrange a clothing drive.
- Identify "regular" people who do great things but go unnoticed and acknowledge and honor them as "*Mitzvah* heroes."
- Send jelly doughnuts to Israeli soldiers through <http://pizzaidf.org>.
- Light a candle each night in honor of one of the Israeli MIAs (Israeli soldiers who were taken captive by acts of terrorism) using "One More Candle/ Od Ner Echad" which can be found at www.youngjudaea.org/html/hanukkah2001.html. Visit www.mia.org.il

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(Ideas for Chanukah continued.)

the website for the International Coalition for Missing Israeli Soldiers (ICMIS) to get more information on the topic.

- Give *tzedakah* each night before lighting candles.
- Run a toy drive in your local school or synagogue to collect *Chanukah* gifts for organizations like OHEL, a nonprofit agency that sustains an extensive foster care program, a domestic abuse shelter and counseling program which addresses the long term care needs of people with disabilities. For more information on the organization, e-mail info@ohelfamily.org or visit www.ohelfamily.org. You may also want to donate the toys to children's hospitals or to terror victims.
- If you are in the New York area, join Dorot the Sunday before *Chanukah* to make packages for the holiday and deliver them to the elderly. Contact Dorot at 212-769-2850 and ask for Lisa Horowitz. Pre-registration is required. Visit their website at www.dorotusa.org or email volunteers@dorotusa.org for more information. If you live outside the New York area, visit www.friendlyvisiting.org to find an organization in your area that promotes friendly visiting programs for the elderly that may have a program specific for the holiday.
- Instead of giving gifts to your family and friends one night of *Chanukah*, give presents to a family in need.



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Ideas for Tu B'Shvat

- Inform people about the holiday as it's not a very well known day outside of Israel. For some ideas, you can visit www.aish.com/tubshvat/tubshvatdefault/default.asp.
- Host a *Tu B'Shvat Seder*. Visit these websites and others for ideas: www.shemayisrael.co.il/tubishvat/index1.htm [Aish_Kabbalistic_Tu_Bshvat_Seder.asp](http://www.aish.com/tubshvat/tubshvatdefault/default.asp).
- Invite someone to give a lecture about the environment.
- Arrange a hike or retreat to promote mankind's relation to nature.
- Plant a tree in Israel in someone's honor or memory by calling 1-800-542-TREE (8733) or visit www.jnf.org.
- Send packages of dried fruit to Israeli soldiers through <http://pizzaidf.org>.
- 24 Things You Can Do To Help the Environment: (adapted from USY)
 1. Recycle!
 2. Use reusable containers
 3. Cut the rings from six-pack containers so small animals will not get caught in them.
 4. Avoid using Styrofoam and polystyrene products.
 5. Make sure your washer, dryer, and dishwasher are full before each use or wash/dry items by hand.
 6. Fill the basin with water when washing dishes to save water.
 7. Don't leave the faucet running while brushing your teeth.
 8. Use rechargeable batteries.
 9. Bring along a reusable cloth bag when shopping.
 10. Clean up the beach.
 11. Take a shower instead of a bath.

My Notes

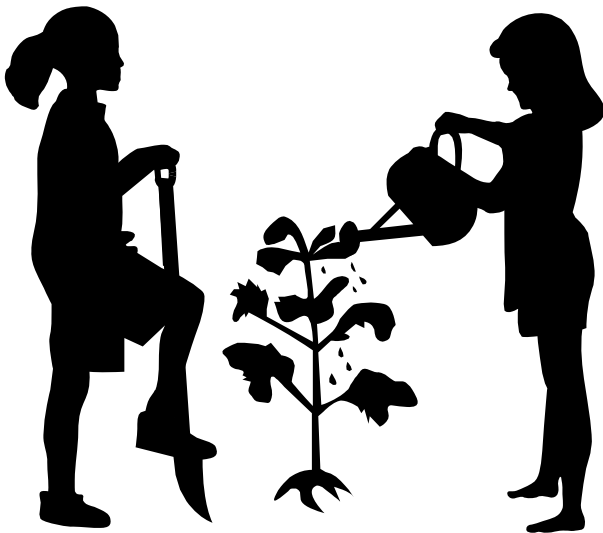
Notes from My Grandchild

(Ideas for Tu B'Shvat continued.)

