

Congregation Beth Tikvah
Bar/Bat Mitzvah Handbook

**BAR/BAT MITZVAH AT CONGREGATION BETH TIKVAH
YOUR FAMILY'S JOURNEY**

*May you live to see your world fulfilled,
May your destiny be for worlds still to come,
And may you trust in generations past and yet to be.*

*May your heart be filled with intuition
And your words be filled with insight.
May songs of praise ever be upon your tongue
And your vision be on a straight path before you.
May your eyes shine with the light of holy words
And your face reflect the brightness of the heavens.
May your lips ever speak wisdom
And your fulfillment be in righteousness
Even as you ever yearn to hear the words of the Holy Ancient One of Old.*

THE BAR/BAT MITZVAH: RABBI GANS "THIS IS NOT THE END IT IS ONLY THE BEGINNING"

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah marks an important step in the spiritual growth of your son/daughter. This is conveyed in the words Bar/Bat Mitzvah (son or daughter of the Commandment). It suggests the B'nai Mitzvah (sons and daughters) must begin to acquire a more mature understanding of Judaism and to begin assuming the responsibilities of adult Jewish life. It does not and should not suggest that the B'nai Mitzvah have reached a point in their lives where they stop growing spiritually or that they have attained enough understanding and experience of Judaism, to sustain and satisfy them through adulthood.

BACKGROUND: The ceremony as a general practice in the life cycle of the Jews began in the fourteenth century. The ceremony followed the attainment of the 13th birthday. It was celebrated by calling the 13-year old boy to the reading of a portion from the Torah and/or the recitation of the benedictions that precede and follow the reading of the Torah in the synagogue. After the boy had become a Bar Mitzvah, he could be counted as one of the ten men in a minyan. A family festivity usually marked this occasion. The ceremony of becoming a Bat Mitzvah began in the year 1922.

CONFIRMATION - A LOOK AHEAD: Recognizing the need for a ceremony that would mark the free acceptance of Judaism by both sons and daughters at a more mature age than the 13th year, the Confirmation ceremony was introduced. Each year a new class of students in the Het (tenth) grade of religious school training, participate in the Confirmation ceremony held in the synagogue on Shavuot (late May/ early June).

Confirmation has become a universal practice. Confirmation provides another step in the spiritual growth of the individual along with an additional opportunity to develop a more meaningful relationship with the Rabbi and other teachers. It emphasizes an ongoing commitment to Judaism through continuing education and enrichment found in the religious school environment. This is also the year that Rabbi Gans leads a Confirmation trip to Israel. It is through experiencing the full sequence of Bar/Bat Mitzvah, Confirmation and the participation in youth programs and other activities that our students most meaningfully develop a social bonding with their classmates and a life-long attachment to their people and their faith.

THE CELEBRATION: A joyous gathering of family and friends celebrating an important milestone in your child's religious growth marks the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Simple gifts, spiritual books, Jewish ceremonial and art objects, donations of charity and other worthwhile causes convey a lasting impression about Jewish values that really matter in life. A reception, which keeps in mind the religious attainment of your son or daughter as guest of honor, acknowledges this milestone in a classic and appropriate way.

BENEFITS OF THE PREPARATION PROCESS: Becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah is a multi-faceted process that includes the student's involvement in reading, chanting, public speaking, composition, and event coordination. Although there is an emphasis on preparing for the day itself, students gain valuable life experiences that enrich many areas of their lives.

THE CEREMONY AT CONGREGATION BETH TIKVAH: Students assist the Rabbi with the Friday evening service on the same Shabbat as their Saturday morning ceremony. Students will conduct the service on Saturday morning by leading many of the prayers and readings, chanting portions of the Torah and the Haftorah and chanting the Blessings before and after the Torah and Haftorah portions.

Each student will also deliver a speech about his/her Mitzvah Project during his/her ceremony. Students will develop the speech with the aid of Rabbi Gans. The Rabbi must approve the final speech two weeks prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah date. Detailed information about the Mitzvah Project is found later on in this Handbook.

BAR/BAT MITZVAH STUDENT PREPARATION: The students receive their Bar/Bat Mitzvah dates from Rabbi Gans approximately one year prior to their 13th birthdays. Each student and parents meet with Rabbi Gans during the year leading up to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah to discuss the student's Torah portion.

