

## 2020 Mitzvah Project & Gemilut Hasadim (Acts of Kindness) Resources

Welcome to exploring the variety of ways you can make a difference in the lives of others! There are two ways to explore the Mitzvah Projects in this guide: you can scroll through this whole document to find the activity or activities that are right for you or, if you are already strongly called to one of the Jewish values below, simply click on that one and you'll be taken to its page.

The themes of our projects are themes of Jewish living that many of you will see echoed in the stories of your Torah portions.

They are:

- [Ma'achil Re'evim - מאכיל רעבים - Feeding the Hungry](#)
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- [Hidur P'nai Zaken - הדור פני זקן - Respecting/Honoring the Elderly](#)
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## **Ma'achil Re'evim – Feeding the Hungry**

**1. Larchmont/Mamaroneck Hunger Task Force** - The Larchmont-Mamaroneck Hunger Task Force is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that was formed in 1993 by a coalition of community organizations, houses of worship, and concerned citizens dedicated to assisting local families who need food. The hungry people in our communities come from many different ethnic backgrounds; they are children, elderly and adults. They are employed with low wages, unemployed, living on social security, social security disability, or public assistance. They are those people who, after paying rent, utilities and medical bills, don't have enough money every month to buy food.

**Criteria to Volunteer as of July 17:**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1et-bNjkPYU9mInlzoqtms4jrGLUw2HxkyzUuTYmHI8I/edit>  
volunteers may now be 13 if working with a parent or 16 with parental consent.

**Website:** <http://www.lmfoodpantry.org/>

**Contact/To Sign Up:** <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0b4bafa62aa7fe3-emergency3>

**2. Midnight Run** - Midnight Run coordinates over 1,000 relief missions per year, in which volunteers from churches, synagogues, schools and other civic groups distribute food, clothing, blankets and personal care items to the homeless poor on the streets of New York City. The late-night relief efforts create a forum for trust, sharing, understanding and affection. That human exchange, rather than the exchange of goods, is the essence of the Midnight Run mission.

Midnight Run is not a solution to homelessness. Our goal is to forge a bond between housed and homeless people by establishing a foundation of sharing and caring from which solutions may evolve. Through Midnight Run, volunteers come to see people on the streets as real people, not a commodity. And homeless men and women interact with mainstream adults and teenagers whose commitments and concerns go beyond their own lives and families.

*"We are doing Midnight Run this summer but not having in person volunteers. Anyone who wants to help can make lunches or collect items and make toiletry bags."*

**Website:** <https://midnightrun.org/>

**Contact Person:** LT Congregant Linda Riefberg (914-610-9390) or [linda.riefberg@gmail.com](mailto:linda.riefberg@gmail.com)

**3. Meals On Wheels** - The Meals on Wheels program provides a nutritious midday meal to senior citizens living in the Town of Mamaroneck, Village of Mamaroneck, and Village of Larchmont who are home-bound and unable to prepare meals for themselves.

“ Many of our local volunteers have gone on vacation and we really need help delivering our daily lunches to seniors who rely on them. We are currently accepting young volunteers who have an adult that can drive to deliver meals to seniors in our community Monday-Wednesday from 11-1. Due to COVID-19, visiting with the seniors is on hold. Volunteering simply entails picking up bags of food at Lunch with Lou on Mamaroneck Avenue between 10 and 12 and leaving the bags of food at the doors of our clients. We look forward to meeting you!”

**Website:** <https://www.townofmamaroneckny.org/415/Meals-on-Wheels>

**Contact:** Alicia Nowlin-Downey: (cell phone during COVID-19) 914-562-0542

**4. Hope Soup Kitchen** – With the assistance and support of a host of volunteers, HOPE opened the doors of its first Soup Kitchen in 1984. Since its early days, HOPE has grown to become the largest emergency Food Pantry and Soup Kitchen in the region. Although HOPE Community Services was founded to respond to hunger in the community, it quickly became apparent that food was not the only thing our clients were lacking. Clothing, language skills, emotional support, immigration services, and other daily necessities were also needed. HOPE Community Services expanded its services to meet the needs of its diverse client population

The Hope Soup Kitchen will be losing the National Guard on July 29<sup>th</sup> and has an empty pantry. They are looking for increased support of help with packing bags (Tuesdays) and distributing them on Wednesdays 9-12 and 2-5:30 outside their building and Thursdays at City Park from 2-4 PM. (they have been giving out about 1000-2000 bags of food a day). They are also in drastic need of non-perishable food donations. Please call them to see what would be most helpful to donate when you're ready. 11-13 year olds must be accompanied by a parent. A page will be on their website for volunteer sign ups starting July 24.

**Website:** <https://hopecommunityservices.org/>

**Contact:** Any questions, reach out to their Program Manager, Benito Ceja at 914-636-4010 or at <mailto:bceja@hope-cs.org>

**5. Feeding Westchester** – Feeding Westchester's mission is to end hunger in Westchester County. As the heart of a network of more than 300 partners, they source and distribute food and other resources to towns across Westchester, helping to ensure that none of our neighbors are hungry.

Starting the week of August 3, they will have a listing on their website of ways that people can create neighborhood food drives, help to assemble breakfast bags and other ways to donate food.