12. Don't buy products made from endangered plants or animals.
13. Car pool to programs and events.
14. Start a compost pile to use as fertilizer for your grass and garden.
15. Write to political officials about important environmental issues and make sure you support them when they run for office.
16. Buy products with the least amount of packaging.
17. Use newspaper for wrapping gifts.
18. Have a garage sale.
19. Use both sides of the paper whenever possible.
20. Use energy-saving light bulbs.
21. Use sunlight when possible instead of electric light.
22. Clean up the local park.
23. Plant trees.
24. Spread the word about the need to protect our environment.

My Notes

Notes from My Grandchild



Ideas for Purim

- Encourage people to give more *matanot l'evyonim* (gifts to the poor) than *mishloach manot*.
- Prepare a community wide *Purim seuda*.
- Read the *megilah* for people who are unable to leave their houses.
- Do *Purim* skits at nursing homes and hospitals.
- Host a *Purim* party where the cover charge goes to *tzedakah*.
- Have a *Purim* carnival for children with special needs.
- Arrange education in relation to Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD). Visit www.madd.org for more information.
- Bring *mishloach manot* to people in hospitals and nursing homes.
- Visit www.friendlyvisiting.org to find an organization in your area that promotes friendly visiting programs for the elderly that may have a program specific for the holiday.
- Dress up in *Purim* costumes and visit the patients at your local hospital or the residents at a nursing home.
- Donate your extra food from *mishloach manot* to a local food pantry.
- Run a *Purim* carnival and donate the proceeds to an orphanage in honor of Queen Esther who was an orphan. Visit www.gioh.org, the website for the General Israel Orphans Home or www.cvoj.org, the website for Children's Village of Jerusalem for examples of orphanages where the money can be donated.
- Learn to be a clown and go to a nursery school to put on a show!



My Notes

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Ideas for Pesach

- Clean the houses of homebound people.
- Arrange a car wash in your synagogue's parking lot and donate the money to *tzedakah*.
- Educate people about Pesach in the weeks prior to the holiday by hosting a model *seder*.
- Develop a *Hagaddah* that involves *chesed* and *tikkun olam*.
- Discuss the Holocaust (*Shoah*) and modern day issues of slavery.
- Research your family history and learn about a story that involves religious freedom.
- If you're using *Pesach* cleaning to do some spring cleaning as well, donate items that you no longer need (i.e. clothes, fans, glasses, cellphones) to local charity. For contact information on a charity organization accepting such items visit: www.onlineorganizing.com/Home.asp.
- Instead of giving money or a present to those who find the *afikoman*, let them choose a charity to which they will donate the money or gift, or have them keep half and donate the rest to charity.
- Prior to the start of *Pesach*, donate the *chametz* you're removing from your house to a local food pantry.
- Adopt a family who has recently immigrated or has just moved to your area for the *Seder*.
- After reciting the *Ma Nishtana*, recite "Four More Questions" about the Israeli MIAs that can be found on www.azm.org/seder.shtml. To show your solidarity towards Israel, leave an empty seat at your *seder* table for the Israel MIA's, victims of terror and for all Jews suffering throughout the world.