The students are expected to attend 12 Friday night adult services and 12 Saturday morning adult services starting 13 months prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah date. The service requirements are to be completed one month prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. After attending a service, a sticker is placed on the child's index card. The cards are kept in a box in the ritual closet. A member of the Ritual Committee will be available in the sanctuary immediately after services to help the student find his/her card. If the student is in the Dalet grade during this period, the Junior Congregation requirements are fulfilled by attending the adult services. The Dalet Shabbatonim requirements must be fulfilled. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah student should attend the adult service and then join the other students attending the Shabbaton for lunch and the afternoon program.

FAMILY OBLIGATIONS: Familiarization with our Friday evening and Saturday morning services is essential. Parents are urged to attend services with their child. This is the best way for the family to familiarize themselves with the customs, ceremonies and rituals that take place at Congregation Beth Tikvah, and to encourage a "whole family" experience of Judaism.

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah students begin meeting with the tutor approximately nine months prior to their Bar/Bat Mitzvah date. The tutor provides the students with a tape of their Torah and Haftorah portions. The tutor contacts the parents to arrange weekly 30 minute sessions with each student. Parents are requested to attend the lessons, and it is the parents' obligation to help insure the educational progress of their child. In order to assure this success, parents are urged to "check in" with the Bar/Bat Mitzvah tutor at the conclusion of each lesson for progress reports.

Rabbi Gans will continue to meet with the parents to discuss the progress.

The week of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, students and parents meet in the Sanctuary with Rabbi Gans for a rehearsal. This rehearsal typically takes place on the Wednesday prior to the service. The parents arrange the date and time of the rehearsal with Rabbi Gans. If you are having family photos taken, the photographer should be scheduled to be at the synagogue on the same date.

In addition to the rehearsal on Wednesday, if your child wishes to have additional practice reading his/her Torah portion, he/she may come to Monday and/or Thursday morning Minyan and read from the Torah. This is also an opportunity for the parents to practice their Aliyah.

BAR/BAT MITZVAH OBLIGATIONS: In order to meet the standards set by our Education Committee and Board, each student is required to have a minimum of five years satisfactory attendance in Congregation Beth Tikvah's Religious School (or its equivalent) starting in the Aleph grade, plus be currently registered and attending Religious School with satisfactory attendance and achievement. The student must also complete his/her Bar/Bat Mitzvah year in the Hebrew High School program.

A Mitzvah Project (Community Service Project) is required for each student. Rabbi Gans approves this project approximately six months prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah date. Please see the separate section in this handbook for complete details and forms.

The Dalet Program, CBT's Bar/Bat Mitzvah Family Education Program is designed to enhance the understanding of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah experience. You will be notified of the sessions and your participation is mandatory to insure that each family is prepared as thoroughly as possible. Typically, you will be expected to attend the three-part series during your son/daughter's sixth grade (Dalet) school year.

BAR/BAT MITZVAH SERVICE ORIENTATION AND PARTICIPATION: We seek to make our services inclusive and welcoming.

FRIDAY EVENING SERVICE: The family of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah is invited to lead the lighting of the Shabbat candles. The family's younger members can bring the Rabbi, Cantor and the Bar/Bat Mitzvah their Kiddush cups for the recitation of the Kiddush.

SATURDAY MORNING SERVICE: The Bar/Bat Mitzvah students are expected to lead a significant part of the service. They will lead many of the prayers in English and chant verses of Torah and Haftarah along with the appropriate blessing. Each student will deliver a Mitzvah Project speech. Parents are also invited to offer personal statements after the student's speech.

After the Haftorah is chanted, gifts are presented to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah by the congregation President, the Sisterhood and Men's Club. If you would like a specific CBT member of the Sisterhood or Men's Club (a family friend or relative) to present their gifts, please contact the Sisterhood or Men's Club President.

TALLIT: The parents or a relative or family friend of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah present a tallit to their child at the beginning of the service. The tallit is placed on the shoulders of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah child and he/she recites the prayer.

PULPIT HONORS

Torah Aliyot: At the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service, there are a total of eight Aliyot. The 8th or Maftir Aliyah is when your child is formally called to the Torah. Of the remaining seven Torah Aliyot, one is for the parents. They recite the blessings in Hebrew (transliteration is provided if needed). Six additional family members or friends of the family may be called to the Torah for an Aliyah. An individual or a pair may recite Aliyot blessings. Both sides of the family are encouraged to be represented. (Note: Please contact the Rabbi about the specific customs for assigning Aliyot, specifically, the order of family members.)

