



National Mitzvah Day & 24 Hour of *Chesed*: Project Planning Unit

We value your participation in our 13th annual National Mitzvah Day and first 24 Hours of *Chesed*. Your partnership is greatly appreciated.

This Project Planning Unit will help guide you in crafting a meaningful and successful program for your synagogue, school or community. We encourage you to use this guide throughout the year as a way to plan programs that impact your participants while meeting the needs of the community. We acknowledge Susan Abravanel who initially developed a Project Planning Unity for our 2006 National Mitzvah Day. This guide has been updated and is based on Susan's. We thank Susan for her help, leadership and partnership.

This *Areyvut* Project Planning Unit will help you:

- **Assess** your community and respond to a real community need;
- **Connect** your community service to in-school, synagogue learning or your youth movement and community experience;
- **Reflect** purposefully throughout the project, to connect the service you are doing, your goals and your own lives;
- **Celebrate** your success, recognizing all participants; share your achievements with others and
- **Evaluate** your accomplishments and the process you used.

Identify the problem(s) and select your project:

What issue(s) does your mission statement address? THE PROBLEM	What would you like to see instead? THE SOLUTION	What could YOU and your peers do to help? THE PROJECT

Making your selection:

From the list of potential project choices and ideas, decide which ONE you will select. Evaluate your choices by asking these questions:

Volunteers: Will your project attract enough volunteers to complete it as planned?

Time: Will you and your volunteers have enough time to design, develop and implement this project?

Resources and funding: Will your project need funding? If so, how will you secure the needed funds and/or in-kind support to implement a successful project?

Task Checklists:

One of the best ways to “get it all done” is to divide the tasks into the following four categories. You may choose to have four groups, each working on one of the categories or have everyone or a leadership team work together through all tasks:

1. Logistics

- Estimate the number of volunteers you will need for the project.

- Contact any community organization you want to work with on your project. Reach out and share your project idea with them. Make sure it meets their needs. Be prepared to meet in person and/or discuss the following information about your project with them:
 - ✓ A thorough description of your project, including what you hope to accomplish by the end of the day
 - ✓ Date and time that you would like to do your project
 - ✓ How many volunteers you think you will have in your project group
 - ✓ What kind of help you will need from staff at the organization
 - ✓ What the organization may be able to provide, and what you will need to provide in order to do the project (special equipment, tools, snacks, protective clothing, etc.)
 - ✓ Be sure to delineate roles and develop a timeline
 - ✓ Leave the meeting with a clear understanding of your role and that of the partner agency
 - ✓ After the meeting, share in writing notes that highlight the important points that were discussed

Be prepared to be flexible, and sensitive to the needs and capacity of the organization.

- Visit the selected project site(s) to know what to expect on Project Day.
 - ✓ If applicable determine best placement for on-site coordination “staging area,” arrange for registration table and folding chairs (if needed).
 - ✓ Make arrangements for purchase (if necessary), and for delivery of special equipment, tools, snacks, etc. to the project site.
 - ✓ Consider having a backup plan in case things don’t go as planned.

Task Checklists: *(continued)*

2. Working with Volunteers

- Contact others** who might be willing to help you with your project. Keep an accurate, up-to-date list of the following contact information for all volunteers:
 - ✓ Full name
 - ✓ Home Address
 - ✓ Phone number (home or cell)
 - ✓ E-mail address
 - ✓ Emergency contacts

- Prepare a letter to distribute project information to all volunteers.** Include information about:
 - ✓ what the project is,
 - ✓ where and when it will take place,
 - ✓ where and when to meet (including directions to the project site, and the availability of transportation)
 - ✓ appropriate clothing they should wear
 - ✓ anything they may need to bring (for example, ID, a notepad, water, food, tools or other equipment, etc.)

- Copy and distribute volunteer waivers.**

Depending on your project and community partner you may need to have a signer waiver for all volunteers and/or participants. In such cases you will need a waiver from all participants—students and adults—for your event. Consult your leadership - as well as any community organization you are working with on your project - to see what specific waiver language they may require.

- Plan out your National Mitzvah Day and 24 Hours of *Chesed* Project presentation for volunteers.**

You will want to include:

 - ✓ an introduction to the project leaders for the day;
 - ✓ project goals, what you will be doing, that you are part of a national effort and clear instructions (if needed);
 - ✓ appropriate behavior and safety reminders;
 - ✓ restroom locations;
 - ✓ a big THANK YOU for helping!!

Task Checklists: *(continued)*

3. Resources

- Determine costs (if any) for materials, equipment and services you will need as you implement your project.

Your costs might include:

- ✓ tools or special equipment
- ✓ materials (such as paint, books for a literacy project, bags for a clothing drive, plants and mulch for a planting project, paper materials for advertising, etc.)
- ✓ water and snacks for volunteers
- ✓ National Mitzvah Day and 24 Hours of *Chesed* shirts
- ✓ recognition/thank-you items (swag such as buttons, stickers, hats)

- Develop the project budget, and include any expected income (individual donations, fundraising proceeds) that you could use to offset your expenses.

