
B MORE INCLUSIVE



LOUISE D. AND MORTON J. MACKS
CENTER FOR JEWISH EDUCATION
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Jewish disAbility Awareness Guide for Middle and High School

Beyond the Mitzvah: Weaving Disability Awareness throughout the Year

In middle and high school, students are ripe for stimulating activities that breed thoughtful discussion. With intentional disability Awareness experiences we can promote empowering, inclusive attitudes that directly affect behavior in today's children and tomorrow's leaders. The activities in this guide can be incorporated into a variety of subjects including *parshah*, *mishnah*, science, literature, music and more! Use them to teach awareness of our diversity and recognition of what each person contributes to the class, to society and to the world.

Note: It is important to convey an attitude of respect and appreciation of people with differences, not pity or shame. For this reason we do not encourage most simulation activities, i.e. activities that act out what it's like to have a particular disability that many of the old disability awareness curricula promoted. Rather, focus on the things that they CAN do well, just like you would like people to do for you.

"להגיד גדלתו שלהקדוש ברוך הוא, שאדם טובע כמה מטבעות בחותם אחד וכלן דומין זה לזה, ומלך מלכי המלכים הקדוש ברוך הוא טבע כל אדם בחותמו של אדם הראשון, ואין אחד מהן דומה לחברו"

"A man strikes many coins from the same dye, and all the coins are alike. But the King, the King of Kings, The Holy One [blessed be He] strikes every man from the dye of the First Man, and yet no man is quite like his friend."

Sanhedrin 4:5

Activities that Promote Disability Awareness

A. RELAY RACE

1. Divide students into teams. Have them stand in single file lines facing the obstacle course. Each group will have to run through the relay race one by one. The goal is to get all team members to complete the obstacle course in the shortest amount of time.
2. Before they begin, each team member will be given an index card. They may not show or tell anyone what is written on their index cards. Most cards will be blank, but each team will have five cards with special instructions. They must follow the instructions written on the card. Make sure that the first person gets a blank card so the team gets the hang of the obstacle course.
3. Explain that the entire team must complete the obstacle course. It is a race for glory and honor! The team that gets all its members across the finish line first wins! Emphasize that the team must work together and some team members might need more help than others.
4. Most members of the team will rush through the obstacles, but when a team gets a member with special instructions they will theoretically all yell at the person to go and then try to figure out what is going on and hopefully help.
5. Encourage them to pay attention when you see someone who is stuck. Offer them suggestions like, "Ask your team-mate why s/he isn't moving," or "Ask if there is something s/he would like your help with."
6. End the race either when one team wins or when you feel they've had enough.
7. After the relay race have the groups sit down as one group to collectively reflect on the process.

Special Instruction cards:

- *Don't do anything unless you are told to do so by a teammate three times*
- *Only move when someone is cheering your name*
- *Only move when a teammate is holding your hand*
- *Say no unless someone gives you a hug first*
- *You must do each obstacle twice*

Sample Obstacle Course:

- Hoola-hoop 3 times
- Weave through cones while doing jumping jacks
- Weave through cones while balancing a lollipop on the back of your hand

Discussion Questions

- Ask those who had special instruction cards to address how it felt to want to rush through the race but not be able to. Hopefully, they will talk about how it was overwhelming to have everyone expect them to do something they couldn't, or embarrassing that they were not able to do what they wanted, or upsetting that they couldn't gain the group's approval.
- Ask the team members with blank cards what it was like to have a teammate who performed differently.
- Talk about how there are many people who are restricted by things that we are unable to see or understand. Although we see them standing still, apparently unaware of what to do or how to do it, the truth is they might be restricted by something else.

B. WHERE DO I STAND

Materials Needed: Sidewalk chalk or tape and signs

1. Draw a line on one end of the room and write “Yes/True/Always”; in the middle write “Maybe/Sometimes”; at the other end of the room write “No/False/Never”
2. Read the following statements. Ask everyone in the group to stand at the part of the line that best represents how the statement relates to them.
3. Once everyone has chosen a spot, you can ask for volunteers to explain why they chose to stand where they did.
4. Choose the number and type of questions that are right for your group.