A list of those to be called to the Torah for an Aliyah, including both English and Hebrew names must be given to Rabbi Gans at the rehearsal. (See sample form. Request actual form from the Rabbi.) All family members and friends should be notified far enough in advance for this honor. If needed, the blessings can be obtained from the synagogue office to be copied and mailed by you to those with Aliyot. When coming to the Bimah on Saturday morning both men and woman are required to wear a head covering and a tallit. Only the Rabbi and Cantor wear tallit on Friday night. All participants who come onto the bimah for an Aliyot must be Jewish.

Other Honors: In addition to the Aliyot, you can designate other adult Jewish individuals/couples to:

Open and close the Ark at the beginning and the end of the Torah Service

Lift and tie (one each) the Torah following the Torah Service

Note: A child may be given the honor of opening/closing the ark.

Rabbi Gans will need the English names of these individuals as well.

Those with honors should arrive by 9:15 a.m. and identify themselves to the Ritual Representative stationed near the Sanctuary entrance.

Four youngsters can carry the three Kiddush cups (Rabbi, Cantor and the Bar/Bat Mitzvah) and tray with the covered challah to the Bimah toward the end of the service.

IMPORTANT DETAILS

Friday evening services begin at 8:00 p.m. and Saturday morning services begin at 9:30 a.m. Please arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the Service. Remind family and guests of the important part they play in enhancing the beauty and meaning of a memorable Sabbath. Toward this end, please ask all guests to arrive promptly as well.

Respectful and modest attire is necessary for anyone that will be on the bimah for any part of the religious service.

Financial Obligations: All members are required to be current in their dues payments, religious school tuition and building use fees prior to the date of their child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah service.

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah fee will be included in your synagogue bill within the year of your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah. The fee includes tutoring and Oneg supplies (cups, plates, etc) provided by the synagogue. All food is the responsibility of the family and must be pre-ordered (see frequently asked questions.) Contact the synagogue for the current fee.

The Synagogue reception creates a wonderful environment for celebrating your Simcha. If you plan to use the building for a reception other than a Shabbat Oneg or Kiddush following the regular service, you will be required to pay a rental fee to the Synagogue. This money will cover the cost for the added use of utilities such as electricity, gas, and water.

Donations to the Synagogue by parents and children in honor of the simcha are appropriate in the spirit of our tradition. Placing a leaf on the "Tree of Life" is a way to honor your children. Contact the office (856-983-8090) for more information (including costs) and a complete listing of Synagogue Funds.

Parents Also Learn: We encourage you to read "Putting God on the Guest List" by Rabbi Jeffrey Salkin (Jewish Lights Press) with your child and to refer to it for guidelines. Our gift to each of our Dalet (sixth grade) students at their Graduation Service is the child's version "Putting God on the Kid's Guest List" by Rabbi Salkin. Attending services regularly with your family and showing genuine interest in Jewish learning is invaluable toward your children's spiritual development.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Does my child receive credit for services attended at other synagogues?

We allow a certain number of non-CBT services to be included in the requirements. Please contact the Rabbi for details, including the “write up” required when attending an outside service.

What are the parents’ responsibilities for the Friday Oneg and Saturday Kiddush?

Regardless of where the reception is held, the parents are responsible for supplying an Oneg (Friday night) and Kiddush (Saturday morning) for their guests and the congregants. The attendance at Friday evening services varies, depending on the nature of the service that week. The office can assist you with an estimate.

Make sure to include a Challah in your order for the Kiddush on Saturday morning.

Please have your pastries and challah for both Friday night and Saturday morning to the Synagogue no later than Noon on the Friday of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Make sure the pastries/food for Friday and Saturday are in separate boxes and clearly marked. This will facilitate a smooth set up by the CBT family in charge of set up.

A list of acceptable bakeries (Kosher) is available by calling the synagogue office.

In addition to the bakery order, if you prefer certain colors/styles of tablecloths, plates, cups, napkins, etc. other than the standard supplied, you can arrange to bring these items into the synagogue by Noon on Friday. Coffee, tea and soda are provided.

Other synagogue members will set up and put away your Oneg and Kiddush. If you are providing special paper goods, etc., please label them so that the family setting up can easily identify them.