**Website:** <https://feedingwestchester.org/>

**Contact:** 914-923-1100

**6. Bronx Riverdale Y** - The Riverdale Y enriches the lives of everyone in Riverdale with educational, recreational, cultural, and wellness programs, through the lens of universally-shared values central to Jewish life. They are looking for assistance with food packing & delivery to seniors.

**Website:** [www.riverdaley.org](http://www.riverdaley.org)

**Contact:** [volunteers@riverdaley.org](mailto:volunteers@riverdaley.org)

**7. Coalition for Community** - At the start of the COVID-19 crisis, a group of local volunteers representing many organizations and/or municipalities formed the Coalition for Community to coordinate local efforts to respond to community needs created by the COVID-19 pandemic. Initially, the Coalition spoke daily and now they have weekly calls focused on using their shared resources and specialized skills to coordinate services for our vulnerable neighbors. The most demanding, first response issue was hunger.

Food Distributions are taking place every Tuesday this summer at St. John's/Mamaroneck Avenue School, and they are organized one week by the LM Hunger Task Force and the alternate week by the Coalition for Community. We allow teens 13-15 to volunteer with an older family member. If any B'nei Mitzvah families want to volunteer for this, they should complete [this volunteer form](#) and then they will get the sign-up every other week to sign up to volunteer.

**Contact:** Sarah Coady at [sarahcoady6@gmail.com](mailto:sarahcoady6@gmail.com)

## **Malbish Arumim – Clothing the Naked**

1. **The New York Milk Bank** - The New York Milk Bank is the first comprehensive nonprofit milk bank based in New York State. It collects milk from carefully screened donors, pasteurizes it, and distributes it to infants in New York State and the surrounding area. Volunteers who love to knit or crochet are needed to help make baby blankets and hats for the New York Milk Bank. These cozy items will be included in gift baskets that are delivered to new moms. Blankets should be just large enough for a stroller or car seat (about 30 x 30 inches or 36 x 36 inches). All colors are accepted, but gender-neutral is always appreciated. Matching hats should be sized for newborns to one-year-olds.

**Website:** <http://www.nymilkbank.org/>

**Contact:** <https://www.nymilkbank.org/contact-us/>

2. **Kids' Kloset** - "Nearly 13% of Westchester county children under 18 live in poverty." Kids' Kloset is a volunteer-driven program that provides under-served Westchester County children with donated clothing and related items. Since Kids' Kloset opened in 2011, it has provided over 17,000 bags of clothing, footwear, diapers and other baby essentials to local children. Check out their facebook page to see what they're currently collecting.

**Web Presence:** <https://www.facebook.com/914kidskloset/> or [www.914cares.org/kids-kloset](http://www.914cares.org/kids-kloset)

**Contact:** (914) 458-5220

3. **Westchester's Baby Bank** - Baby Bank is a program that provides basic necessities and essentials for babies, 0-2. Their mission is to help local families in need keep their babies clean, healthy and happy. Organize a diaper drive or one for other needed baby supplies.

**Web Presence:** [914cares.org/baby-bank](http://914cares.org/baby-bank)

**Contact:** (914) 458-5220

4. **Open Door Family Medical Center** - Open Door is the region's experts in all aspects of health, with a broad focus on building healthier communities. From prevention and wellness programs to the treatment of diseases, Open Door sees their primary mission as keeping the people of Westchester and Putnam Counties healthy and strong, regardless of their ability to pay.

The birth of a new baby can be overwhelming even under the best circumstances. For families already facing inequities in the community, the added stress of the COVID-19 pandemic often means that they

are unable to afford the most basic necessities. Call them to see how you might volunteer to help these families.

**Website:** <https://www.opendoormedical.org/join-us/volunteer/>

**Contact:** [hello@odfmc.org](mailto:hello@odfmc.org) or **The Mamaroneck Office:** 914-OD-CARES

5. **Coalition for Community** - This pandemic has forced many families to have to choose between buying food, paying rent, or buying clothes. This organization's leadership teams have branched out to providing clothing support and received over 100 applications for help within 3 days! They are now seeking financial donations to purchase new shoes and underwear to supplement used donations from The Sharing Shelf. [DONATE HERE](#) (choose "**Community Clothing**" in the fund drop down). This effort is being led by St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Mamaroneck, with the support of the Coalition for Community, Larchmont Avenue Church, and the MHS Street Store.

**Interested in volunteering to sort clothes at The Sharing Shelf?** Email [thesharingshelf@fsw.org](mailto:thesharingshelf@fsw.org).

**Specific questions?** Email [MHSstreetstore@gmail.com](mailto:MHSstreetstore@gmail.com).

## *Hidur P'nai Zaken – Respecting/Honoring the Elderly*

**1. Your Family** - Use FaceTime, Zoom, Google Meet, Microsoft Teams, or other virtual platforms to connect with grandparents or other elderly relatives who might be cheered by a visit. Write a collection of stories and life lessons that they share with you. If you don't have a lot of elderly relatives or if you want to reach out to more people, ask friends if you can reach out to their relatives and listen to their stories together. You can also teach people in your family how to cook family recipes of an older relative, collect recipes from your oldest relatives and create a story/recipe book.