- *I work or go to school with a diverse community including people with disabilities, people from different cultures, ethnicities*
- *I socialize with friends who are different from me in terms of their culture, ethnicity, religion or race.*
- *My social group includes friends who have disabilities.*
- *I am comfortable welcoming a classmate with special needs.*
- *Growing up, I feel different from my family or friends in some significant way.*
- *I have been excluded because of my race, religion, gender, or a disability.*
- *I feel the language I use is always respectful of others around me.*
- *This past year, I have been more aware of including others.*
- *This past year, I have noticed diversity, equality and equity and have spoken out when I felt there was a need.*
- *This past year, I felt I was more aware of those who are vulnerable.*
- *I try to always be inclusive of others.*

Helpful hint: In education, equality means everyone receives the same and equity means everyone receives what he/she needs.

C. CIRCLE OF FRIENDS ACTIVITY

1. Ask the group to make a very tight, close circle – move in as close as possible (it may become more of a blob than a circle.) Ask everyone to think for a moment about those whom they love – those who are in their inner circle. Allow a minute for quiet thought.
2. Ask the group to move out and form a circle where they are touching shoulder to shoulder. Ask everyone to think about those whom they consider to be close friends, beyond Facebook friends: those who would be on the A-list if they were having a party, those whom they would call if upset, and those with whom they would celebrate achievements. Allow a minute for quiet thought.
3. Ask the group to move out to form a big circle where they are just barely touching fingertips to fingertips if they put their hands out at their sides. Ask everyone to think about those in their life with whom a friendship began with, or somehow involves money and scheduled appointments. Examples may be a favorite professional, a coach, a therapist, a teacher, an accountant, a hairstylist, a personal trainer, etc. Allow a few minutes for quiet thought.
4. Standing inside the circle so you can move to where the inner group started out, say – everyone, including people with disabilities, have people in this group. We are all blessed to have people in our lives who truly are in our “inner circle” and love us unconditionally.
5. Move toward where the middle group was and say, it is my guess that most of you have people you thought about for this circle of friends; for some of us it is a relatively small group, while for

others it may be a larger circle. Either way, we have a group of friends to whom we can turn in times of joy and of need.

6. Move toward the third circle and say: Often due to the need for speech therapy, physical/occupational therapy, social skills groups, doctors monitoring medication, special education teachers, special sports and activity programs... it is my guess that kids with disabilities have more people in this group than most of us. I am not saying they do not have people in a circle of friends. Thanks to advances in inclusion within our schools, camps, and communities, more and more kids with disabilities are able to form friendships with each other and neuro-typical peers.
7. Yet building that circle of good friends is still often more challenging for them. You can be a friend and you can model that acceptance for younger children in your role as a big brother or sister, aunt or uncle, babysitter or camp counselor. Notice that sometimes those that are "close but not quite" are hardest to include. You also hold power as camp counselors and babysitters to help youngsters understand this lesson.

Discussion Questions

- Who do you invite into your circle of friends? Does it include people with disabilities, people from different ethnicities?
- What's the difference between your bigger circle of friends (closer to those you "pay"), those you may hang out with as opportunities present themselves, and those who are part of your closest, inner circle?
- Who have you reached out to and included since the start of the school year or the start of this unit? Old friends, new friends, those who seem different from you?
- Think about the environments you live in: your communities at home, the shul you attend... How inclusive are these environments? Are there accessible doors and ramps? Can someone who uses a wheelchair get around? Are there spaces and activities for children with disabilities to enjoy?