Do the parents supply the flowers for the bimah? When should they be delivered?

If the family decides to have flowers for the Bimah, arrangements can be ordered from any florist in the area. They should be delivered by Noon on the preceding Friday.

Who is responsible for setting up the Oneg and /or Kiddush?

Each family is responsible to set up for at least one Friday Oneg and one Saturday Kiddush during the year. In turn, another family will set up for your Oneg and Kiddush.

If you decide to have a Friday, Shabbat dinner or an extended Kiddush on Saturday morning (serving lunch), you must hire an outside company to help with the set up and clean up. The synagogue office can suggest companies for this. Contact the office for the name of the family assigned to set up. Contact this family to inform them of your arrangements.

You should also hire a maintenance person to assist the caterer. This person can focus on other (non-kitchen) areas of the synagogue: restrooms, hallways and general upkeep in the social hall.

When does one set up the Oneg Shabbat?

On Friday evening, set up should begin at 7:30 p.m. On Saturday morning, 9:00 a.m.

Does the Bar/Bat Mitzvah family supply kippot for the Saturday morning service?

Yes - Quantities should be enough to cover your invited guests. Please bring a "basket" in which to put the Kippot. Additionally, you should order head coverings and bobby pins for the women. These items can be ordered from the CBT gift shop.

Where do I purchase a tallit?

Please make sure to order a tallit for your son or daughter. They can be purchased in the CBT gift shop, the gift shop of the JCC, other synagogue gift shops, or on line. Rabbi Gans can also offer suggestions.

Is the tossing of candy at the end of the Torah service allowed?

Please speak with the Rabbi if you are considering this.

How can I help my family and friends feel more comfortable during the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service?

It is recommended that you print a program to be handed out by the ritual rep Saturday morning. This brochure typically describes the services, provides information on acceptable conduct (i.e., no cell phones) and more. Samples from previous Bar/Bat Mitzvahs are available in the office. Rabbi Gans is available to proof the program.

What restrictions are there regarding the use of any portion of the Synagogue for the Oneg, Kiddush or a Reception?

There is no smoking anywhere inside the Synagogue on Shabbat. Please encourage guests to use the butt receptacle located near the main entrance during a reception on Saturday evening after Shabbat ends. Hebrew School classrooms are not to be entered at anytime.

What do I do if I have guests who do not ride on Shabbat?

Guests can stay at the Synagogue. Arrangements need to be made through the office.

Is there an approved list of caterers that may be used in the Synagogue?

Families can hire a caterer of their choice, provided that they are Kosher and adhere to the standards set by the Congregation. Contact the office for guidelines and recommendations before hiring a caterer.

Whom do I contact regarding the use of the Synagogue for a reception?

Inform the office and a contract will be sent to you.

How far in advance of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah date must the Synagogue be reserved for a reception?

In order to ensure availability for your specific date, a contract for the use of the Synagogue facilities must be signed at least six (6) months prior to the date of the affair. This will prevent any conflict with programs later scheduled by the synagogue.

Whom do I notify as to how many chairs and/or tables I will require for a Kiddush or reception?

Contact the office for the quantities currently available. Contact your caterer if more need to be rented.

May a Saturday afternoon reception include music, pictures and dancing?

No music or photography of any kind is permitted until 1:00 pm. At that time, background or instrumental music is permitted. Mood music, or music supporting Israeli dancing is acceptable. Contact the Rabbi for more specific details on acceptable music. DJ's and karaoke machines are not acceptable. A candle lighting ceremony and the use of the bimah are not permitted. Videotaping is acceptable, using only ambient light, beginning at 1:00 p.m. No flash or still cameras are permitted. Videotaping of the service or of the Bimah, or ritual pictures while it is still Shabbat is not acceptable.

May non-Jewish family members be included in the service?

While non-Jewish persons are not permitted on the Bimah for an honor, there are ways in which to include these family members. Please contact Rabbi Gans directly to discuss this issue.

Is there anything else that we need to know to prepare for our simcha?

Please inform your guests who will be called to the bimah for an honor that the Rabbi is highly allergic to perfume. Ask them to refrain from wearing any.

Buddy system: If you have additional questions, concerns, etc., we will arrange for you to meet/talk with a family who has been through the process so you can become more familiar and comfortable with the process.

IF THERE ARE ANY ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS, PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CONTACT THE RABBI, CANTOR, TUTOR, PRESIDENT OR THE OFFICE.

