



Handbook

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Mazal tov on your child's becoming a bar or bat mitzvah!

A Bar or Bat Mitzvah is an important lifecycle event for your family and for our congregation and we look forward to sharing in this milestone. The purpose of this information guide is to help families prepare for their child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah at Bnai Keshet. Our rabbis and the synagogue staff are pleased to work with you throughout this process.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah Expectations

The preparation period is one of great anticipation and excitement. While it does involve hard work on the part of each student, it is also tremendously rewarding. The moment of a Bar or Bat Mitzvah marks the first step of Jewish maturity and responsibility. It is for this reason that we treat the experience as a process of inner transformations, not simply a ceremonial one. There are several requirements that ensure your child is prepared.

1. The student must be at least 13 years old at the time of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.
2. The student agrees to complete the full year of Kitah Zayin and Kitah Chet (8th grade).
3. The student must be in good standing at Bet Midrash, having maintained acceptable behavior and attendance. Good attendance during the Vav (6th) and Zayin (7th) years is essential to adequate preparation for Bar/Bat Mitzvah.
4. The student's family must have met all financial obligations to the congregation.
5. The student is required to have become familiar and comfortable with our Shabbat Services through attendance at Bet Midrash and family attendance.
6. The Mitzvah/Tikkun Olam Project - 25 hours of community service must be completed preferably prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah (the "Mitzvah Project") or during the Bar/Bat Mitzvah year.
7. The student will complete our prescribed course of study in the recitation (reading and chanting) of prayers, Torah, and Haftarah readings.
8. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah student is expected to chant the final Aliyah (Torah reading) and is encouraged to chant at least two or more, according to his/her ability.
9. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah student may chant 8-12 p'sukim (verses) of Haftarah depending on the Parasha (portion). The Rabbi will work with the tutor and family to determine which section is appropriate. Additionally, the child will chant the blessings both before and after the Haftarah. Chanting the haftarah is an optional part of the service, not required.
10. The student prepares and presents a D'var Torah (a lesson for the congregation on his or her Torah portion) for the service. The Rabbi supervises its preparation.
11. Parents may make offer a brief blessing or personal message to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah at the conclusion of the service. Please have these remarks prepared in advance and share them with the Rabbi. Your blessing should be under a page, double-spaced.

Meeting with the Rabbi

Rabbi Elliott or Rabbi Ariann will begin meeting individually with families and the student 2-3 months in advance of the Bar/t Mitzvah service. Generally there will be one meeting that includes parents and 3-4 meetings with the student alone. During the initial meeting you can discuss particular readings your family would like to include and other features of the service. There is no formal family rehearsal. The final meeting with the student will be a “walk-through” of the service.

Your Child’s Service Leading

Bnai Keshet’s Shabbat service includes Hebrew prayers that are the core of the traditional Shabbat liturgy. These prayers are listed near the end of the handbook. Your child is expected to chant or sing some of the prayers on the list. It is expected that your child will learn to lead from the Hebrew text and not a transliteration (barring issues of special needs) and will learn to chant from the Torah scroll. This preparation will take place during Bet Midrash in sixth and seventh grade and the beginning of eighth grade for Fall B’nai Mitzvah. Your child will chant/sing a selection of the prayers they have learned throughout their Bet Midrash studies.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah students will lead portions of the Shabbat morning service together with the rabbi. Each student’s bar or bat mitzvah may look a little different in terms of which portions they lead – this is to be determined in discussion with the rabbi.

D’var Torah Preparation

D’var Torah preparation is a key part of our Zayin Family Education curriculum, and materials are distributed to assist families in their child’s writing of the D’var Torah. Additionally, your child will work with the Rabbi to develop the content at the Rabbi-Student meetings.

Honors and Aliyot

Services begin at 9:00am with the Morning Blessings followed by Torah study until 10:00am when we continue the service. We encourage Bnai Mitzvah students to lead the Morning Blessings. We also encourage you to invite your family to study with us.