**2. The New Jewish Home** - The New Jewish Home, Sarah Neuman, provides skilled nursing care for elders, as well as short-term care for those recovering from a recent hospitalization. Read about how their cantor continues connection for the residents and staff during COVID-19 here:

<https://jewishhome.org/the-power-of-shabbat-even-over-the-loudspeaker/>

They are currently receiving too many cards from the community but they are having their Friday services outside this summer and might be interested in having our learners attend or participate if the parent was comfortable. **Please check back with Rabbi Frankel for an update before calling.**

**Website:** <https://jewishhome.org/>

**Contact:** Jeanette Cohen – 914.864.5141; [jcohen@jewishhome.org](mailto:jcohen@jewishhome.org)

**3. DOROT** - DOROT is a nonprofit organization addressing the challenges of an aging population. They serve clients with a diverse range of programs and services & deliver those programs and services through intergenerational connections with volunteers of all ages.

DOROT will be offering new online interactive programs for younger and older adult volunteers in August and September. Now that we are all keeping our distance from one another to protect against COVID-19, a Caring Card is a wonderful way to reach out to a DOROT older adult. To see some guidelines with suggested messages and other tips to ensure that your card will bring smiles during this challenging time, please check out this page:

<https://www.dorotusa.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/Tips%20for%20a%20Successful%20Caring%20Cardmaking%20Project%20May%202020%20%281%29.pdf>.

**Website:** [www.dorotusa.org/](http://www.dorotusa.org/)

**Contact:** Dorot Westchester (914) 485-8354

**4. JASA** - JASA honors older New Yorkers as vital members of society, providing services that support aging with purpose and partnering to build strong communities. In March, they launched the JASACHat program to connect volunteers with seniors for a weekly phone or video chat. Their need for volunteers continues to grow.

**Website:** <https://www.jasa.org/get-involved/volunteer>

**Contact:** volunteer@jasa.org or 212.273.5320 for any questions.



## Bal Tash'chit – Caring for the Earth

1. **Larchmont Manor** – Due to COVID-19, they have experienced a loss in Beach memberships this summer and so could really use volunteer help cleaning up their beaches that collect a lot of spillover from local drainage systems. This can be all day work that requires a team of committed people for a certain number of days. Volunteers will allow the lifeguards to focus on the water and will provide greater safety for everyone. A great project for a group of families to sign up for together. Learners are requested to have parents present to supervise and address some of the educational moments regarding types of materials that might show up. Contact John, the park director, at [Larchmontmanorpark@yahoo.com](mailto:Larchmontmanorpark@yahoo.com) or (914)834-4309.

2. **Sustainable Westchester** - Sustainable Westchester is a nonprofit, consortium of Westchester County local governments that facilitates effective collaboration on sustainability initiatives. Their goal is to bring socially responsible, environmentally sound, and economically viable solutions that create healthy, resilient, sustainable communities.

Their contact below will be happy to work with any of our learners on becoming a composter & a Love Your Food (<https://www.loveyourfoodny.org/>) ambassador. There are also local targeted gardening projects underway to help certain insect groups i.e. butterflies retain their environmental cycles.

**Website:** <https://sustainablewestchester.org/>

**Contact for composting:** Karen Khor, Volunteer, Town of Mamaroneck Sustainability Collaborative, 646-642-5561

**Contact for Gardening:** Elizabeth Poyet [epoyet@gmail.com](mailto:epoyet@gmail.com)

3. **Sheldrake Environmental Center** – The Sheldrake Environmental Center has a community garden for growing vegetables and they need lots of help with that. The trails at Sheldrake can always use a little TLC in terms of trash pick-up. It's been heavily used during the pandemic which is great! But there is also more trash there than I have ever seen.

**Website:** <https://www.sheldrakecenter.org/>

**Contact:** Jocelyn Kleinman at [education@sheldrakecenter.org](mailto:education@sheldrakecenter.org).

## Tza'ar Ba'alei Chayyim – Compassion for Animals

1. **Humane Society of Westchester** – The Humane Society of Westchester, founded in 1911 as the New Rochelle Humane Society, is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to promoting the human/animal bond through the compassionate care and treatment of animals throughout the communities we serve in Westchester County and beyond. To that end, their goal is to create a living environment that is not just a shelter, but a transitional home for stray, lost, abandoned, injured, and abused animals, until they can ultimately be placed in loving permanent homes.

**Website to foster a dog or a cat:** <https://humanesocietyofwestchester.org/foster-a-pet/>

**Website page to organize needed supplies:** <https://humanesocietyofwestchester.org/wish-list/>

**Contact:** 914-632-2925

2. **SPCA** - The SPCA of Westchester is a no-kill, 501(c)3 not-for-profit animal welfare organization dedicated to saving homeless, abused and abandoned animals and to protecting animals from cruelty and neglect through education and enforcement of humane laws.

**Website pages to foster:** <https://spca914.org/programs-and-services/foster-care>

**Website for materials needed:** <https://spca914.org/donate/wish-list>

**Contact:** 914-941-2896

3. **Paws Crossed:** Paws Crossed is a no-kill shelter in Elmsford.

**Website:** <https://www.pawscrossedny.org/getting-kids-involved>

**Contact:** 914-372-7878

## Pikuach Nefesh – Saving a Life

1. **My Sisters' Place** – My Sisters' Place strives to end domestic violence and human trafficking through comprehensive services, advocacy, and community education. MSP works to create a world in which every individual has the basic human right to be free from gender-based violence and to engage in relationships that embrace the principles of respect, equality, and safety.

