



# ILLUMINATING WHO WE ARE

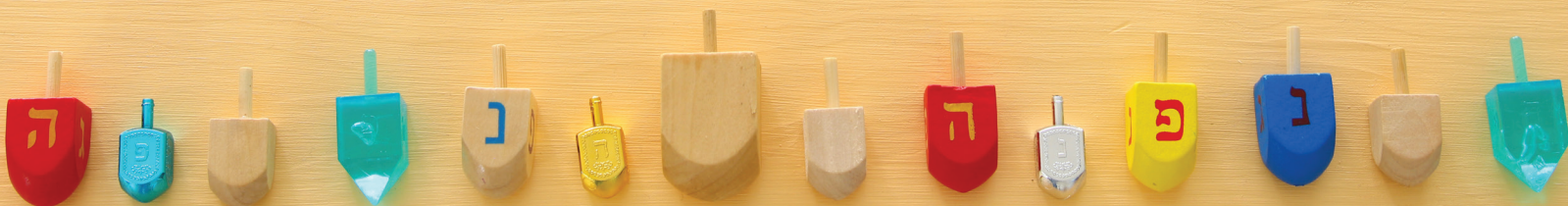
1. Who brings light into your life?
2. In what ways have you actively brought light into the world since this time last year?
3. How can you proactively add light to others?
4. What makes you “light up” like the Chanukah candles?
5. Why is it important for everyone to be free to be who they want to be?
6. How does that idea relate to Chanukah?
7. In what ways are you or anyone you know like a Maccabee?
8. Think about the concept of freedom. What do you think it means to be free? What happened to the Jewish people in the Chanukah story when they lost their freedom? How does it feel when freedom gets taken away?

*Adapted from the Jewish Grandparents Network*

# TRANSFORMING INSPIRATION INTO IMPACT

1. Consider how you can proactively bring light into others’ lives this week:
  - How can you bless and be a source of blessing to your own family?
  - How can you support or uplift your neighbors, colleagues or those in need?
  - How can you involve your children, family or friends so that kindness becomes a shared experience?
  - What simple act could you do today that would make someone feel seen, valued or appreciated?
2. As you light the menorah, focus on a cause or a person who matters deeply to you:
  - Why does this cause or individual hold such significance in your life?
  - What values do they represent that you want to embody or amplify?
  - How can you honor, support or elevate that cause or person in the coming year?
  - What small but meaningful step can you take—tonight or this week—to act on that intention?

*Adapted from Maot Chitim of Greater Chicago*





# 8 WAYS TO TEACH KIDS ABOUT KINDNESS, RESPONSIBILITY & COMMUNITY THIS CHANUKAH

Chanukah is a powerful reminder that even the smallest flame can push away tremendous darkness. It teaches us about courage, conviction and the responsibility we all have to proactively bring more light into the world. These eight nights offer families, schools and commUNITIES a chance to nurture the next generation of ethical, compassionate and engaged Jewish leaders — young people who understand that their actions matter and that they can spark meaningful change. Here are eight Areyvut-inspired ways to help children actively live their values, one candle at a time:

## 1. Illuminate What Matters Most

Invite children to identify the values that guide their choices — kindness, respect, gratitude, courage, generosity or responsibility. After lighting the menorah, write or draw these values together and display them prominently. Let the menorah's glow inspire daily reflection on who we strive to be and how we can add more light to others' lives.

## 2. Make Giving Your Brightest Gift

Chanukah presents a wonderful opportunity to teach that giving is as joyful as receiving. Encourage children to choose one act of kindness each night — writing cards to seniors, donating a toy, calling someone who needs support or helping a neighbor. Give real coins or dollars and let them practice thoughtful tzedakah by selecting causes they care about. Help them see giving as a privilege that uplifts both the giver and the receiver.

## 3. Play With Purpose

Share the legend of the dreidel as a symbol of courage and resilience. Then create a meaningful "Kindness Dreidel" game:

Nun: Share something you learned today

Gimel: Commit to a new act of chesed

Hey: Give a sincere compliment

Shin: Name one way you can bring more light to the world

Use the game as a springboard to discuss standing up for what is right and advocating respectfully for positive change.

## 4. Let Your Light Be Seen

Placing the menorah in the window is a proud expression of Jewish identity and resilience. Encourage children to think about what it means to show their values publicly and courageously — to act with integrity, kindness and

pride, even when that's not the popular choice. Explore moments when doing the right thing required bravery and when their light made a difference.

## 5. Turn Gratitude Into Action

Each night, invite children to name one blessing or person they're thankful for. Then take one small step to act on that gratitude — writing a thank-you note, helping with a chore, sharing a kind word or giving charity in someone's honor. Gratitude expressed through action becomes chesed that ripples outward.

## 6. Notice the Everyday Miracles

The miracle of the oil reminds us that small things can have extraordinary impact. Help children recognize the quiet miracles in their daily lives — a helpful friend, a patient teacher, a supportive sibling — and challenge them to create moments of wonder and kindness for others.

## 7. Strengthen Your Chesed Muscles

Choose one night for a family, classroom or commUNITY kindness project. Prepare care packages for seniors or soldiers, donate food or winter gear, bake treats for neighbors or distribute and disseminate You Matter cards. When children see kindness modeled consistently, it becomes part of who they are.

## 8. Rededicate Yourself — Like the Maccabees

Chanukah is an annual call to reflect and recommit. Encourage each family member or student to choose one value or behavior to rededicate themselves to — patience, generosity, honesty, friendship, helpfulness or standing up for others. Ask them to share why this value matters to them, what steps they can take to practice it and how the family or class can support them. Rededication turns Chanukah into a living practice of growth, purpose and responsibility.

