



Israeli Independence Day themed Shabbat Mishpacha

Submitted by: *Marcia Seigal*

Subject Area: Jewish Living and Identity, Holidays, Prayer, Jewish History, Culture & Art.

Target Age Group: Families with young children ranging from preschoolers to first graders.

Lesson Objective:

To teach about Israel and to create a comfortable learning environment that helps families with young children integrate Jewish traditions and customs into the fabric of their lives as well as connect to the synagogue. The program attracts many families with young children who are seeking an opportunity to meet other Jews within their demographic. It also appeals to interfaith families who do not possess the skill set to create a Jewish experience and want to gain exposure to Jewish living.

Summary:

The program begins with a short Shabbat service which includes Hinei Mah Tov, The Shalom Song, Modeh Ani, Barchu, Shema, Mi Chamocha, and Miriam's Song as well as a closing song and story connected to Israel. Possible books to choose from include [Dance, Sing, Remember – A Celebration of Jewish Holidays](#) by Leslie Kimmelman and [Israel Is](#) by Susan Remick Topek. Nametags are provided for families as they arrive, as well as instruments for children to play during the service.

After the service, everyone participates in the blessings over the wine and the challah. Falafel balls as well as pita and chommous are available for participants to snack on, and a JNF Tzedakah can is on display. In addition, children have the opportunity to place wishes written on small pieces of paper into a makeshift Western Wall (use your imagination).

Next, children may choose from a variety of activities and art projects. Children may concentrate on just one activity, or they can try their hand at them all. Possibilities include making Israeli flags (see appendix for more information),



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playing Aleph Bet Bingo (available through Jewish Educational Toys), and participating in activities from What's An Israel by Chaya Burstein. Plain paper and crayons are also available for children to illustrate their favorite part of Israel.

Finally, the program concludes with the singing of Shalom Chaverim, as well as an invitation to attend next month's program. Handouts relating to Israel are distributed to parents as they leave.

APPENDIX:

Israeli Flags

Glue a Popsicle stick to a plain white index card. Then cut out two stripes and a Jewish star from blue construction paper and also glue to the index card. You'll have an instant Israeli flag.