My Sister's Place currently has several very young children that could benefit from a virtual story time. They're also in need of book bags, arts and crafts items and masks.

**Website:** [www.mspny.org](http://www.mspny.org)

**Contact:** Wendy Brooks at [hwlbrooks@gmail.com](mailto:hwlbrooks@gmail.com)

2. **Masks for NY** is an organization that has distributed masks directly to a list of hospitals, care centers, food pantries, shelters, senior centers! These masks are currently collected at Westchester, NY based hubs, as over 250 volunteers work tirelessly to cut or snip or sew or drive. They are a dedicated relay team, acting for the good of our community.

**Website:** <https://www.masksforny.org/>

**Contact:** Complete their volunteer form here:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScNQ5hTbeCfEakYAWMEHqMQo0s7Xx7R6Vc2He3XZDgg10hGMA/viewform>

3. **YWCA White Plains & Central Westchester** - YWCA of White Plains and Central Westchester provides low-income supportive housing for women. It is seeking donations of reusable face masks that will be utilized by its most vulnerable tenants as well as its essential workers and staff who continuously go into work daily to make sure all tenants' needs are met.

YWCA of White Plains and Central Westchester supports women with different debilitating life challenges, including chronic homelessness, mental illnesses, and substance use disorders. It also serves victims of domestic violence and human trafficking, as well as those with different physical and other life challenges.

Express interest below to connect with the organizer of this opportunity and to find out how you can donate face masks.

**Website:**

<https://ywcawpcw.org/what-we-do/empowerment-and-economic-advancement/womens-residence>

**Contact:** Isabella Malouf [Click here to email this contact](#)

4. **Afya Foundation of America: Supplies for Life** - The Greater New York area is in desperate need of personal protection equipment (PPE) for its health workers. Afya is preparing to deliver these vital supplies to hospitals and federally qualified health centers during the COVID-19 crisis. However, there is a severe shortage of supplies, and volunteers are needed to help get more.

Volunteers can call their doctors, specialists, or dentists who have supplies to donate. They can also contact free-standing surgical centers, plastic surgery centers, construction companies, or manufacturers and ask them to donate their PPE.

**Supplies needed:**

- Masks (all types, including N95)
- Face shields
- Goggles/eye protection
- Procedure gloves
- Disposable gowns and coveralls
- Disinfectant wipes
- Hand sanitizer

**To volunteer for Afya**, secure any or all of the above supplies or establish a connection to a healthcare provider, facility, or manufacturer with supplies to donate. Express interest below to alert Afya's volunteer coordinator, who will connect with you about the supplies you'd like to donate.

**Website:** <https://afyafoundation.org/>

**Contact:** Mary Grace Pagaduan [Click here to email this contact](#)

5. **The Red Cross** - American Red Cross babysitting and child care courses can help you provide quality care to children of all ages and make you extra qualified to react responsibly in case of any emergencies. Developed by experts in the industry, their online courses are available to those ages 11 and older, and include topics such as choosing age-appropriate activities, basic child care, like bottle feeding, child behavior, leadership, professionalism, safety, starting a babysitting business, and more. You can challenge yourself to learn CPR & First Aid for children and for pets.

**Website:**

[https://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/babysitting-child-care?utm\\_source=RCO&utm\\_medium=For\\_Individuals\\_Find\\_Classes\\_and\\_Certification&utm\\_content=Babysitting\\_and\\_Child\\_Care](https://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/babysitting-child-care?utm_source=RCO&utm_medium=For_Individuals_Find_Classes_and_Certification&utm_content=Babysitting_and_Child_Care)

6. A learner can pair up with one of our members who are social workers, psychologists, etc. who can virtually teach them how to identify stressors unique to COVID-19 and how to be a peer leader during this time. The learner can host a zoom class for their grade or family & friends to educate them how to identify and talk about stress and techniques to lower stress for people of all ages.

**Contact:** Rabbi Frankel

## **Bikur Cholim – Caring for the Sick (and their caregivers)**

1. **Blythedale Children's Hospital** – Blythedale Children's Hospital is dedicated to improving the health and quality of life of children with complex medical illnesses and disabling conditions, through superb multi-disciplinary care, teaching, research and advocacy programs. By combining expert medical care and rehabilitation, they provide hope to children and families with the goal of enabling children to be discharged home as soon as possible.

Blythedale has a Kids for Kids project idea list. Please contact Ms. Dinzey below to see what their current volunteer opportunities might be.

**Website:** [www.blythedale.org](http://www.blythedale.org)

**Contact:** Jabeen Dinzey 831-2428 or [jdinzey@blythedale.org](mailto:jdinzey@blythedale.org)

2. **Friends of Karen** - The mission of Friends of Karen is to provide emotional, financial, and advocacy support to children with a life-threatening illness and their families. As a part of this effort, Friends of Karen is recruiting local volunteers who can help organize material drives in their communities. Volunteers can help in many ways.

**Website:** <https://www.friendsofkaren.org/volunteer>

**Contact:** Denise Tredwell at [denisetredwell@friendsofkaren.org](mailto:denisetredwell@friendsofkaren.org) or call her at (914) 617-4052.

3. **Hospice of Westchester** - Hospice of Westchester is committed to providing compassionate end of life care. We combine the highest level of quality medical care with emotional and spiritual support enabling individuals and their loved ones to make the most of each day.