D. BUDDY UP

1. Have students form a "buddy system" with younger children with disabilities or run group activities for children with disabilities in the community
2. Provide opportunities for children to spend time with individuals with disabilities
3. Visit local group homes or day programs as a class field trip
4. Have children volunteer to assist with Special Olympics programs
5. Encourage students to become involved in summer camps for children with disabilities in your community. Check out the Variety Club or ask a school therapist about information regarding these camps.
6. Speak with the principal or director of the school about having the students receive academic credit for their participation in community programs for children with disabilities. If a senior project is required by your school district, this would be an excellent project for students to initiate

E. WHEN SOMEBODY CLAPS TWICE

This activity gives participants the opportunity to work together toward a goal that benefits everyone.

Time Required: Approximately 15-20 minutes.

Materials needed: * enough candy (e.g. snack size candy bars or other pieces of individually wrapped candy) for the number of participants in the group.

* Cut apart the statements below into small slips of paper. You must have one per person; if you have a smaller group participants can receive two slips of paper.

- > Seat the group so that everyone can see each other.
 - > Hand out the slips of paper to participants.
 - > After giving them a moment to read their paper, the facilitator claps twice. This should start the action rolling, and if everyone does his/her part, everyone ends up with a piece of candy!
 - > If the action stops, either because someone isn't paying attention, or they miss the clue of the person before, or if a person "jumps in" when they're not supposed to, causing the movement to stop or to "skip" some people, ask everyone to check his or her paper, then start over by clapping twice.
- Suggestion: > Once they have completed the sequence successfully, have everyone switch prompts and add an emotion. For example, on this round everyone has to do their part in an ANGRY way, then in SAD way, then in an EXCITED way.

Discussion Questions 1. Talk about what happened: Was it easy to reach the goal? What things hindered you from reaching the goal? What did you do that helped you reach the goal? 2. Talk about the goal: Was it a worthwhile goal? Even though you didn't decide on the goal, you were willing to work toward it. Have you ever had to work for a goal that you didn't choose? What's it like to work for a goal that you don't feel is worthwhile? What's it like to work toward a goal in which there isn't an immediate "reward," or one which takes a long time to accomplish? 3. Talk about goal setting in your group. Does our group have specific goals? Does everyone in the group know what they are? What do we do if people don't "buy in?"

STATEMENTS:

When somebody claps twice, stand up and say "good morning".

When somebody says "good morning", get up and turn off the lights.

When somebody turns off the lights, yell "It's dark in here!"

When somebody yells "It's dark in here!" get up and turn on the lights.

When somebody turns on the lights, stand up and spin around twice.

When somebody spins around twice, make a loud cow (mooing) noise.

When somebody makes a cow (mooing) noise, stand up and say, "I'm glad to be here!"

When somebody says "I'm glad to be here," stand up and flap your arms like a bird.

When somebody flaps their arms like a bird, stand on your chair.

When somebody stands on a chair, say "Get down from there!"

When somebody says "Get down from there!" make a loud sneezing sound.

When somebody makes a loud sneezing sound, feel the forehead of the person next to you and shout "Somebody get a Doctor!"

When somebody shouts "Somebody get a Doctor!" sing "Mary Had a Little Lamb" in a loud voice.

When somebody sings "Mary Had a Little Lamb," walk around the leader/teacher 2 times.

When somebody walks around the leader/teacher two times, laugh really loud.

When somebody laughs really loud, stomp your feet for 5 seconds.

When somebody stomps their feet, do a cheerleading move and say "Rah! Rah! Rah!"

When somebody does a cheerleading move and says "Rah! Rah! Rah!" tell us what time it is in a loud voice. When somebody tells us what time it is, shake hands with the person next to you and loudly say, "Nice to meet you!"

When somebody says "Nice to meet you!" say "I have a question".

When somebody says "I have a question", yell: "The answer is seven."

When somebody says "The answer is seven," go to the front of the room and make the letter Y with your body. Yell out "Y" and stay there.

When somebody makes the letter Y, grab 2 other people, go to the front of the room, stand next to the Y and make the letters M, C, and A, then sing "YMCA."

