



DO NOT STAND
IDLY BY

DARFUR

CONGO NOW!

An Activist's Bar/Bat Mitzvah: Creating your Tzedakah Project and Tying it into Your Whole Event

So you're becoming a Bar or Bat Mitzvah. Mazel Tov! You have a lot of decisions to make in the months ahead: What will your Bat Mitzvah look like? How will your Bar Mitzvah be special? Glow sticks or boas? Important, serious, adult decisions.

The Bar and Bat Mitzvah ceremony has always been an important turning point in a Jewish person's life. It means being accepted into the community as an adult. Leading the congregation in prayer and having the honor of reading the Torah are big responsibilities. But an equally important part of this ceremony is developing a meaningful tzedakah project. Not only are you becoming an adult, but you're doing something good for the world. This part of your responsibility can be truly empowering – you will find out that you have the energy and ability to make a real difference in other people's lives.

Many Bnai Mitzvah wind up doing such incredible projects we can't help but recognize them on our Activist Spotlight! The ideas below are just some of the projects we've seen completed – if you're interested in these, or in coming up with another project, **call our office at 818-501-1836 or email info@jewishworldwatch.org to set up a meeting with our staff!**

You can choose one, three, seven and a half, or all of these options. If you choose to be super ambitious and do all of them, we might just have to make you an award or something. A plaque at the very least. It will be shiny, and your family will be really proud. Maybe they'll spring for glow sticks AND boas. It will be epic. Either way, please call or email our office and tell us about your project – we'd love to feature it on our website!

Getting ready:

- **Along with RSVP cards, include an advocacy postcard and/or pledge card in invitations.** You can find examples of actions on our website under Take Action, or if you'd like, we can email you our current postcards. People are more likely to send them out when they are already in the process of sending out your RSVP, and it serves to incorporate the invitation into what your speech will hopefully be about. (Hint, hint, nudge, nudge).
- **Make a website!** It's an easy and accessible way for your guests to get information about your Bar/Bat mitzvah—times, maps, hotel suggestions, and appropriate synagogue dress. Attached to all of this fabulously useful event information, you can have a JWW page. You can link to histories of Sudan and Congo, our events page, and our donation page. Add a blurb about why you chose JWW to make it your own.

At Shul and In School:

- **Join Forces:** If there are other Bar or Bat Mitzvah students at your temple or in your school, talk to them about doing joint projects. Repetition is vitally important when trying to educate an audience, so think of how powerful it could be if for a few weeks at your synagogue, all of the Bar/Bat mitzvah students spoke to the congregation about Sudan and Congo.

- **Run a Bake Sale:** Because 1) Delicious, and 2) you can raise money while educating people about genocide. People eating cookies and cupcakes you made for them have to listen to you. It's a rule.
- **Make your own Genocide Awareness Day:** Ask anyone you know with a social media account to post or tweet or update their status with a fact about Congo or Sudan on a particular day. In deference to people who are shomrei Shabbos, don't ask them to take action on the day of your Bar or Bat Mitzvah.
- **Create a fundraiser around things that you do already in your life:** You can announce it in your invitations and then keep it open until your Bar or Bat Mitzvah. Make a website to allow friends and family to pledge donations for every time you babysit your siblings/ read a chapter in a book/ get a good score on an assignment/ make a goal on the field. You and your friends and family will then have a sustained dialogue of sorts about Sudan and Congo - and they will be even more receptive to what you have to teach them at your service. Integrating tzedakah into everyday activities makes those activities really meaningful.
- **Pair your work with Jewish World Watch with something local.** Clean, sustainable energy or hunger or women's rights and protections or small business or health and medicine--- any of these interests can apply to the work Jewish World Watch accomplishes abroad and can be matched with organizations that work locally. You could volunteer at your local food bank, the hospital, your old elementary school, or a women's shelter, and then during your speech you can talk to your congregation about the parallels between your volunteer efforts and Jewish World Watch. Contact our office for ideas – we'd be happy to help you pair up with other local partners!

During your Service:

- **Your speech:** Your speech may seem overwhelming right now – all those pages to fill with your wisdom! Think about how your Torah portion relates to working against genocide or human atrocities or gender based violence—whatever it is that spoke to you about the mission of Jewish World Watch. Be creative, and discuss it with your guardians, rabbis, teachers, or friends if you're stumped—or even if you're not. And of course, you can always call on us at the JWW office – we're thrilled to help you think through it! If you've truly stretched your reading to the very limits of the possible, and you can't quite make it relate, never fear! What does it mean to you to become a Jewish adult? How does that relate to choosing to make your Bar/Bat Mitzvah revolve around the work of JWW?
- **JWW Kippot:** Cutting edge shul fashion. Give us a call if you want some.

The Great Big Epic Light Stick and Boa Shindig (AKA The Party):

- **Forgo the spray painted t-shirt table and the psychedelic spray-painted pictures guy.** They're just going to sit in your guests' trunks, and money can be set aside for the following prizes. Who needs that much neon in their life? Make a gift to JWW, hand out JWW tribute cards, kippot or bracelets or call us for other favor ideas!
- **Make your Bar/Bat Mitzvah party a dance-a-thon.** Have your guests raise money to sponsor themselves as dance-a-thon participants. Whoever is running the party, be it friends, guardians, or a DJ, can create related activities. Whoever dances the longest/keeps hula-hooping the longest/wins a three-legged race/etc could win... a solar cooker for a family in a refugee camp! And the honor, glory, and bragging rights as champion, of course.

Before or After and Forevermore (Because now that we've got you, we don't want to lose you! Because you're awesome too):

- **You're not done yet! Make your project a yearly event.** If you had a dance-a-thon, then create an annual dance-a-thon at your school or synagogue. Dances fit in particularly well at your party, but you can make anything that interests you into a 'thon. Swimming, hula-hooping, egg-tossing, and so on.
- **Volunteer with us, or show up for some of our events.** We need you to keep adding your voice – and your friends' voices! – to the cause!
- **Invite someone to speak,** at your school, congregation, camp, or (almost) anything you can think of.

Please get in touch with us if you want advice or need anything, and we will do our very best to accommodate you. And of course, tell us what you're up to! We might need to be working on a plaque, after all.