Do you have a child that loves to draw? Consider helping Hospice of Westchester brighten the day of a patient! Hospice of Westchester is collecting artwork from children of all ages throughout Westchester County and building "Thinking of You" packages to bring to Hospice of Westchester patients during this difficult time. If you and your child are interested in sharing the joy of their artwork with a hospice patient, let the inspiration flow! Be sure to include the child's first name and age on the front of the piece.

**Website:** <https://www.hospiceofwestchester.org/>

**To volunteer:** Send or drop off completed artwork to: Hospice of Westchester, ATTN: Joan Jacobus, 1025 Westchester Avenue, 2nd Floor, White Plains, NY, 10604

**4. Feeding the Front Line** - Local restaurants and our healthcare community are both facing extraordinary challenges, and here's an opportunity to support both of them. Westchester Magazine launched Feeding the Front Line, an initiative to raise money to purchase food from open restaurants and deliver it to healthcare professionals. All the money raised will be spent at local restaurants who in turn will deliver the food to health care providers and first responders dealing with COVID-19 throughout Westchester County. No donation is too small and every dollar helps.

**Contact:** [marketing@westchestermagazine.com](mailto:marketing@westchestermagazine.com) with questions or for more information

**5. Health Hero Hotline** Show your appreciation for healthcare workers by calling the [Health Hero Hotline](#) and leaving a message of gratitude for healthcare workers.

**Contact:** To leave your message: 877-226-4376

**6. United Hebrew** - Express gratitude for local social workers, art therapists, nurses, home health aides & residential staff at United Hebrew of New Rochelle or send letters of encouragement to patients and residents at their rehab and assisted living homes.

United Hebrew welcomes your letters! If you would like to send a message of support please **send to:** [UHheroes@uhgc.org](mailto:UHheroes@uhgc.org)

Snail Mail: ATTN: Administration, United Hebrew of New Rochelle, 391 Pelham Road, New Rochelle, NY 10805

**7. United for the Troops** - United For the Troops will be sending "thank you" and goodwill cards to isolated and homebound veterans in local VA Hospitals and homes. Volunteers who are interested can create handwritten letters, cards, and pictures to help show our veterans how thankful we are of them. This is the perfect project for volunteers who are sheltering in place.

**Mail handwritten cards and notes to:** United For the Troops (UFT), 16 Boniello Drive, Mahopac, NY 10541

**Contact:** Jim Rathschmidt [Click here to email this contact.](#)

**8. Contact your local municipal police, fire, or emergency medical services** to arrange meal delivery for those who keep our neighborhoods safe.

**9. White Plains Hospital Caregiver Support Program:** A Caregiver is defined as a family member, partner, friend; essentially anyone who has assumed informal responsibility for helping an individual meet their daily living needs. In addition to providing comfort and emotional support to a hospitalized loved one, caregivers play an essential role in coordinating patient care (in the hospital and post-discharge), which is often overwhelming. The caregiver support program provides: relevant information regarding many available resources (in the Hospital and within the community), emotional support, coping strategies, and coaching techniques to better manage a patient's care while in the hospital and after release (whether to home, a rehab facility or nursing home).

During this time, they would love to partner with our learners to educate them about the needs of children of caregivers and help our learners offer anonymous support by donating a care basket with a card. Each basket can be tailored to ages 3-16 and can include age appropriate items such as word searches, picture matches, small board book, picture book or chapter book, colored pencils or crayons and coloring books, crossword puzzles, origami paper with instructions and comfort items such as lip balm, hand lotion, nail polish, gum, chocolate, etc. The director of the caregiving program will speak with each learner to help them understand what they might want to convey to these children in a card to accompany the basket.

**Contact at WP Hospital:** Laura Himmelstein, LCSW 914-681-2720

**10. Burke Rehabilitation Hospital's Caregiver Program** - Burke Rehabilitation Hospital, a member of the Montefiore Health System, is one of the nation's premiere leaders in rehabilitation medicine. Burke offers both inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation care for the full range of neurological, musculoskeletal, cardiac, and pulmonary conditions resulting from illness, injury or surgery.

Burke is happy to partner with our B'nei Mitzvah learners to recognize the efforts of the 50-90 caregivers that enter their facility between 5 and 7 pm each day. They will work with each learner to create appropriate and comforting baskets of care for the caregivers. If desired, they can have 3 people max come and hand out these baskets. They would need to collect the baskets about 4 days in advance of giving them out.. Set up, pending weather, would probably be a table outside of their front lobby.

**Website:** <https://www.burke.org/about>

**Contact:** Robin Goldberg (914) 597-2132, [rgoldberg@Burke.org](mailto:rgoldberg@Burke.org)

**11. Sharsheret** - Sharsheret, a national non-profit organization, improves the lives of Jewish women and families living with or at increased genetic risk for breast or ovarian cancer through personalized support and saves lives through educational outreach.



Sharsheret's B'nai Mitzvah program provides meaningful ways for B'nai Mitzvah to include a chesed component in their celebrations as they reach this important milestone in their lives. Sharsheret works with B'nai Mitzvah celebrants to develop a project that meets their specific interest and needs. B'nai Mitzvah have coordinated Shabbat awareness programs in their communities, hosted bake sales in support of Sharsheret, organized toy collections for Sharsheret's Busy Box® program, coordinated Pink and Teal Challah Bakes, and so much more. They tailor every project based on individual interests and are always open to new ideas!