When somebody sings "YMCA", hop on one foot for 5 seconds and yell "I am a rabbit."

When somebody says "I am a rabbit," say "Here comes Peter Cottontail!"

When somebody says "Here comes Peter Cottontail!" give everybody a piece of candy

(Developed by Patty Hupfer and Anne Stevenson for the Wisconsin Association of School Councils, Inc. Summer Leadership Workshop)

F. FIELD TRIPS

Arrange a field trip to a disability-related organization or special event (for example, a celebration of the Americans with Disabilities Act). Plan to have an activity that your group can do together with the children in the school you are visiting

1. MD School for the Blind
2. Maryland School for the Deaf - Columbia
3. Gesher LaTorah Sunday school for individuals with disabilities
4. **Sunflower Bakery** is a kosher bakery and cafe in Gaithersburg, MD that employs individuals with cognitive and other disabilities. A field trip might include lunch and an opportunity for the typical students to learn some pastry skills from the employees with special needs.

G. GUEST SPEAKER

Invite a person who has a disability to talk about their disability, what adaptations they need, and their feelings about having the disability. A parent or older student might want to share information about a family member's disability.

Contact: Rachel or Yael at CJE for suggestions. 410-735-5000, yzelinger@cjobaltimore.org

H. POSTER DISPLAY

Have students choose a disability that they would like to know more about. Have them research and create a poster about that disability or an aspect of the disability. For example, here are some interesting facts about Autism...

I. "WHAT IF" CARDS

Using a 5x8 card, anonymously write down reactions you'd have if you were to wake up with a disability. How would you react? How would your family, your friends and your neighbors. Post them on a bulletin board.

J. VIDEOS

Watch a film or search on the Internet for videos about people with disabilities. Have the students watch the video or film and discuss what they learned. You can search on you google or you tube.

Ex: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CL8GMxRW_5Y
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uF9iz8ppwXs>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=twIqOMzenOg>

K. REPORT

Have students do a report on a specific disability, a famous person with a disability, sports for people with disabilities, or the laws that are in effect to protect the rights of persons with disabilities.

L. INVENTIONS

Have students “invent” a piece of equipment or technology that might be helpful to a person with a disability.

M. BOOKS

Have older students do book reports on a book that includes people with disabilities. Ideas for books can be found in your library or through an online search.

N. CONVERSATION STARTERS

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tw1qOMzenOg> *The Eyes of the Beholder* from *The Twilight Zone*
<http://www.torah.org/learning/pirkei-avos/chapter4-3.html?print=1>

O. ACCESSIBILITY ASSESSMENT

1. Have students pick a facility they like to visit, for example: school, synagogue, home, supermarket, bowling alley, mall... and conduct an assessment of its accessibility using the attached Accessibility Assessment.
2. In class, instruct students to think about which aspect of accessibility they would like to improve at that facility and how they will advocate for it.
3. Post their results on a bulletin board and promote their efforts and success in the school newspaper.
4. Discussion: In 10-20 years from now, you will be vital community members, decision makers and in leadership positions, what aspects of Disability Awareness do you plan to keep in mind, advocate for or implement? These can be recorded and included in the yearbook.

P. MORE GREAT ACTIVITIES

<http://www.shalomdc.org/acfaactivities/>

Q. RESOURCES:

- PACER Center’s website: www.PACER.org
- Person first language explained <http://www.pacer.org/parent/php/PHP-c31.pdf>
- Etiquette tips <http://www.pacer.org/parent/php/PHP-c127.pdf>
- Disability Museum online: <http://www.disabilitymuseum.org/dhm/index.html>
- Take this test: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/selectatest.html>
- Your school district’s special education staff
- School or community library
- Websites for specific disability organizations. A website search on a specific disability will result in links to related organizations, resources, and activities
- The Internet: search for the answer to a specific question, for example, “How do people who are blind play ball?”

**To learn more or to share your ideas, please contact Yael Zelinger 410-735-5023,
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