



## The Mitzvah of Tikkun Olam: A Guide for Students & Parents in Search of a Mitzvah Project



Congregation Brith Shalom  
Houston, Texas

## How to Use:

These listings can help you find a specific agency to work with or give you ideas and suggestions so that you can either find other institutions to work with or create your own project. It is best to view the websites for detailed and current information before contacting the agencies. It is important to contact the agencies for detailed information before committing to community service of any type.

Keep in mind as you read this material whether you're looking for several short term commitments or whether you are ready, willing and able to volunteer a few hours a week for 6 to 12 months. Consider whether you want to work with your friends on a project. Several organizations require an adult to accompany and work with 12 and 13 year old volunteers so discuss whether or not this is going to be possible.

All the agencies that are listed here have already benefited from the services and work of bar/bat mitzvah students in previous years. When they were contacted to confirm and update their information, there was nothing but praise and compliments of the Jewish children volunteers; their hard work and creative projects have made an impact and all future students are absolutely welcome, needed, and much appreciated.

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# ***Adults & Children with Special Needs***

## **Friendship Circle**

Chabad Lubavitch Outreach  
11000 Fondren Road, Suite B104, Houston, TX 77096  
(713) 774-0300  
[www.friendshiphouston.com](http://www.friendshiphouston.com)

The Friendship Circle matches Jewish tweens and teens with children who have autism or other special needs. Volunteers make weekly visits to the home of the child for recreational interaction, arts and crafts, or homework support. Volunteers can work individually or pair with a friend for visits.

## **JCC Special Needs Programs**

### **Jewish Community Center of Houston**

5601 Braeswood, Houston, TX 77096  
(713) 729-3200  
[www.jcchouston.org](http://www.jcchouston.org)

- **JCC Night Owls**

Special needs group for adults in the community. Through community involvement, the group hopes to decrease the stigma around people with special needs. The Owls meet every Wednesday night at the JCC from 7:00-9:00 p.m. There are currently 30 members, some of whom were part of the original teen group years ago. Volunteers help with arts and crafts, athletics, cooking, yoga, Jewish and secular holiday celebrations, and field trips.

- **JCC Club Haver**

New program of the JCC that provides monthly social and Jewish learning events for special needs children who in K-5<sup>th</sup> grades, usually held on Sunday afternoons. Club Haver is supported by the Bureau of Jewish Education, The Jewish Federation, and Jewish Family Services. Volunteers usually work one-on-one with the children to assist in activities.

- **JCC TOPS Soccer**

Designed to bring the opportunity of learning and playing soccer to any boy or girl who has a mental or physical disability. Offered in the fall, winter and spring for 6 week periods, on Sundays from 5:30-6:15pm. Volunteers are needed to work with the children.

## **Special Olympics**

[www.sotx.org](http://www.sotx.org)

The mission of Special Olympics Texas is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities [mental retardation], giving them opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, and experience joy and friendship. Children under age 14 can volunteer at events with a parent.

## **Animals**

### **Citizens for Animal Protection**

17555 Katy Fwy., Houston, TX 77094

(281) 497-0591

[www.cap4pets.org](http://www.cap4pets.org)

CAP shelters, rescues and finds homes for animals. Over 12,000 animals come through their doors each year. Volunteers, ages 12-15, must have a parent with them at all times. CAP offers an initial 1 ½ hour orientation and requests 8 volunteer hours a month for at least 12 months. Tasks include walking the dogs, bathing the animals, making sure animals have water, and cleaning cages.

### **Houston Humane Society**

14700 Almeda Road, Houston, TX 77053

(713) 433-6421

[www.houstonhumane.org](http://www.houstonhumane.org)

Parent participation is necessary for children volunteers. There is a required one-time, 2-hour volunteer orientation for both children and parents. Volunteers walk, bathe and cuddle the animals and are particularly helpful in working with the public. Volunteers help people interested in adopting a pet to become acquainted with the animals. Volunteer hours are anytime from 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., seven days a week. There is also a new animal foster care program called Life Support. Only volunteers may provide foster homes for pets and must commit to a minimum of 2 weeks. These animals are adopted through web site postings and do not return to the shelter. (Be forewarned. Roughly 30% of all foster “parents” end up adopting the animals!)

## **Veterinarians**

It is not uncommon for local veterinarians to agree to have interested children volunteers assist in helping with the animals that are in their care.

## **Arts & Crafts**

### **BEAResource for CPS Kids**

2223 West Loop South, suite 136, Houston, TX 77027

(713) 295-2794

[www.hc-ps.org/BEAR.htm](http://www.hc-ps.org/BEAR.htm)

Provides support for children living in foster care. Volunteers provide birthday celebrations, etc.