Family and friends may be included in the service through your offering them an aliyah or other honor. For each of the following, you'll want to plan ahead and strategize as a family as to whom you'd like to honor, so that you can ask friends or relatives in advance. They need not be from the congregation, unless specifically indicated below. Those given Torah honors need to be Jewish (please see BK's policy about non-Jewish participants in services toward the end of this handbook). Should you have a questions or concern about this requirement, please discuss it with the Rabbi. A form to assist in the assigning of honors is also included in this booklet.

All friends and family who are offering words of congratulation to the bar or bat mitzvah should submit their comments to the Rabbi at least one week in advance for approval.

Torah Honors include:

Aliyot – People can be invited to chant the Torah blessings before and after each aliyah, or section of Torah reading. There are usually six aliyot total. The first two blessings are reserved for BK congregants (the most recent Bar/Bat Mitzvah student and members commemorating *yartzeits* or other lifecycle event). The final two are reserved for the parent/guardians of the student, and the student him/herself. This leaves two Aliyot for which you can invite family members to say the blessings. If you have a lot of family, you can invite them up in groupings (the grandparents, the cousins, etc). If you have proficient Torah readers in the family, you can also invite family to chant sections of the day's Torah portion which your child is not chanting. The rabbi will give you the properly divided sections of Torah so that you can give the lines in advance to any family who might be chanting that morning, in order for them to practice. (Please note that if you don't have Torah readers in the family, we can help you find BK members to chant the portions your child is not covering.) You can also give copies of the Torah blessings to family in advance for them to practice for an aliyah – the Reconstructionist version and the traditional version of the blessing is included at the end of this packet.

Ark opener and closer – This honor is often offered to a child or children under 13; great for younger siblings or cousins.

2 Gabbai'im - A "gabbai" is a Torah reader helper. These are usually people very familiar with our service (BK members). One is the "caller" (who calls people up for blessings and chanting Torah) and the other is the "follower," who keeps track of where we are in the scroll as readings progress. The "caller" gabbai must be a member of BK unless cleared with one of the rabbis in advance.

Hagbah and Gelilah - Torah lifter and wrapper. These are good jobs for family or close friends. (They don't have to be members, though the Torah is heavy – the lifter should be someone strong!)

OTHER HONORS:

2 Ushers and 2 greeters to welcome guests – Often parents from the Zayin class or other friends in the Bnai Keshet community serve as ushers; we will assign members of the community for greeting unless you would rather choose your own.

1 member of Zayin class to present class gift to your child - This student should restrict their comments to three sentences. This will usually be the student two b'nai mitzvah after your child(ren)'s.

1 member of the Congregation to present congregational gift - Let Rabbi know who will be making this presentation -- often a fellow BK parent who knows your child well. This congregant should restrict their comments to a short paragraph.

The comments by these presenters should be short and sweet. All comments should be written and shared with the rabbi the week before the Bnai Mitzvah.

English readers (optional): Though optional, including readings in English during the service is a nice way to honor non-Jewish family members or those who may be less comfortable approaching the Torah. Choosing poems and readings that reflect your child's sensibility and strengths also personalizes and enriches the service. Please select readings in advance and share them with the Rabbi for approval.

Expanding the Spiritual Landscape: We are eager to explore different approaches to prayer and worship that might be meaningful to your family. We believe this can make not only for a more meaningful service for your family but also for the congregation. We encourage you to explore ideas or themes with the Rabbis.

After the Service/Kiddush Options

After the service, the Bar/Bar Mitzvah family sponsors the Kiddush for their guests and the congregation. This is expected even if you have chosen to have an afternoon party and/or luncheon elsewhere. Please plan to provide an ample Kiddush for the community and stay to schmooze before departing for another celebration. It is a joyous occasion for all of BK when your child becomes a Bar/Bar mitzvah and we want to congratulate you and kvell over your child before you go! Your invited guests can have a quick nosh to hold them over until luncheon may be served elsewhere.