MAZAL TOV TO YOU AND YOUR CHILD!

Following is a suggested timeline for your “To Do” List

Note: This is only a suggested timeline and may not be all-inclusive. All times are approximate. Please refer to the booklet and/or contact the Rabbi or office for further clarification.

13 Months

Child begins attending adult services (12 Fridays and 12 Saturdays). Must be completed one month prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah date. Please make sure the child sees the ritual rep for the sticker at the end of each service.

One Year

Receive date from Rabbi – Rabbi will contact the family

Nine (9) months

Receive Torah and Haftorah portion (Should additional preparation time be needed, portion can be requested from the Rabbi sooner.)

Begin tutoring – Bar/Bat Mitzvah tutor will contact you (Please speak with the Rabbi if you'd like to arrange for more time for the lessons)

Seven (7) months

Initiate a meeting with the Principal to discuss the Bar/Bat Mitzvah project.

Schedule a meeting with the Rabbi to receive approval on Bar/Bat Mitzvah project and begin project. (duration: minimum 6 months)

Reserve social hall (if appropriate)

Two (2) months

Purchase Tallit, Kippot and head coverings

Place order for Kiddush and Oneg pastries and Challah

Contact Men's Club and/or Sisterhood President if requesting a specific presenter of gifts

One (1) month

Contact Rabbi to discuss preparation of speech and to set up rehearsal

Contact photographer if scheduling photography/video at rehearsal.

Two (2) weeks prior

Turn in Bar/Bat Mitzvah Project Report to the Principal

Wednesday afternoon before Bar/Bat Mitzvah

Rehearsal with Rabbi – submit form listing those being called for Aliyot to Rabbi Gans

One (1) week prior

Notify CBT office how many people you are expecting and whether you need the Social Hall tables set up any different than usual for an extended Kiddush.

Friday morning before Bar/Bat Mitzvah (by Noon)

Have all food, kippot, flowers (optional), programs, etc. delivered to CBT

NOTE: Since there is bingo at CBT Thursday evening (and the kitchen is used), it is highly recommended that no food or supplies arrive before Friday.

Additional:

Set up/clean up at least one Friday night Oneg and Saturday morning Kiddush within the year leading up to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

If you would like to have more time to review speeches, projects/reports, etc., please contact the Rabbi directly.

Fill in both English and Hebrew names where indicated. All adults receiving honors must wear a head covering and Tallit! Children receiving an honor must wear a head covering.

Name of Bar/Bat Mitzvah student:

Date:

ALIYOT (Adults only)

<p>Kohen #1 Levy (Circle one) Israelite</p> <hr/> <p>Kohen #2 Levy (Circle one) Israelite</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p>	<p>Name #1: _____</p> <p>Hebrew Name: _____ ben/bat</p> <p>Name #2: _____</p> <p>Hebrew Name: _____ ben/bat</p>	<p>Relationship to child:</p>
<p>Kohen #1 Levy (Circle one) Israelite</p> <hr/> <p>Kohen #2 Levy (Circle one) Israelite</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2</p>	<p>Name #1: _____</p> <p>Hebrew Name: _____ ben/bat</p> <p>Name #2: _____</p> <p>Hebrew Name: _____ ben/bat</p>	<p>Relationship to child:</p>
<p>Kohen #1 Levy (Circle one) Israelite</p> <hr/> <p>Kohen #2 Levy (Circle one) Israelite</p> <p style="text-align: center;">3</p>	<p>Name #1: _____</p> <p>Hebrew Name: _____ ben/bat</p> <p>Name #2: _____</p> <p>Hebrew Name: _____ ben/bat</p>	<p>Relationship to child:</p>
<p>Kohen #1 Levy (Circle one) Israelite</p> <hr/> <p>Kohen #2 Levy (Circle one) Israelite</p> <p style="text-align: center;">4</p>	<p>Name #1: _____</p> <p>Hebrew Name: _____ ben/bat</p> <p>Name #2: _____</p> <p>Hebrew Name: _____ ben/bat</p>	<p>Relationship to child:</p>