### **Jewish Family Service**

4131 S. Braeswood, Houston, TX 77025

(713) 667-9336

[www.jfshouston.org](http://www.jfshouston.org)

This human service agency offers mental health and support programs for individuals and families. JFS also provides senior services and case management, community outreach, social and educational programs, financial assistance programs and volunteer opportunities.

- **Decorate Shabbat Shalom Bags.** Fill the bags with challah rolls, Shabbat blessings, grape juice and hard candy. Each Friday the bags are taken to M.D. Anderson by a Houston Jewish Chaplaincy volunteer who distributes them to Jewish patients.
- **Adopt-a-Holiday Project,** JFS Houston Jewish Chaplaincy. Decorate bags or boxes and fill

- them with appropriate treats for Purim or Passover to be donated to hospital patients.
- **Prepare theme baskets** of food or other items that can be used as centerpieces and then donated to JFS for distribution to their clients

## **Ronald McDonald House**

1907 Holcombe Blvd, Houston, TX 77030

(713) 795-3500

[www.rmhhouston.org](http://www.rmhhouston.org)

Home away from home for families with children being treated at a Texas Medical Center institution, for cancer or other serious illness. Volunteers must be a minimum of 15 years old to volunteer on site. However, some bar/bat mitzvah students and their families have hosted ice cream and pizza parties for the children and there is always a wish list of needed items on their web site. In addition, items can be made off-site and brought to the premises; e.g. holiday door decorations for patients' rooms.

## **Donations / Collecting Items for Charity**

***BE ADVISED: Students are encouraged to donate their own items to charity, such as clothes, toys, or books that are in good shape or to buy new items with their own funds. However, for the purposes of a mitzvah project, we recommend that community collections be discouraged. Rather than calling on the community for help, mitzvahs performed solely by the student tend to be more meaningful and have a longer lasting impact.***

## **The Fairy Godmother Project of Houston**

[www.fairygodmotherproject.com](http://www.fairygodmotherproject.com)

Clean out your closet for a good cause. Help Houston high school students fulfill their prom dreams. The Fairy Godmother Project of Houston, comparable to the national organization, "Becca's Closet, Inc.", collects new and gently used prom dresses, bridesmaid dresses, cocktail dresses, tuxes, and suits year-round. They are provided for free to needy students in the Houston area.

## **Haddasah – Let My People Read**

4654 Beechnut St., Houston, TX 77096

(713) 661-1022

[www.houston.hadassah.org](http://www.houston.hadassah.org)

Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, has health care as its primary charitable focus both in Israel and America. This ongoing Houston program collects children's books and distributes them to medical patients at Ben Taub Hospital.

## **Hanukkah Gifts - Count Me In**

(713)721-6381

[www.countmeininc.org](http://www.countmeininc.org)

BBYO Lonestar Chapter

(713) 838-7200

Count Me In anonymously provides Hanukkah gifts to children whose families are experiencing financial, medical, or other problems. Volunteers receive a description of the recipient and are asked to shop for appropriate gifts. Contact Count Me In by late October to participate.

## **Jewish Children's Regional Services**

P.O. Box 7368, Metairie, LA 70010

1-800-729-5277

[www.jcrsnola.org](http://www.jcrsnola.org)

This agency provides aid to 600-700 Jewish youth each year from seven southern states, including Texas. JCRS was instrumental during Hurricane Katrina and moved their New Orleans office to Houston at that time. Students can make personalized Hanukkah cards for kids and isolated adults. New gifts for boys and girls are also collected during the holidays by JCRS.

## **Lion's Eye Bank of Texas**

6565 Fannin St., Houston, TX 77030

(713) 798-5500

[www.bayloreye.org/eyebank/donate.cfm](http://www.bayloreye.org/eyebank/donate.cfm)

Donate used eye glasses to the Lions Club. The glasses are sorted, cleaned and refurbished for distribution to needy people throughout the world.

## **Recycled Baseball Items (R.B.I.) Foundation**

5401 Mitchelldale, Ste. A14, Houston, TX 77092

[www.rbi-houston.org](http://www.rbi-houston.org)

Provides baseball equipment, league organization, and instructional clinics and camps to groups working with children, all free of charge. They accept used baseball and softball equipment donated from the community which they clean, refurbish and distribute to local youth groups.

## **Star of Hope**

6801 Ardmore, Houston, TX 77054

713-748-7242

[www.sohmission.org](http://www.sohmission.org)

This organization helps Houston's homeless. Children may not work on the premises but can prepare toiletry bags, which they then deliver to the Star of Hope. Items may include brushes, combs, toothpaste and tooth brushes and can be put in zip-lock bags or decorative gift bags. Call to get details of what's needed and arrange for a tour of the premises when you deliver the bags.

