

SARAH AND CHAIM NEUBERGER HOLOCAUST EDUCATION CENTRE BAR/BAT MITZVAH OF REMEMBRANCE PROGRAM

During the Holocaust 1.5 million children under the age of 16 were murdered. Tragically, we know very little about them. However, there is a special way to remember and honour them.

The Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre's **Bar/Bat Mitzvah of Remembrance Program** creates an opportunity for a student who is becoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah to share his/her *simcha* with the memory of a child who was murdered in the Holocaust. The program will provide a means for remembrance and recognition of these innocent victims and will educate about the Holocaust and its important lessons. It is also an opportunity for a student to reflect on the greater significance of the Holocaust.

The program's components, including a unique project workbook published by the Holocaust Centre, will give Bar/Bat Mitzvah students a historical overview and an understanding of the experiences of children during the Holocaust, with testimony from Holocaust diaries woven into the text. The student will share what he/she has learned via an individual creative project that will further educate others about one particular precious life lost in the Holocaust.

This meaningful act is an opportunity for a student approaching Bar/Bat Mitzvah to connect with Jewish history and perform a first *mitzvah* as a Jewish young adult -- remembering an innocent victim of the *Shoah* and spiritually sharing this *simcha* with that child.

Since this is an educational research activity, the student who chooses to participate should be committed to carrying out the research on his/her own, with assistance if necessary, but it is the responsibility of the student to initiate the activity. The research project can be expressed through a formal essay, poetry or artwork, a media project or other formats that reflect the interests of the student. The way in which the project is incorporated into the Bar/Bat Mitzvah is at the discretion of the family. The family may wish to print a pamphlet to be distributed at the service, describing the story of a young person during the Holocaust, accompanied by a short historical background.

Procedures:

1. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah student chooses to participate and meets with staff of the Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre to be informed of the responsibilities and activities involved.
2. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah student and family informs their Rabbi of his his/her participation and, if the family so chooses, any opportunities for the synagogue to be involved.

3. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah student will attend an educational program at the Centre and listen to a Holocaust survivor share his/her story.
4. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah student will receive and read a copy of the book *We Are Witnesses: Five Diaries of Teenagers Who Died in the Holocaust* and the Centre's Bar/Bat Mitzvah Program of Remembrance Workbook.
5. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah student will read about and reflect on one child victim of the Holocaust, and either his/her specific experience, or that of the residents of the town/ghetto/camp where that child was sent. This child can either be someone chosen by the family, or a name provided by the Centre.
6. The student will undertake a creative project to express his/her knowledge and reflections on the Holocaust and the individual child victim. This activity is a free-form assignment, established when the student completes the workbook, and will be customized to fit his/her interests and talents. The final project (subject to the discretion of the Centre) may be archived through the museum's website, where it can be viewed publicly. **OPTIONAL:** Holocaust Education Centre to design and print a pamphlet displaying the project, for an additional fee of \$50.00. (Please note that the student must choose from pre-designed templates, and that drafts that are not submitted 6 weeks prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah cannot be designed or printed through the Centre.)
7. The student will incorporate his/her knowledge and reflections into the service and celebrations in any manner chosen by the family and/or synagogue. The staff at the Centre can provide some options.

It takes approximately 6 months to complete the project.

The cost of the entire Bar/Bat Mitzvah of Remembrance Project (incl. Museum tour, Research Library use, and project assistance) is **\$200.00** (non tax deductible). Subsidy is available, if requested. Student/parents can send a voluntary donation (tax deductible) to assist another child who can't afford the full fee.

For more information on this program (and other youth educational and volunteer opportunities at the Holocaust Centre), please contact us by phone: **(416) 635-2883 X 5153**, e-mail: iglesinger@ujafed.org or visit our website at www.holocaustcentre.com