Other families choose to make the Kiddush a special one and cater it for both the congregation and invited guests rather than going elsewhere after the service; they might then choose to have a “kids' party” or fancier party in the evening. Still others will have a communal Kiddush for all followed by a fuller luncheon or party for invited guests that takes place at BK itself.

IF YOU WANT TO HAVE A PARTY, LUNCHEON OR ANY EVENT AT BK THAT GOES BEYOND THE KIDDUSH, PLEASE RESERVE THIS AT LEAST 3 MONTHS IN ADVANCE WITH STUART BROWN IN THE OFFICE.

There is a fee for use of Bnai Keshet for a luncheon or party (beyond Kiddush). Currently the cost for a party is \$750, or less based on the proposed use (subject to change). This fee is competitive and affordable compared to other venues in our area. This fee is for the facility only – other costs such as kitchen help and supplies are discussed on the next page. Following is a chart that shows the fee schedule that applies to various situations.

	Length of Rental	Number of tables	Cost
Party	3-5 hours	>10 tables	\$750
Small Party	3-5 hours	10 tables or less	\$650
Luncheon	2-3 hours	>10 tables	\$500
Small Luncheon	2-3 hours	10 tables or less	\$400
<i>The charge is based the length of time and resources used; not on whether the congregation is invited, in addition to outside guests. Please discuss your specific use with Stuart so he can calculate the exact cost for your specific situation.</i>			

In terms of Kiddush and other food options, we are here to help. Stuart is very experienced and can advise you to help plan amounts or discuss food providers. Remember that the Kiddush does not have to be from a “fancy” caterer to be delicious and enjoyable; Fresh Direct, Fairway, and ShopRite and various bagel places in our area can provide excellent Kiddush food. You are encouraged to think outside the box.

The same general policy applies to Minchah situations. There is no facility fee for the lifecycle event; however, the facility fee applies if an extended event is hosted at BK.

“Minchah” families: you can explore new ways to celebrate at BK. Consider a light nosh and beverage as your guests come in; check in with Stuart about our calendar if you might wish to have a party at BK following your service, etc. If you have any questions, please explore them

with Stuart and Rabbi Elliott. This kind of celebration is new to us, too; we will work with you to make your afternoon celebration ideal for your family and guests.

Kashrut rules/Kiddush requirements

If your caterer is not Kosher, all food must be dairy or parve (this would include any purely vegetarian foods, eggs, dairy, and fish) – no MEAT or baked goods made with lard or other animal products or foods that are never kosher such as shellfish. It is sufficient for parve or dairy foods brought into the synagogue to be “ingredient kosher,” they do not need rabbinic certification of kashrut. Most grocery stores, bagel shops, and caterers can handle this requirement; just make sure they are aware of it.

If you do want to serve meat, you must use a kosher caterer and they must bring their own utensils to BK. Dairy foods may not be served along with meat.

You are responsible to provide a challah. The synagogue can supply wine and grape juice. Please understand that for b'nai mitzvahs we say the prayers at the end of the service and do not distribute the little cups of grape juice and wine. Doing so is logistically not practical.

BK has modified its Kiddush Policy to make the process easier for you. The following chart illustrates what BK does and who is responsible for various items:

	Who supplies	Notes
Serve Coffee/Tea at 9am (remaining for Kiddush)	BK	Including cups, milk, soy milk
Other beverages for Kiddush/Luncheon/Party	Party Host	
Supply BKs cups, plates, cutlery, tablecloths	BK	BK does not custom order any specific colors, etc. Cutlery, plates, cups are made from renewable resources and compostable. Tablecloths cloth, limited colors.
Cloth tablecloths		BK has limited colors
Challah	Party Host	
Wine for prayer	BK	
Tables	BK has 20 round 60 inch tables and approximately 15 72 inch long tables	Please discuss your needs with us to determine if you will need to rent additional items
Please email or call Stuart with any questions.		