## **Environment**

### **Houston Parks Board**

300 North Post Oak Lane, Houston, TX 77024

713-942-8500

[www.houstonparks.org](http://www.houstonparks.org)

Citizens advocate for restoring, preserving and expanding parks, natural areas and trails. Annual park cleanup and repairs for trails in six local parks: Lake Houston Park, Herman Brown Nature Trail, White Oak Trail, North MacGregor Way at Hermann Park, Oyster Creek at Cullinan Park, and Cullen Park.

## **Keep Houston Beautiful**

3000 Richmond, suite 350, Houston, TX 77098

(713) 839-8855

[www.houstonbeautiful.org](http://www.houstonbeautiful.org)

This organization is committed to making Houston a cleaner, more beautiful and livable city. One clean-up event every third Saturday, usually from 8:00 am – Noon. Call for schedule and locations.

## **Recycling**

Start a recycling program at your school, synagogue, park, or wherever you see a need.

## **Hair Donations**

### **The Children's Bridge of Zichron Menachem**

1333 Broadway, Suite #306, New York, NY 10018

[www.zichron.org](http://www.zichron.org)

Zichron Menachem is an Israeli non-profit organization aimed at easing the suffering of young cancer patients and their families. Hair donations are accepted and used to make wigs for ill children. Hair must be a minimum of 10 inches long, when braided.

## **Locks of Love**

234 Southern Blvd. West Palm Beach, FL 33405

[www.locksoflove.org](http://www.locksoflove.org)

Locks of Love is a public non-profit organization that provides hairpieces to financially disadvantaged children under age 18 suffering from long-term medical hair loss from any diagnosis. To donate: your hair must be a minimum of 10 inches long and it must be in a ponytail or braid before it is cut.

## **Human Services**

### **Aishel House**

Chabad at Texas Medical Center

1955 University Blvd., Houston, TX 77030

(713) 522-2004

[www.aishelhouse.org](http://www.aishelhouse.org)

Aishel House provides assistance to patients and their families who come to the Texas Medical Center from all over the world. Aishel House provides apartments in walking distance to all the hospitals. Kosher meals and Shabbat food are provided as needed to the hospitals, apartments and area hotels. Junior volunteers are encouraged to visit Aishel House and learn of the many ways they can help as individuals, with groups of friends, or working with a parent.

- **Holiday-Cheer Project:** Get together and create uplifting gifts, of food or crafts, which are given to the patients. This is done around holidays and features a holiday theme.
- **Nigun for the Neshama ("melody for the soul"):** Musically talented volunteers visit with patients and lift their spirits with song.
- **Childcare Assistance:** Volunteers help look after patients' children or other young family members.
- **Mitzvah Wheels Project:** • Pick up or drop off patients and their family members at the airport. • Take a patient or family member to get out a little and do some shopping for groceries or just for fun,

like going to a mall or sightseeing. • Grocery shop for a family who cannot get out on their own. • Deliver a warm meal to the hospital or to patient's accommodations.

- **Home Improvements** Help furnish or decorate the apartments to make them more inviting, cozy and comfortable for patients and families who must be away from their homes.

## **BEAR**Resource for **CPS Kids**

2223 West Loop South, suite 136, Houston, TX 77027  
(713) 295-2794

[www.hc-ps.org/BEAR.htm](http://www.hc-ps.org/BEAR.htm)

BEAR (Be A Resource) is a unique public/private sector partnership that sponsors programs to support children under the care of Child Protective Services (CPS) in Harris County. These children have been abused or neglected and are living in foster homes.

- **BEAR Back-to-School Program:** Help sort new school supplies and uniforms that are then packed and prepared for foster kids. This happens at BEAR's offices during several weeks in the summer prior to the start of school.
- **X-mas BEAR:** Volunteers are needed to sort and box gifts for the foster kids prior to the holiday.

## **Bo's Place**

10050 Buffalo Speedway, Houston, TX 77054  
(713) 942-8339

[www.bosplace.org](http://www.bosplace.org)

Provides programs and services to help grieving children. Junior volunteers must be 15 years old but younger children can work with their parents in the kitchen. Occasionally there are special projects for groups of 12 and 13 year old volunteers (e.g. preparing camp bags, yard work, cleaning furniture).

## **Boys and Girls Club of Greater Houston**

1520-A Airline Drive, Houston, TX 77009  
(713) 868-3426

[www.bgclubs-houston.org](http://www.bgclubs-houston.org)

Boys and Girls Clubs inspire and enable young people, especially those from disadvantaged circumstances. Club programs promote the development of young people by instilling a sense of competence, usefulness, influence and belonging. Of 15 clubs throughout Houston, the one nearest the southwest, Morefield, is near Hobby Airport. Volunteer opportunities include reading to children, tutoring, arts and crafts projects, coaching a sports team, and collections of clothes and school supplies. It is best to call and visit and create a volunteer job that blends your interests with their needs.