**Website:** <https://sharsheret.org/>

**Contact:** Sarah Eagle, Outreach Program Coordinator, 866 474-2774

## Hachnasat Orchim – Welcoming Guests/Reaching out to Strangers

**1. Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism** – the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism (the RAC) has been the hub of Jewish social justice work. As a joint instrumentality of the Union for Reform Judaism and the Central Conference of American Rabbis, they represent the values of the largest and most diverse Jewish Movement in North America. The RAC mobilizes around federal, state, and local legislation; supports and develops congregational leaders; and organizes communities to create a world overflowing with justice, compassion, and peace. As part of a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, their work is completely nonpartisan.

The RAC has an “Every Voice, Every Vote” campaign. They are looking for people to help mobilize voters, combat voter suppression and to engage college age voters.

**Website:** <https://rac.org/rac-civic-engagement-campaign-2020-1>

**Contact:** LT member, Jayne Lipman [jayne@coverd.com](mailto:jayne@coverd.com)

**2. Neighbors for Refugees** - Refugees and immigrants bravely leave behind everything to seek safety, a life free from fear, and the chance for a new start. Neighbors for Refugees is a 501(c)(3) Westchester non-profit and resettlement organization. They are a non-political, grassroots humanitarian group located in Westchester County, NY, organized to welcome Westchester refugees and other new Americans, both here in our state and elsewhere.

Volunteers come alongside our new neighbors to empower them throughout their first year of transition as they reach self-sufficiency. They provide services such as refugee resettlement, community connections, ESL support, career assistance, and we also help with social services and empowerment initiatives. **We are waiting to hear back from them about possible Mitzvah Projects. Please check back with Rabbi Frankel for an update.**

**Website:** <https://www.neighborsforrefugees.org/community-engagement>

**Contact:** [info@neighborsforrefugees.com](mailto:info@neighborsforrefugees.com)

**3. The Coachman Family Center** - Westhab's Homeless Services programs help homeless individuals and families quickly get back on their feet and secure permanent housing. Their robust service model helps with housing, jobs, connecting to community-based resources, and everything else needed to help make permanent self-sufficiency and independence a reality.

Now that the “Coachman Kids” do not visit LT monthly – how can you still support them? You can assemble bags with necessities for families put together backpacks stuffed with enriching summer learning materials and art supplies for children, be a reading buddy, tutor, entertainer, virtually, with a

younger student over zoom or face-time. To explore these or other ideas, please reach out to LT member, Vicki Erlich.

**Website:** <https://www.westhab.org/> **Contact:** Vicki Erlich at [drvickiehrlich@aol.com](mailto:drvickiehrlich@aol.com)

4. **Westchester Jewish Community Services** - Westchester Jewish Community Services (WJCS) strengthens communities by helping people of all ages and backgrounds overcome emotional, cognitive, physical and social challenges. Bar and Bat Mitzvah community service projects are available and can be tailored to your needs.

**Website:** <http://www.wjcs.com/index.php>

**Contact:** Diana Eppolito at [deppolito@wjcs.com](mailto:deppolito@wjcs.com)

5. **Center Lane** – Center Lane (run by WJCS) is where Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer / Questioning (LGBTQ+) youth create community connect with culture and contribute to the world. As Westchester's only community youth center, Center Lane works to reduce the isolation that many LGBTQ+ young people feel and promote a culture in all Westchester towns that supports and affirms LGBTQ+ youth.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Center Lane has rallied to serve LGBTQ+ youth during one of the scariest and most complicated times of their lives. They continue to provide safe space with peers and caring adults, offering individual counseling for youth struggling with this 'new normal', particularly those who are confined to their homes which are not always supportive of their sexuality or gender identity.

There are several ways you can volunteer with Center Lane:

1. Join their online youth support group that includes LGBTQ+ youth and their allies.
2. Make pieces of art or compose a song about personal strength through hard times, believing in yourself, strength in our differences, etc. that will be anonymously gifted to their youth
3. Bring an LGBTQ+ 101 seminar with Q & A to a multigenerational online audience of LT members

**Website:** [http://www.wjcs.com/index.php?src=gendocs&ref=CenterLane\\_2015](http://www.wjcs.com/index.php?src=gendocs&ref=CenterLane_2015)

**Contact:** David Diamond at [centerlane@wjcs.com](mailto:centerlane@wjcs.com) or 914-423-0610. David will make sure that each student is matched with an age and individually appropriate way to volunteer.

6. **The Jewish Board** - The Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services strengthens families and communities throughout New York City by helping individuals of all backgrounds realize their potential and live as independently as possible. Become a Virtual Volunteer or Activities Leader

**Contact:** <https://jewishboard.org/volunteer-covid19/>

7. **Bluecard** - The Mission of The Blue Card is to provide direct financial assistance to needy Holocaust survivors. Lift a Holocaust Survivor's Spirits –Holocaust survivors throughout the US have been sheltering at home to keep safe from COVID-19. However, many live alone and are experiencing anxiety, depression, and PTSD from memories of the Holocaust and of hiding from the Nazis. You can help by sending them a short 1-minute video to cheer them up!