- If needed, seek additional support - other funding such as in-kind donations - for the project.

- Be sure to keep a detailed record of all donations and in-kind support you receive for the project and to properly thank donors. (Donors will want a proper acknowledgement of their donations for their records and tax purposes.)

- Remember to recognize and thank all sponsors, donors and volunteers at the event and again after the event in any correspondence, newsletters, blog posts, social media posts and videos.

Task Checklists: *(continued)*

4. Publicity, Media and Documentation

For publicity, you may want to:

- ✓ Highlight your participation on your website, blog and social media channels.
- ✓ Include announcements in your bulletins, newsletters and regular correspondence.
- ✓ Prepare flyers, posters, memes and/or infographics about the project to help recruit other participants.
- ✓ Be sure to provide contact information –including a link to the event, phone number and e-mail address- so they can reach out to ask questions or sign up as a volunteer.
- ✓ Inform local business and elected officials about your project. Invite them to attend and to support your efforts.

For media, you may want to:

- ✓ Write advance news releases or articles about your project. Include quotes from team leaders, participants, program partners and funders telling how they are planning to make a difference.
- ✓ Request that influencers share your project and encourage others to participate.
- ✓ Once your project is complete, highlight the results and impact to your school, synagogue, local media and the community.
- ✓ After your project, write an update to the community highlighting the project and thanking everyone who participated and helped out.

To document your project, consider the following:

- ✓ Take “before” and “after” photos, to show the impact of your project.
- ✓ Video interviews with community members, project planners and participants about the benefits of your project.
- ✓ Prepare a “how-to” video, using steps from your project, to show others the process that you followed. Post your video and share the link.
- ✓ Compile a “reflection video”, where participants reflect on their experience.
- ✓ Compile a photo book that highlights the project and your participation.
- ✓ Be sure that you have permission from anyone whom you film or videotape.

Reflection ⇒ Connection

What is important to you about your project?

Reflection – throughout and after your project – helps you to connect to what you: learn in school, experience in synagogue, and see in both your local and broader community.

Some Questions that Prompt Reflection:

- Why did you decide to participate?
- What did you enjoy most about what you did?
- What did you learn that you didn't know before?
- How does this connect with your Jewish tradition?
- How do you think you made a difference in your community?
- Why do you think that the project you did is your responsibility?
- If you did the same project again, what would do differently?

Try to use a variety of ways to reflect:

Write - journals, stories, poems, essays; articles or letters to the editor in your Jewish or local newspaper; informational brochures; blog posts

Read - articles and books about service or topics related to the project; informational data about the need your are addressing

Speak - class or group discussions, debates; presentations or skits for others; informational interviews

Create- collages, posters, scrapbooks, photo essays, videos, PowerPoint presentations, story boards, murals, mobiles, cartoons, puzzles, songs, dances

Watch- videos such as Ted Talks or ELI Talks that relate to your project

Social media- **utilize** social media as a way to reflect and engage others in a conversation about the cause your project addressed

Post-Project Reflection

*After your National Mitzvah Day and 24 Hours of Chesed project, we encourage you to write and submit a **1-page reflection essay**.*

Please Select ONE of the following “prompts” to help you get started:

1. Discuss the problem(s) that your project addressed. How did you address this/these issues during your project? Do you have more, or less, understanding for the problem that you addressed than you did before your project experience? Why?
2. Did this experience have any impact on the way that you see yourself, the world around you, or how you will become involved with your community in the future?
3. Choose three words that best describe your service-learning experience, and develop an essay around these words.
4. Based on your experience, what advice would you give to someone like you who was thinking about planning a similar program?
5. If you needed to come up with a catch phrase or tag line that captures your experience what would it be? Why?
6. In your opinion why as a Jew is it important that you participated in your project and this national effort?

Share with us:

Areyvut invites you to submit your reflection essay with us so that we can use your experience to engage, inspire and motivate others.

Please e-mail your completed essay to social@areyvut.org.

We encourage you to include photos of your project experience!

Project Completion Report

Please return by e-mail to:
social@areyvut.org

Your Name _____

Address _____

City _____ County _____ Zip _____

E-mail address _____

Work/home number _____ Cell number _____

Project Site _____

Community Partners for the Project (if applicable) _____

Age range of participants _____

Number of participants _____

Community Partners for the Project (if applicable) _____

What was your Group's Mission Statement? _____

Project Completion Report *continued*

How did your project connect to your Mission Statement?

Your project goals _____

Did you meet your goals? Yes No

Project Results _____

What went well? _____

What problems did you have? _____

What would you do differently next time? _____

Were the Areyvut materials helpful to you? Do you have feedback or suggestions for next year? _____

Please attach additional comments or information as needed.