



Areyvut's

National Mitzvah Day
&
24 Hours of Chesed

April 2, 2017

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Introduction

Acts of kindness are among those things that have no limits. Mishnah Peah 1

On behalf of Areyvut, I welcome your help in bringing this powerful suggestion to life by participating in Areyvut's 13th Annual National Mitzvah Day and first 24 Hours of Chesed effort. Areyvut's *A Kindness a Day* Calendar unites Jews across the world in an effort to inspire acts of kindness through its 366 suggestions of how to incorporate *chesed* (kindness), *tzedakah* (charity), and *tikkun olam* (social justice) into everyday life. One suggestion in the calendar this year says "Acts of kindness are among those things that have no limits."

On National Mitzvah Day, we will strengthen this effort as schools, synagogues, families and community organizations and thousands of people worldwide dedicate **Sunday, April 2** as a time to turn the calendar's suggestions into action. This year we hope to have every second over the full 24 hours dedicated to active kindness and that is what we are launching our first 24 Hours of Chesed effort.

The 2017 National Mitzvah Day Educational Material and 24 Hours of *Chesed* presented here focuses on ways that we can make the *mitzvot* that we do today lead to making a better future. Included in this packet is a Project Planning Unit, 50 Ways For Individuals to Participate in the 24 Hours of Chesed effort and concrete project ideas with step by step instructions. For additional resources, please visit the Areyvut website www.aryvut.org for additional ideas.

We hope that these materials help schools, synagogues, families and communities discover opportunities for kindness on National Mitzvah Day and every day, all year long. Materials can be used to inspire your own ideas, and begin your own Mitzvah Day activity. Feel free to share these resources with others, and we ask that you acknowledge and credit Areyvut.

Please let us know what project you are planning by [registering](#) your project on our website. By doing so, we will not only be able to help you coordinate and facilitate your project, but you will also be inspiring others with your actions. For your convenience, a registration form is also included in this packet.

Thank you to our Board of Trustees, interns and staff who have helped bring this project to fruition. Thank you to all those participating in National Mitzvah Day 2017 and 24 Hours of Chesed effort.

Daniel Rothner

Daniel Rothner
Founder & Director
Areyvut

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 Unit 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? <small>THE PROBLEM</small>	What would you like to see instead? <small>THE SOLUTION</small>	What could YOU and your peers do to help? <small>THE PROJECT</small>

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 you 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.

50 Ways For Individuals to Participate in 24 Hours of Chesed

We really want you to participate in **24 Hours of Chesed!** Here are 50 ways that you can be a part of **24 Hours of Chesed** and fill April 2nd with kindness, compassion and good deeds.

1. Check to see if your workplace, synagogue, or local restaurant donates its leftover food to organizations that serve the hungry. If not, offer to put them in touch with agencies that serve those in need who can arrange pick up of leftover food.
2. Good at sewing or knitting? Donate homemade blankets to people in need.
3. Support a local business.
4. Allow another driver to merge into your lane.
5. Buy one extra non-perishable food item and bring it to a homeless shelter, food pantry, soup kitchen or senior center, or bring it to an organization that distributes food to the hungry.
6. Don't raise your voice today.
7. Become a philanthropist by making a gift to an organization that is underfunded and take an active role in their work.
8. Donate furniture you no longer use to charity.
9. Give a baby or wedding gift you owe.
10. Offer to run an errand or do a chore for an elderly neighbor.
11. Treat a friend to dinner unexpectedly.
12. Give your child a blessing. Mention something he or she did this week that made you proud.
13. Help support the Israeli economy by purchasing Israeli products at local stores and on the Internet.

