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## ACT Activist Certification and Training

**Goal:** To foster a community of certified Youth Activists: youth trained and prepared to take action in the case of egregious violations of human rights such as genocide, beginning with the ongoing genocide in Darfur. Young leaders will train and earn certification in the skills essential to well-rounded activists: Education, Advocacy and Refugee Relief.

**Activist Circles:** JWW has organized Activist Circles at several Los Angeles area high schools, including Milken High School, New Community Jewish High School, Harvard Westlake, Marlborough, High Tech High – Los Angeles, Calabasas High School, and Temple Beth David, and has also established an Activist Circle at Chicagoland Jewish High School in Chicago, IL. Each Activist Circle is has approximately 5-10 dedicated high school-aged students participating. While the ACT curriculum was originally designed to be implemented in informal club settings, several schools have approached JWW with the possibility of adapting it into formal classroom learning. Mark Twain Middle School in Venice, for example, has already integrated the ACT curriculum into its formal programming for the 2007-2008 school year.

**Activist Projects:** JWW has divided the academic year into three themed trimesters focusing on one type of activist skill each: Education, Advocacy, and Refugee Relief. During each trimester, each Activist Circle completes one Activist Project in order to earn their "tag" for that theme. After earning an Education tag, an Advocacy tag, and a Refugee Relief tag, members of Activist Circles will earn their full Certification as Youth Activists. Activist Circles are provided with a Handbook for each trimester, offering information about genocide and Darfur, skills training, and instructions for sample projects. Students are of course encouraged to design their own innovative projects within each trimester as well.

**Portfolios:** Though your students should complete their Activist Project as a group, each one of them is individually responsible for creating a portfolio piece based on their experience once the project is complete. This portfolio is a chance for students to reflect on their experiences - what they accomplished, what went well, what they would change for next time. The portfolio piece can be anything they like: a journal entry, a poster, a collection of photographs, a poem – anything they feel expresses what they accomplished and what they learned. Students must create a portfolio piece to earn their tag for each trimester.

**Trimester Events:** At the end of each trimester, all students involved in ACT are invited to a program-wide event, where they can meet their peers from other Activist Circles and take part in collective activism.

**Circle Leaders:** A Circle Leader is the adult sponsor of each Activist Circle – either a dedicated parent, a teacher, or a leader of a youth group. Their job is to be the liaison between JWW and the students in each Activist Circle, to keep the students motivated and ensure that they are completing the tasks required for successful projects. As the projects are and should be very student-designed, the Circle Leader is much more in the role of facilitator, rather than director, of the Activist Circle.

### New ACT Project!

The ACT curriculum has now been adapted into six succinct activist lessons, easily adapted into middle or high school classrooms. Please contact Naama at JWW ([naama@jewishworldwatch.org](mailto:naama@jewishworldwatch.org)) for more information about bringing ACT to your classroom or religious school.