<p>Kohen #1 Levy (Circle one) Israelite</p> <hr/> <p>Kohen #2 Levy (Circle one) Israelite</p> <p style="text-align: center;">5</p>	<p>Name #1: _____</p> <p>Hebrew Name: _____ ben/bat</p> <p>Name #2: _____</p> <p>Hebrew Name: _____ ben/bat</p>	<p>Relationship to child:</p>
<p>Kohen #1 Levy (Circle one) Israelite</p> <hr/> <p>Kohen #2 Levy (Circle one) Israelite</p> <p style="text-align: center;">6</p>	<p>Name #1: _____</p> <p>Hebrew Name: _____ ben/bat</p> <p>Name #2: _____</p> <p>Hebrew Name: _____ ben/bat</p>	<p>Relationship to child:</p>
<p>Kohen #1 Levy (Circle one) Israelite</p> <hr/> <p>Kohen #2 Levy (Circle one) Israelite</p> <p style="text-align: center;">7</p>	<p>Name #1: _____</p> <p>Hebrew Name: _____ ben/bat</p> <p>Name #2: _____</p> <p>Hebrew Name: _____ ben/bat</p>	<p>Relationship to child:</p>
<p>Kohen Levy (Circle one) Israelite</p> <p style="text-align: center;">8</p> <p>Maftir</p>	<p>Name: _____</p> <p>Hebrew Name: _____ ben/bat</p>	
<p>Open Ark:</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	
<p>Close Ark:</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	
<p>Person to lift Torah: Person to tie Torah:</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	
<p>Carry wine and Challah (adult or child)</p>	<p>_____</p>	

BAR/BAT MITZVAH PROJECTS

Beyond the Hebrew lessons, speech writing and party planning, performing meaningful community service puts the mitzvah back into Bar/Bat Mitzvah preparation. Tikun olam, the Jewish concept of repairing the world is an important part of becoming a Bar or Bat Mitzvah.

To help your child determine his/her project, ask him/her a few questions.

1. What types of things do you do well and how can you use one or more of them to make our community/the world a better place?
2. What do you like to do/what are you interested in and how can you utilize it to help others?
3. What bothers you so much in our community/ in the world that you want to do whatever you can to change it?
4. Whom do you know that can help you get involved with something meaningful?

Each student will participate in an extended community service project of significance to him or her during the Bar/Bat Mitzvah year. Participation in the project is a required component of Bar/Bat Mitzvah and entails a commitment of service spread over weeks or months. The student can perform one-time volunteer projects in addition to the required extended project.

This component of Bar/Bat Mitzvah is called Lo Ta'amod after the Torah's commandment, "You shall not stand idly by when your neighbor is in distress." We are dedicated to teaching our children about helping those less fortunate and giving back to the world. This is the backbone of Jewish life.

In this section, you will find a list of suggested projects. They range from helping the disabled, homeless or underprivileged children, making several visits to a nursing home, residential facility or hospital, or using a special talent to benefit others. While this list offers many suggestions, we welcome and encourage your child to come up with his/her own ideas that will be meaningful to him/her. Also, suggest that your child consider a project that relates to his/her Torah or Haftorah portion. Your child can also speak with the School Principal for suggestions from past Bar/Bat Mitzvah projects on file in the office.

Our main requirement for the project is that it be a "hands-on" experience. Students should interact with those they are helping- making it a personal and rewarding experience.

Discuss ideas about the project with your child. Once your child has developed an idea for the project, he/she must meet with the principal to share their idea. Help your child arrange this no later than six months prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah date. Following this meeting, schedule a meeting between yourself(ves), your child and the Rabbi. Your child will submit the Mitzvah Project Form found in this section to the Rabbi for his approval at this meeting.

Your child will need to complete the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Project Report prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah day. It will help organize his/her thoughts for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah speech. Your child will also hand in a copy of the Report to the Principal prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, as a resource for future students.

BAR/BAT MITZVAH PROJECT FORM

Please bring this form to the Principal no later than 7 months prior to your Bar/Bat Mitzvah date. Discuss your project with the Principal prior to completing the form. Have your parents schedule a meeting with the Rabbi, them and you. Complete this form and submit it to the Rabbi for his approval at the meeting.

Name of Bar/Bat Mitzvah _____

Date of Bar/Bat Mitzvah _____

My project will benefit _____

The following is a brief description of the project that I plan:

Timeline to accomplish this project _____

Project goal(s) _____

Jewish values reflected in this project are _____

Signature of Rabbi _____ Date _____

BAR/BAT MITZVAH PROJECT RECORD KEEPING

Once you have selected your project and the Rabbi has approved it, you may want to keep a record of your project. Here are some suggestions.