Website: <http://www.bluecardfund.org/virtual-volunteering.html>

8. Card, poetry, drawings, short stories, Letters or an essay on an interesting topic for Seniors – **MET Council** – <https://www.metcouncil.org/creating-connections>

9. **Support Local Unemployed Seamstresses by Purchasing a Mask**

LT Social Action supports congregants Roseanne Amoils and her daughter Alyssa with their initiative that combines local job creation with personal protection. They are making masks! Each mask costs \$10 and all monies raised by this project will go directly to local seamstresses who have become unemployed due to the pandemic. To order and for more information, click [here](#).

10. **JCCA Pleasantville Cottage School** - Pleasantville Cottage School is home to emotionally troubled boys and girls, ages 7-16. Its philosophy is that the child is part of a family that must be engaged and helped so that the child can safely return home permanently. The Pleasantville Cottage School is taking the utmost precautions to protect the children in its care during the COVID-19 crisis. Due to the pandemic, the children aren't able to attend school or participate in many of their usual activities. Help donate toys, games, and crafts supplies to keep the children active and engaged.

**To volunteer:** <http://www.jccany.org/volunteer>

**Contact:** Sandi Rosenthal [Click here to email this contact](#)

[Click here](#) to view the Amazon wish list and purchase a game or toy

Mail or ship the order to: JCCA Pleasantville Cottage Campus, ATTN: Sandi Rosenthal, 1075 Broadway Pleasantville, NY 10570

11. **The Community Resource Center** - CRC is a 501 C 3 nonprofit social services and advocacy organization dedicated to empowering and integrating new immigrants in Westchester County, NY. They are currently in great need of medical and personal supplies for families and might be able to use virtual communication between young people for conversational practice in English or companionship. **We are waiting to hear back from them so please check with Rabbi Frankel for updates as to what will be most helpful for them at this time.**

**Website:** <http://www.crcny.org/>

**Contact:** 914-450-3394

## **Ahavat Yisrael – Loving & Supporting Israel**

1. **The Lone Soldier Project** - The Lone Soldier Mitzvah Project enables teens to directly impact the lives of IDF lone soldiers while engaging their community through a variety of giving activities such as letter-writing, fundraising, holding a gift drive, and hosting events to help raise awareness. Their team

of professionals takes an intimate approach to these projects, working directly with each teen to create a meaningful, interesting and inspiring project that will make an impact for years to come.

**Website:** [https://israelforever.org/programs/LoneSoldierProject/mitzvah\\_projects/](https://israelforever.org/programs/LoneSoldierProject/mitzvah_projects/)

**Contact:** <https://israelforever.org/programs/LoneSoldierProject/contact/>

**2. Friends of the Israeli Defense Forces** - FIDF is a non-political, non-military organization that works closely with the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) to provide for the well-being of its soldiers. In fact, we are the single organization representing the IDF across North America and Panama. As the brave men and women of the IDF risk their lives to serve and protect Israel and the Jewish people worldwide, FIDF strengthens the bridge between the State of Israel and the U.S. and Panama to raise critical funds for IDF soldiers and their families. Our programs address their educational, financial, and emotional needs, fundamentally changing their lives and providing them with opportunities ahead.

Create a fundraising campaign to help . Your donation may provide relief through the supply of essential food and basic needs, support and education for troubled youth hit especially hard by poverty exacerbated by COVID-19, or ease the financial pressure of a soldier whose family can no longer afford to offer support due to layoffs and financial instability.

**Website:** <https://www.fidf.org/get-involved/start-your-own-campaign>

Send a message to a soldier in quarantine: <https://join.fidf.org/quarantine2020/>

**3. Polyphony** - Polyphony aims to bridge the divide between Arab and Jewish communities in Israel through music and to serve as a worldwide model for cooperation based on cultural exchange, dialogue and partnership. Polyphony envisions an Israeli society where Arab and Jewish youth receive equal access to musical education and training of the highest caliber and are provided ongoing opportunities to learn, rehearse and perform together. Through our holistic, multitiered approach, young Israelis from diverse backgrounds can create new possibilities for themselves, families, communities and fellow musicians.

In the process, they are also obtaining a heightened understanding of the social context and importance of music in society, and of their value as musicians, role models and ambassadors for promoting intercultural dialogue and reconciliation.

**To create a B'nei Mitzvah project with them:** [inquiry@polyphonyfoundation.org](mailto:inquiry@polyphonyfoundation.org)

**4. The Jewish National Fund** - Unparalleled in the Jewish philanthropic world, Jewish National Fund-USA's strategic vision has been and always will be, to ensure a strong, secure, and prosperous future for the land and people of Israel. They plant trees, build houses and parks, source water solutions, buy fire trucks, and improve the lives of people with special needs. They boost tourism,

support Aliyah, promote Zionist education and engagement, build medical centers and trauma centers, fund agricultural and culinary research, and run an American semester abroad high school in Israel.

Using their online tools, you can create your own fundraising website to collect online donations and send emails to promote your passion to friends and family. Thanks to funds raised through fundraising events, Jewish National Fund is bringing an enhanced quality of life to all of Israel's residents. And by participating, YOU can play a part in raising critical funds to support that mission.