All of BKs plates, cups, and most utensils are made from sustainable or recycled materials and are fully compostable or biodegradable. Please consider the environment when planning your event.

Your family is responsible for setting up and cleaning up for the Kiddush, whether you handle this yourself, ask friends to pitch in, or engage your caterer to take care of this. If you have a caterer on site, you can arrange to have this service included in their service. If you are ordering and laying out the food yourself or with help from Zayin friends, you may arrange for the Bnai Keshet custodians to do clean-up, for a fee (Usually \$150 to \$250, depending on what is needed). Please make arrangements in advance for this service with the office. Please note our custodian, Debbie Hall, is off on Sundays and she may not be available for all events.

In general, Zayin families should try to be there for one another – you can exchange ushering duties, food help, etc, for one another's simchas as needed.

Bnai Keshet Space Limitations and other Protocol

Our sanctuary can accommodate seating during services for 320 people, but you need to check on the number of chairs available. For a party following the celebration, the synagogue can accommodate up to about 200 people around round tables, though this would not include space for a dance floor. We will work with you to accommodate your space needs for your event; however, you will be responsible for making arrangements to rent anything that BK cannot supply, such as a dance floor, or chocolate fountain.

The synagogue does not currently have a portable dance floor and one must be rented if there will be a significant amount of dancing. This is necessary for the safety of you and your guests. If there is enough interest, BK will consider forgiving room rental fees in lieu of a donation to the purchase of a dance floor; but only if there is enough interest in purchasing a quality dance floor (\$3,500 to \$5,000 depending on size.)

As BK acquires additional equipment we will make items available for use or rental, subject to replacement at your cost for anything that is damaged because of misuse or accidental damage occurring during your event. For example, we now have a popcorn machine cart (including popcorn and bags), snow cone machine (including syrup and cones), and a hotdog roller that can be rented.

Please work directly with Stuart Brown in the office on all issues about how to set up for your service and Kiddush; he can help you determine if you need to supplement our furniture inventory for a large crowd and other similar considerations.

We strongly recommend that you visit BK with your caterer several weeks prior to your event so they know what's available, can have any questions answered, and have the time to make arrangements to service your event properly.

Please arrange delivery times for any Kiddush or party elements with the office. No deliveries may be made during services. In general, it is preferable for deliveries to be made on Friday when the office is open or prior to 9am on Saturday if necessary.

Balloon and Floral Arrangements

If you have fresh cut flowers, you will need to arrange for delivery and removal and provide your own container for them.

A new twist on this custom is making up large decorative food baskets to use in place of flowers, and then donating the baskets to a food pantry as tzedakah (charity).

Balloons have caused false alarms by disrupting motion detectors in the past. You will be charged a \$200 (our cost) false alarm fee if an alarm is set off by a balloon that is not removed at the end of your event.

Kippot and Tallitot

Bnai Keshet encourages our guests to cover their heads when entering the synagogue. The synagogue has a certain number of kippot on hand for congregants and your invited guests. However, you may want to order personalized kippot for your guests. Alternatively, your class may together decide to order one full set of kippot for use for each celebration with an appropriate group inscription. You may also do a combination of family and class kippot.

Please select a tallit for your child. You may use one already in the family or buy one. The Bnai Keshet gift shop can assist you. Tallit are also available at local Judaic stores as well as in NYC and through the Internet. There are also local artists who make tallitot.

It is the minhag (custom) at Bnai Keshet to wear a tallit when approaching the Torah. People receiving aliyot, serving as hagbah/gelilah, gabbai, and those opening/closing the Ark (if over the age of 13) are expected to wear a tallit during these honors. If someone comes without one, don't worry – we have tallitot available for visitors.