14. Loan someone money, free of interest.
15. Make a special effort to console and assist those who have recently lost their loved ones.
16. Make yourself available to drive someone to the doctor or hospital.
17. Volunteer for an hour at an organization of your choice.
18. Call your siblings today and congratulate them on their achievements, both big and small.
19. Let someone who has fewer items than you do go ahead of you at the supermarket.
20. Make a welcome basket for a new child or new family in town. This can include useful telephone numbers, a neighborhood guide and food.
21. Hold the door open for those who enter or leave after you.
22. Write a thank you note to your parents, spouse, mentor or anyone who has helped you.
23. Make a list of ways in which you have wronged others over the past week. Resolve to spend the next week asking forgiveness for your actions.
24. Send a care package to deployed troops, veterans, or wounded soldiers. Write a thank-you letter and include some food (no homemade or canned food allowed). Take a look at [Operation Gratitude](#) or [Give2TheTroops](#) to learn what to donate and who to send it to.
25. Show your hospitality and invite a friend now for Shabbat.
26. Deliver flowers or pizza to your local police or fire station as a thank-you for a job well done.
27. When you have the urge to gossip about someone, say something positive about him or her instead.
28. Make a *tzedakah* box—a charity box—and place it in at a convenient place near the door. Whenever you come home, put the coins left in your pocket or purse in the *tzedakah* box. When the box is full, bring it to the specified charity.
29. If you know a family with young children, volunteer to play with the children or to take them out of the house for a few hours.

30. Write a handwritten letter (because it's more personal than a typed letter) to a grandparent or elderly relative. Share what is going on in your life and ask about their life experiences.
31. Make sandwiches to give to a local shelter, soup kitchen or agency.
32. Go through your closets and fill two bags with clothing that you no longer wear. In one bag put clothing that is perfectly fine—too small for you, the wrong color, just-not-you, etc. In the other put stained, torn, or ripped clothing. Give the first bag to a local organization that gives clothing directly to those in need. Give the second bag to an organization that work with members of the textile industry to recycle everything possible.
33. If you aren't already in a Bone Marrow Registry find out how you can join a bone marrow registry. If you joined a Bone Marrow Registry in the past, confirm that your information is up-to-date and ask what else you can do to help.
34. Offer to pick up medication for someone.
35. Take a large garbage bag and a pair of plastic gloves. Go for a walk in your neighborhood and collect garbage as you go.
36. Write to the President, your congressman, or a local official about a social injustice being done.
37. Care for a neighbor's pet and/or offer to take your friend's dog for a walk.
38. Call up elderly people who live on their own to see if they need anything.
39. Clean up the yards of neighbors who cannot do it themselves.
40. Bring gently used board games and decks of cards to a local homeless shelter.
41. Put on gloves and pick up litter at your local park.
42. Prepare homemade greeting cards for people in supervised homes, prisons, or nursing homes.

43. Collect pet food for an animal shelter.
44. Go through your book shelves and collect books to donate to a local school, library, juvenile detention center or children's hospital.
45. Leave a quarter or dollar in a vending machine with a note on it that says "Have a great day" or "You deserve this treat."
46. Donate old eyeglasses to an organization that recycles them for the needy.
47. Collect unused make-up, perfume and other cosmetics for a center for abused women.
48. Make a meal for someone in the community so that they can spend the day doing what they want.
49. Take some time to fix pockets, missing buttons, hems, and socks, and any other necessary at-home fixes and alternations to your parents', child's or spouse's clothing.
50. Be on the lookout for opportunities to perform good deeds and act upon them.

Challah or Matzah Covers

Ages 6 and Up
20 minutes-1 hour



Supplies:

- Table covers or newspaper
- Handkerchiefs (for matzah cover, can use a pillowcase cut a bit smaller)
- Fabric markers
- Templates of Shabbat or Passover
- Tapestry needles
- Threaders
- Yarn
- Scissors
- Cardboard (if you want to make tassels for the corners)

Directions:

- Cover the table, as the marker will bleed through
- Make designs/use templates to make designs
- Thread the needle with the yarn
- Whipstitch around the edge- see photo at left



Yarn Tassel

- Wrap yarn around cardboard (whatever size you want, ours was 3 1/2 inches high) at least 10 times.
- Loop yarn for hanger under top strands; pull tight.
- Cut through bottom loops.
- Tie yarn around tassel near the top; trim ends evenly.



Dog Chew Toy

Ages 8 and Up
20 minutes and up



Materials:

T-shirts
Scissors

Directions:

- Cut 2 inch wide strips from the t-shirts width-wise
- Take three strips and tie together, leaving about 3 inches at the top
- Have one child hold the end, and the other braid the strands together
- Tie the other end leaving about 3 inches at top
- If desired, the ends can be knotted individually

Done!