**Contact for Mitzvah Projects:** [https://secure.jnf.org/site/TR?fr\\_id=1890&pg=informational&sid=1850](https://secure.jnf.org/site/TR?fr_id=1890&pg=informational&sid=1850)

**5. The Ethiopian National Project** - ENP helps Ethiopian-Israeli teenagers succeed in school, develop self-confidence and discover their potential by providing intensive Scholastic Assistance and a plethora of extra-curricular activities through ENP's SPACE Program. SPACE offers myriad mitzvah opportunities that will offer a unique and critical way to make a difference in Israel.

A variety of opportunities exist to sculpt a personalized Bar/Bat Mitzvah Project with ENP. ENP is pleased to work with the Bar/Bat Mitzvah and the family to create a project which will make the most out of the mitzvah. In addition, a variety of avenues for recognition of the special gift can be offered. From a short celebratory film, to a family visit, to a lasting penpal friend, to participation in the actual ceremony, ENP is a partner in helping make the mitzvah project one to remember.

**Website:** [https://www.enp.org.il/en/pages/Mitzvah\\_Projects/](https://www.enp.org.il/en/pages/Mitzvah_Projects/)

**Contact:** [https://www.enp.org.il/en/contact\\_us.php](https://www.enp.org.il/en/contact_us.php)

**6. Pizza IDF** - This organization allows you to send warm food to active duty soldiers who, day after day, are fighting terror and protecting all Jewish people. Over the last two years they have delivered thousands of pizza pies (and other food too) to many thousands of soldiers. It goes well beyond getting a hot pizza or soup late at night at a lonely post. It is as tremendous an experience to give them out as it is for the soldiers to receive them. And they love to know that people everywhere support and care for them.

**Website:** <http://pizzaidf.org/>

**7. OneFamily** - OneFamily is a unique family of professionals, volunteers, supporters and victims bereaved, maimed and traumatized - young and old - Jews and non-Jews. They reach out to all of Israel's victims of terror when an attack takes place. They are a non-governmental organization funded entirely through private donations from across the world. OneFamily empowers victims of terror to rebuild their lives, rehabilitate and reintegrate through emotional, legal, and financial assistance

programs geared toward each of the following: Orphans, Bereaved Parents, Parents of Injured Children, Widows and Widowers, Young Adults, and Youth Injured and Bereaved.

**Website:** <https://www.onefamilytogether.org/portfolio/bar-and-bat-mitzvah-twinning/>

**Contact:** 646-289-8600

**8. American Friends of Combatants for Peace** - Combatants for Peace envisions a future of peace, equality and freedom, with self-determination for both Palestinians and Israelis. They serve as a model and catalyst for democracy, equality, freedom and dignity for all Palestinians and Israelis. American Friends of Combatants for Peace serves as a fiscal sponsor (501c3) for the Combatants for Peace movement in Israel and Palestine. They seek to amplify the work of Combatants for Peace through fundraising, awareness, education and coalition building.

Some project ideas to help this organization might be:

1. Learn about their organization and their use of drama and art to create partnerships of non-violence. You can look at their puppets, posters, logos and videos and create your own marketing items to be used on social media.
2. Create a zoom teach-in for friends and family about some of the basic concepts of non-violent communication or the use of the arts to bring people in conflicts together.
3. Charge admission to this teach-in or another activity in order to raise money for the special transportation needed to bring Israelis and Palestinians across borders together for peaceful relationship building. Raising money is also needed to help them continue their widely attended once a year joint memorial service for families and friends of Israelis and Palestinians that have been killed as a result of the ongoing conflict.

**Website:** <https://afcfp.org/about-us/vision-and-mission/>

**Contact:** Please follow up with Rabbi Frankel for the most up to date contact.

**9. New Israel Fund** - The New Israel Fund works to build a stronger democracy in Israel, rooted in the values of equality, of inclusion, and of social justice.

There are two ways to connect with this organization for your mitzvah project:

1. Read through written testimonies and/or watch videos about kids impacted by one or more of the issues that NIF supports. Create a social media project to educate our community about your peers in Israel and their situation, what Jewish values are involved in their struggle, and what's being done about it. You can use their [website](#), where they have a "Latest News" section,



which usually contains videos and updates on current events in Israel (same goes for their [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)).

2. Connect young people in Israel who have been given NIF grants to work on a specific social justice value to speak (virtually or in person) to LT and invite local LT youth leaders (you can be one of them) or ones that you know of outside of our LT community working towards the same values to share strategies, stories, successes, road blocks, etc. that they have experienced doing their work. Adults involved in these issues can speak to the adult attendees and then the younger people can talk about what it's like to be young and politically involved in Israel and what it's like to be young and caring about social justice issues in the US.

**Website:** [www.nif.org](http://www.nif.org)

**Contact:** Jacob Levkowicz, NIF Program Office, [jacob@nif.org](mailto:jacob@nif.org)

## Other possibilities:

1. Record a PSA style video to raise awareness for a cause you believe in.
2. Create a 100 days of kindness list and video blog the experience of completing the checklist items and enlisting others to help in a “pay it forward” model. (<https://www.dosomething.org/>)

Website: <https://www.areyvut.org/events/2020-virtual-national-mitzvah-day/>

If you are already volunteering or would like to volunteer with an organization that is not in this list of resources, please let Rabbi Frankel know! We would love to hear about it and add it to our list!

**Wishing you a rewarding journey towards becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah**

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