Photography/Videography

Photography and videography are permitted prior to Shabbat services (ending by 8:30am at the latest) and thirty minutes after the service is complete. Some families who would like pictures of their child reading from the Torah will arrange a photo shoot on another day; please be in touch with the office if you are interested in doing this.

Recorded and/or Instrumental Music for Celebrations

If you are having your party/reception at Bnai Keshet, you may have such music after the Kiddush. However, you are asked to be good neighbors and to respect the residential character of the area. Please be mindful of noise levels, the behavior of your guests outside the building and of local ordinances. In addition, users, guests and entertainers are expected to maintain a suitable level of decorum appropriate for a synagogue. No decorations of any type are to be affixed to any walls, ceilings or painted surface. Bubble machines, smoke machines, silly string, and other such equipment/effects are not permitted. You will be held financially responsible for the repair of any damage or other costs that occur as the result of your event.

Music During Services

Our new music policy at BK allows for prayer-appropriate acoustic music during certain parts of the service. If your child is musical and/or you would like to include a musical element in your service, it must be approved in advance by Rabbi Elliott or Rabbi Ariann. Please let the Rabbi know early on that you want to include music and they will help you plan a beautiful service.

Other Preparations and the Day Of!

Many families create a program, indicating who the family members are for each honor and saying something about the child who is called to the Torah and the meaning of this day. Please ask in the office to see some examples -- or start collecting them at services and see what others are doing!

Separate from the program; be sure to have a list in advance of all your honorees. For those being called to the Torah for Aliyot have their Hebrew names, so the Gabbai (Caller) can call them appropriately! (It's helpful to give the Gabbai a list of both the aliyot and the Torah readers, indicating who is being called to do the blessing and who is actually doing the chanting for that segment, whether your child or another reader.)

Bring a printout of this to the service, and don't forget any English readings and your child's dvar!! Some like to place an extra printout of these materials in the lectern at BK the day before, so as not to worry about forgetting something crucial on the morning of the service.

We have about 60 copies of the Chumash available for use. If you would like there to be enough copies for all your guests, you should make arrangements to have the relevant pages of the Torah and Haftarah portions photocopied. This is typically about 12 pages, and you may want to provide a cover noting that it is for your child's service.

Additional Helpful and Important Notes

It is customary to make a donation to the discretionary fund of the Rabbi who helped your child prepare for and lead his or her bar or bat mitzvah service in thanks for participation. Also, the class typically purchases a gift for the congregation. If not, your family may do so.

It is expected that students attend each classmate's service (parents are also encouraged to come to the services). Families also pool money to buy the same gift for each child as a gift from their classmates. This way, there is a one time initial expense and then you need not think about it again. (For example, a class might choose to give one another's children a Kiddush cup as their gift -- so each child gets one, and you have only to pay for one Kiddush cup in order to have given a gift to your child's classmates.)

It is our policy that all students in the Zayin class are invited to every Bar/Bat Mitzvah party or reception, with the exception of very large classes, where this might become an undue burden on families; in that case, you will be informed by Rabbi Elliott and Rabbi Ariann of the modified party policy for large classes, and we ask that you follow these guidelines in order to avoid hurt feelings among classmates and fellow parents.

If you have any concerns about how to plan your party -- about its size, character, or any issues about inclusion of BK classmates -- please speak to Rabbi Elliott or Rabbi Ariann and ask for their guidance well in advance of sending out your invitations.

Our Contact Information

We are available to assist you throughout the planning stages of your *simcha*. If you would like to speak with us please call the BK office at 973-746-4889. If you would like to contact us via email, our email addresses are as follows:

Rabbi Elliott Tepperman
Rabbi Ariann Weitzman
Stuart Brown, Director of Operations

rabielliott@bnaikeshet.org
rabiariann@bnaikeshet.org
stuart@bnaikeshet.org

Other Contacts -- Your Community!!