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Ideas for Yom Ha'atzmaut

- Adopt an Israeli soldier and correspond with letters, packages and stories.
- Adopt a family stricken with terror. Visit <http://www.onefamilyfund.org> for more information.
- Arrange a community-wide ceremony (*tekes*) to commemorate the fallen soldiers. Make sure to involve children with a flag march, choir or skit presentation.
- Have a walk-a-thon to raise funds for Israel.
- Have a community-wide barbeque on *Yom Ha'atzmaut* in the park.
- Bring in an Israeli vendor fair and promote buying Israeli-made goods.
- Assemble a mission to Washington for your community to lobby your Senators and Congressmen about supporting Israel.
- Bridge the gap between Jews of different sects. We're all part of *Am Yisrael* (the Jewish People) with strong ties to the State of Israel.
- Express your appreciation or send letters of encouragement to Israeli soldiers by writing your message, your name, and address and sending it by:
 - ◊ fax to 972-2-621-6133 or 972-2-621-6214
 - ◊ express mail to: Letter for an Israeli Soldier
The Jewish Agency for Israel
POB 92 Jerusalem 91000, Israel
 - ◊ forwarding them to: Letter for an Israeli Soldier
The Jewish Agency for Israel
633 Third Avenue 21st floor
New York, NY 10017
 - ◊ e-mail as attachments to LettertoSoldier@jazo.org.il.
- Send care packages/pizza to Israeli soldiers through <http://pizzaidf.org/>.
- Volunteer for Israeli organizations in Israel. For volunteer opportunities please visit www.areyvut.org/Resource/volunsum.asp
- Email the president at president@whitehouse.gov to voice your support for Israel and express your appreciation for his support of Israel. For a

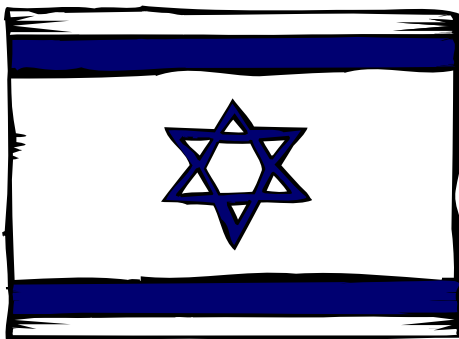
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(Ideas for Yom Ha' 'atzmaut continued.)

list of how to contact other public officials
visit www.aipac.org/Action1.cfm or
www.bjeny.org.

- Ensure that Israel gets fair newspaper coverage by subscribing to <http://honestreporting.com> or www.camera.org.
- Work for the release of missing Israeli soldiers by visiting www.mia.org.il/ and see what you can do to help.
- Donate money to victims of terror.
- Send messages to Israeli hospital patients through www.soaringwords.org/.
- Donate blood when you're in Israel.
- Buy stock in Israeli companies. Contact Amidex Mutual Funds: www.amidex.com/ or call (888) 876-3566, www.globes.co.il/, www.themarket.com/, or www.tase.co.il/.
- Show solidarity with Israel by wearing a blue ribbon, pin or displaying an Israeli flag.
- Connect your school or synagogue with families of recent terror victims by visiting www.walk4israel.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=Living.
- Go to Israel on a mission by contacting the UJC Missions Information Center at (212) 284-6519 or missions@ujc.org or by visiting www.goisrael.com/. If you are between the ages of 18-25 and have never been to Israel on a peer-group tour, visit www.birthrightisrael.org to register for a free trip to Israel.
- Support the Israeli economy by visiting www.shopinisrael.com/, www.USAIIsrael.org, www.export.org.il/, www.actionIsrael.org, www.artofisrael.com, www.iguide.co.il, www.israeldirect.co.il, www.israelexport.org.



My Notes

Notes from My Grandchild

Ideas for **Shavuot**

- Set up study partners (*chavrutot*) with people who may not be as knowledgeable as you.
- Focus learning on something relevant and practical to your every day life (such as Jewish ethics and values).
- Buy fresh flowers for hospitals and nursing homes.
- Have a campaign that encourages honoring parents (*kibbud av v'em*).
- Buy flowers from www.mnmrose.com/price.html to support an Israeli flower business.
- Send religious articles or books to Jews in the U.S. military. For more information, contact Rabbi Menachem Katz at admin@aleph-institute.org.
- Donate your leftover flowers from *Shavuot* to shelters, hospitals, or nursing homes.
- Organize Torah study in smaller communities for Jews who don't have such programs.



My Notes

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Our Own Social Action Holidays

(Because Every Day Can Be Social Action Holiday for Someone!)

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