Easy Birdfeeder

Ages 4 and Up
20 minutes and up



Materials:

Different types of Cheerios

4 pipe cleaners, or 3 pipe cleaners and twine, ribbon, or raffia

Directions:

- String Cheerios on 3 of the pipe cleaners



- Make a circle out of 2 of them by twisting the ends together
- Make a curved handle out of the 3rd one, attaching it to two parts of the circle



- Hang from a tree by the 4th pipe cleaner, or twine, ribbon or raffia, and watch for feathered friends!

Fleece Blanket

Ages 8 and Up

1 hour+



Supplies:

Fleece, precut or follow the first set of directions

Directions:

To prepare the fleece:

- The finished dimensions of this fleece blanket are 48" x 58" which includes the 5" fringe on all sides.
- Gather your supplies:
- (2) 48" x 58" rectangles of fleece. Choose a fun pattern for one side and a solid color for the other side. Or choose 2 solid colors. Choose whatever you'd like!
- Sharp scissors
- Straight edge and measuring tape
- Lay the 2 pieces of flannel wrong sides together, aligning the edges and smoothing flat.
- Cut out a 5" square from each corner.

To create the blanket:

- Making sure the edges are lined up, tie each set of 1" strips into double knots until all are matched up.

Done!

Get Well Postcards

Ages 2 and Up

20 minutes to an hour



Materials:

Newspaper
Watercolors
Water containers
Paintbrushes
Scissors
Card stock

Directions:

- Paint over a piece of newspaper with watercolors and let dry
- Cut card stock into 4x6 rectangles (for younger kids, a grownup can do the cutting)
- Paint one side of the card stock in bright watercolors and let dry
- Cut the newspaper into a large shape (star, heart, etc) and glue onto the painted side of the postcard (for younger kids, a grownup can do the cutting)
- Let dry, and write a friendly note on the blank side
- Mail to a friend who could use some cheering up!

Memory Game

Ages 8 and Up

30 minutes +



Supplies:

Cardstock squares

OR cut 18-20 of your own 2.5 inch squares (you can use cardboard, and back it with the same craft paper)

Craft paper

Scissors

Glue

Paintbrush

Directions:

1. Take a set of squares,

OR cut your own:

- Paste a sheet of craft paper onto the card stock
 - Using a ruler, make 2-2.5 inch squares
2. Take the patterned craft paper and cut two of the same shapes or designs
 3. Glue onto 2 cards
 4. Repeat until you have a complete set
 5. Allow the cards to dry
 6. Bind with a rubber band and you're done!

Smile Bags With Puzzles

Ages 8 and Up

1 hour



Supplies:

Smocks
Table covers
Ziploc bags
Masking tape
Newspaper

Bags
Foam brushes
Acrylic paint
Painter's tape
Cups/holders

Puzzles

Blank Puzzle
Markers/crayons
Disposable brushes

Directions:

Bags:

- Tape out design on bag- press tape down
- Paint
- Allow to dry a bit, lay painted side down on newspaper
- Paint other side

Puzzles:

- Draw things on puzzles
- Break up into pieces and put in Ziploc bag

Done!

Snack Packs

Ages 4 and Up

20 minutes and up



Materials:

Juice boxes

Cereal bars

Brown bags

Markers

Small toy

Directions:

- Decorate the bag- write something like, “have a great summer!” or “Enjoy the snacks!”
- Put a juice box and cereal bar in the bag
- Put a little toy in the bag
- Fold over the bag

Done!

Tic Tac Toe in a Bag

Ages 8 and Up

10 minutes and up



Supplies:

- Burlap bags
- Sharpie for each child
- Ruler
- Wood shapes- 10 for each child
- Newspaper for inside of bag and table
- Small slips of paper

Directions:

1. Draw tic tac toe board as large as possible on one side of bag using sharpie and ruler
2. Make designs/decorate other side of bag
3. Draw X on both sides of 5 wood shapes
4. Draw O on both sides of 5 wood shapes
5. Close pieces in bag
6. Write a friendly note to enclose

Done!