Remember, many of the parents of older children in our community have been through this experience and have a lot of information to share. If you want to ask their opinion about a Torah tutor, a caterer, hear how they handled their relatives for aliyot, or planned a transition from Kiddush to luncheon -- please reach out!! If you are not sure who to ask about what, check in with Rabbi Ariann, Stuart, the VP of Education (currently Cynthia Green -- crgreenphd@gmail.com) and we will suggest some possible congregants who can help you out.

Bnai Keshet
Bar/Bat Mitzvah Honors

Name _____ Date of Bar/t Mitzvah _____

Please return this form no later than the 4 weeks prior to the bar/bat mitzvah.
Please indicate Hebrew names of those receiving aliyot only.

Role	Name	Hebrew Name (Hebrew or transliteration)
Usher #1		
Usher #2		
Ark Opener/Closer		
Gabbai 1 (caller)		
Gabbai 2 (follower)		
Aliyah 1 (last BK bar/bat mitzvah)		
Aliyah 2 (Bnai Keshet Community)		
Aliyah 3 (family's choice)		
Aliyah 4 (family's choice)		
Aliyah 5 (Parents)		

Aliyah 6 (bar/bat Mitzvah)		
Torah Readers List each aliyah separately.		
Hagbah (lifter)		
Gelilah (wrapper)		
English Readings (3-4) List readers and the names (and page numbers if relevant) of their readings.		
Class Gift Presenter		
Synagogue Gift Presenter		

So that we may know how many chairs to set up: _____ guests at service

Prayers taught in Bet Midrash
Page numbers from Siddur Kol Hanesama

- 241 Shochen Ad (taught in 7th grade)
- 243 Yishtabach (taught in 7th grade)
- 245 Hatzi Kaddish (taught in 7th grade)
- 247 Barchu
- 269 Or Hadash
- 275 Vaha'er eneynu
- 277 Shema & V'ahavtah
- 291 Mi Chamocha
- 295 Avot v'Imot
- 299 Gevurot
- 303 Kedushah
- 307 Veshamru
- 309 Yismechu
- 321 Sim Shalom

TORAH SERVICE

- 383 Eyn Kamocha
- 385 Vayihi
- 387 Bey Ana
- 393 Shema, Echad Elohenu, Gadlu
- 399 Torah Blessing
- 409 Haftarah Blessings

Your child should be familiar with all of these prayers through their time at our Bet Midrash. However, we are aware that our students have different levels of proficiency and better knowledge of some prayers than others and some students are less comfortable leading services than others. We will work with your child to be sure the prayers selected for your child to lead are appropriate. Your child may also choose to lead additional prayers or songs which are not part of the Bet Midrash curriculum, but may enhance the service. The Rabbis will work with your family to create the most meaningful service possible for the Bnai Keshet community and your family.

**RITUAL POLICY OF BNAI KESHET
AS ADOPTED BY THE CONGREGATION
(important to read if you have a non-Jewish family member)**

Bnai Keshet has accepted in practice the definition of Jewish identity developed by the Reconstructionist Movement.

The Reconstructionist movement considers children Jews if the parents have committed themselves to rear their children as Jews by providing circumcision for boys, Jewish education for boys and girls, and the children fulfill the requirements for Bar or Bat Mitzvah or confirmation. (*Adopted by the Federation of Reconstructionist Congregations, May 5, 1968*).

The congregation adopted policies concerning participation of non-Jews in worship services in three situations: Reciting English readings, honors associated with the Torah Services and parental customs during Bnai Mitzvah ceremonies. In formulating policies for these situations, the congregation considered:

1. The importance of maintaining the integrity of Jewish ritual.
2. The desirability of welcoming into the synagogue a non-Jewish spouse.
3. The need to be sensitive to extenuating circumstances which might affect the non-Jew, the family, and the synagogue.

With these factors in mind, the congregation developed the following policies:

English Readings

Any non-Jewish person who worships with the Congregation at any worship service is permitted to recite an English reading from his or her seat. In this regard, the congregation recognizes the potential for prayer to bring people together. However, the congregation also recognizes that certain prayers reflect particular Jewish concepts. Thus, certain prayers can be recited only by Jews.