1. Keep a diary. Write some notes after each visit. Consider answering questions like:
 - what were today's activities or events
 - was this day's visit unique or special
 - what made this visit challenging
 - what made this visit positive
2. Take photographs of your project or site, or collect pamphlets.
3. Put your records all together in a scrapbook, a binder or as a computer presentation.
4. Submit the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Project Report at the completion of your project and prior to your Bar/Bat Mitzvah date. You will find this form in this section of the Handbook.

BAR/BAT MITZVAH PROJECT REPORT

Submit a copy of this report to the Principal two weeks prior to your Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

Name _____

Bar/Bat Mitzvah Date _____ Parasha _____

Project Description (What did you do?)

Who supervised you? _____

Where did you work/volunteer? _____

Date project began _____ Date completed _____

How and why did you choose this mitzvah project? _____

Does your mitzvah project relate to your Torah or Haftorah portion? _____

If so, how? _____

What are the two the most important things you learned from this project? _____

How did you feel about your project? (Include how you think you and your project made a difference.) _____

Please complete this sentence: I would recommend this mitzvah project to someone else who _____

Could someone who wants to hear more about your project contact you? If yes, please provide phone: _____ e-mail _____

BAR/BAT MITZVAH PROJECT SUGGESTIONS

You may select a project from the following suggestions, alter one to reflect your interests or create your very own.

1. Cook meals and plant flowers at a Ronald McDonald House where parents with youngsters being treated at a children's medical center can stay. Many of these families are on a tight budget and cannot afford to stay at a hotel close to the hospital where their children are being treated.
2. Ask the Manager at a Build a Bear store to donate a supply of bears for your project. Take your friends there to dress the bears as ballerinas, baseball players, etc. These bears can be used as centerpieces for your Bar/Bat Mitzvah reception. Donate the bears to a children's hospital. You can have the patients attend a "tea party" with the bears prior to giving them out.
3. If you enjoy playing a musical instrument, plan a series of concerts at a nursing home or shelter. Enlist friends to help.
4. Assist with leading Junior Congregation services at CBT.
5. Teach a beginning computer class at a senior center.
6. Run an athletic/fitness clinic at a homeless shelter.
7. Be a volunteer coach for a season with a youth soccer/basketball league.
8. Volunteer for Special Olympics. (See CBT teacher Sharon Savitz for details.)
9. Pick an unused spot of land at a community center and create a garden in honor or memory of someone.
10. Read books at a Children's Hospital.
11. Support a food pantry with a neighborhood food collection drive. Distribute grocery bags in your neighborhood with a message attached telling about the food drive. Collect the food, then personally deliver it and work the food pantry the day the items are distributed.
12. If you have an interest in the environment, develop a project linked to saving the environment, preserving an endangered species or organizing and executing a project to clean up parts of the community in which you live.
13. Organize a fundraiser for a Jewish organization or cause about which you care.

GLOSSARY

Aliyah - "Going up"- The honor of being called to recite the blessings over a segment of the Torah portion

Aliyot - plural of aliyah

B'nai Mitzvah – literally "sons and daughters of the commandment"

Bar Mitzvah - "son of the commandment" – ceremony marking the coming of age and time where a boy assumes responsibilities of the commandments and adult Jewish life

Bat Mitzvah - "daughter of the commandment"- the equivalent ceremony for a girl

Bimah - the raised section in the sanctuary

Challah - braided egg bread, for Shabbat and festivals

Haftorah – selection from the Prophets read or chanted after the weekly or holiday Torah portion

Kippah - skullcap head covering worn by Jews during services, also known as yarmulke

Kiddush - blessing recited or chanted over wine, emphasizing the holiness of Shabbat and festivals. Also used to describe the food and drink following a Saturday service

Minyan - quorum of ten Jewish adults

Mitzvah - "commandment" or "good deed"

Oneg - refreshments follow Friday evening service

Shabbat - the designated day of rest and holiness

Shavuot - "weeks" – a festival that occurs seven weeks after Pesach - Confirmation is typically held on Shavuot

Simcha - "happiness"- a special happy occasion

Tallit - "prayer shawl" with fringes on its four corners to remind the wearer to do God's commandments

Torah - The Five Books of Moses. The first five books of the Bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

Tzedakah - "act of righteousness"-helping another person through difficult time of financial resources