Torah Honors

Only Jews are allowed to participate in Torah honors (Aliyot, Ark opening and closing, Hagbah, Gelilah, Torah, Haftarah chanting). The Congregation acknowledges the special relationship between the Torah and the Jewish people as expressed in the Torah blessings.

Parental customs during Bnai Mitzvah

A non-Jewish parent who has accepted the Jewishness of his or her child and has provided a Jewish education has earned a part in the Bar or Bat Mitzvah. Indeed, participation under these circumstances is welcomed.

As practiced, in Bnai Keshet, there are three opportunities for parental participation:

Tallit

Parents place the Tallit on the child prior to the child's Aliyah.

Shehecheyanu/ Parental Blessings

It is customary for the parents to recite the shehecheyanu, a brief prayer which thanks god for "Keeping us in life, sustaining us and enabling us to reach this season." Both parents may recite this prayer.

[Note: Either or both parents may also give the final blessing or message to their child, if they choose to do so at the end of the service.]

Aliyah

Non-Jewish parent of the Bar or Bat Mitzvah is invited to stand beside the Jewish parent when the Jewish parent is called up for his or her Aliyah at the time of their child's Bar or Bat Mitzvah.

Participation by other non-Jews

Non-Jewish friends and relatives may participate in the service by way of non-liturgical readings.

Bnai Keshet

B'nai Mitzvah

Mitzvah (Tikkun Olam) Project

What is a Mitzvah project?

Becoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah means that you are becoming an adult in the eyes of the Jewish community. In addition to prayer and study, Bnai Keshet is founded on the principle that we should do acts of repair and kindness in the world—*tikkun olam*. So part of becoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah is giving of your time and energy to service work that will help to repair the world in some way. There is a project out there to match everyone's interests, talents, and of course, schedule.

You might want to get project *ideas* from some great social action web sites—check out www.socialaction.com, or [http://www.areyvut.org/resources/volunteer opportunities/](http://www.areyvut.org/resources/volunteer%20opportunities/). Some students may want to continue with the project or theme they were focusing on in their Vav year. Our rabbis and members of our Tikkun Olam committee can be helpful in suggesting opportunities and possible projects related to your child's interests.

When should I begin my project?

The answer probably depends on your schedule and when your Bar/Bat Mitzvah is scheduled. Some students prefer to work on a project the summer before their Bar/Bat Mitzvah so that they have more time for studies during the school year. Other people like to spread out their project to work on it in little units, over the year. Some people put in a large amount of hours during a short time. You might want to consider volunteering for the week when the Interfaith Hospitality Network is here at Bnai Keshet each summer.

What are the requirements in terms of hours?

We recommend that students spend at least 25 hours of time in their project. Ideally, you will find something that you enjoy doing and you may even want to continue this service work beyond your Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

Once I have a project, whom should I tell?

Please complete the form on the last page of this packet and give to Rabbi Ariann. Whether you would like to do a project over the summer or during the Bar/Bat Mitzvah year itself, we recommend that you be in touch with her about 6 months before your date to be sure your project is planned in advance and you have time to complete it.

Mitzvah Project Planning Activity

Name: _____

Date of Bar/Bat Mitzvah _____

Bar/t Mitzvah's Talents	<i>Bar/t Mitzvah's</i> Concerns (things to fix)
Project Brainstorm:	

Mitzvah Project Form

Student's Name: _____ *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* Date: _____

Name of organization/contact person student will be working with: _____

Phone number of organization/contact person:

Please briefly describe your *Tikkun Olam* project:

When will you begin doing it? How long do you hope to commit to the project?

What are your goals for the project? What do you hope to contribute to the organization/individual you're helping? What do you hope to learn?

Todah Rabah & Hatzlacha!
Thank you & Good luck!