## **Challenger League - West University Little League Baseball**

[www.westull.org/challenger](http://www.westull.org/challenger)

A baseball program for boys and girls ages 5-18, with physical and mental disabilities. The goal is to give everyone a chance to play regardless of limitation. Baseball Buddies are junior high and high school volunteer students that help by acting as guides for the blind, pushing those wheelchair-bound around the bases, or helping them bat or field the ball.

## **Christian Community Service Center**

3230 Mercer, Houston, TX 77027

(713) 961-3993

[www.ccschouston.org](http://www.ccschouston.org)

CCSC is an ecumenical coalition of 38 churches united in service to the needy. Child volunteers, usually with a parent, can assist in the food pantry or help sort, hang clothes and display merchandise in the resale shop located at 5407 Bellaire Blvd.

## **City Wide Club of Clubs**

P.O. Box 8446, Houston, TX 77288

(713) 752-2582

[www.citywideclub.com](http://www.citywideclub.com)

Thanksgiving and Christmas meals are served at the George R. Brown Convention Center to over 35,000 poor, needy or lonely people. Volunteers are needed to set up, cook, serve, wait on tables, distribute clothing and clean up. Families with children of all ages are welcome to volunteer. There is a greater need for volunteers during Christmas rather than Thanksgiving.

## **Elves and More**

[www.elvesandmore.org](http://www.elvesandmore.org)

Provides 20,000 underprivileged children with brand new bikes each year. There are ongoing events throughout the year, but the biggest program is just prior to Christmas. Volunteers meet at Reliant Stadium to build, load and deliver the bikes. Children volunteers can only participate with a parent.

## **Emergency Aid Coalition**

5401 Fannin, Houston, TX 77004

(713) 528-FOOD

[www.eachouston.org](http://www.eachouston.org)

An interfaith association of congregations that help meet the basic human needs of the poor and homeless. Parent and child work as a team stocking food pantry and sorting of clothes on third Saturdays (10:00-12:00) and on Fridays during the summer.

## **Holocaust Museum Houston**

5401 Caroline St, Houston, TX 77004

(713) 942-8000

[www.hmh.org](http://www.hmh.org)

The library has oral histories that have been typed into manuscripts but need to be re-typed into Microsoft Word. 2hrs/week. Weekdays only.

## **House of Tiny Treasures**

1529 Lombardy St., Houston, TX 77023

713 921-6092

[www.searchhomeless.org](http://www.searchhomeless.org)

In 1992, SEARCH opened the House of Tiny Treasures (HTT), Houston's first licensed early childhood development center exclusively serving homeless children ages 6 weeks to 6 years and their families. HTT has enjoyed the contributions of many bar/bat mitzvah students and invites anyone thinking about helping to come in for a visit. Children volunteers cannot participate in the

classrooms but have created centerpieces full of art supplies for the kids, bought and delivered back packs to children's homes, worked with their parents to help clean or repair the facilities, and one family hosted a field trip to the zoo for the pre-schoolers.

## **Houston Food Bank**

3811 Eastex Fwy., Houston, TX 77026

(713) 223-3700

[www.houstonfoodbank.org](http://www.houstonfoodbank.org)

The Houston Food Bank fights against hunger and feeds more than 250,000 people each month. The program is flexible and accommodates students. Children under 8 must be accompanied by an adult to work in the kitchen. Food donations are always appreciated.

## **Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston**

3217 Montrose Blvd., Houston, TX 77006

(713) 533-4922

[www.imgh.org](http://www.imgh.org)

This agency brings people of diverse faiths together for dialogue, collaboration and service. Children volunteers can work for the aniMeals on Wheels program which prepares pet food for distribution. Kids can do this on the premises with an adult or pick up pet food and supplies and repackage them at home. Help is also needed on the fourth Saturday of each month for distributing the pet food.

## **JCC Senior Adult Department's Annual Used Book Sale**

5601 Braeswood, Houston, TX 77096

(713) 729-3200

The Jewish Community Center has a used book sale in August every year. Proceeds support and enhance programs for seniors. Volunteers are needed during the summer to sort books, shelve the books and assist at the sale.

## **KEREN OR – National**

350 Seventh Avenue, Suite 701

New York, NY 10001

Phone: (212) 279-4070

Fax: (212) 279-4043

Email: [info@keren-or.org](mailto:info@keren-or.org)

## **KEREN OR – Local Houston Contact**

Rosa Castiel

832-767-5935

832-353-0122

[rosacastiel@gmail.com](mailto:rosacastiel@gmail.com)

[www.keren-or.org/bar-bat-mitzvah.php](http://www.keren-or.org/bar-bat-mitzvah.php)

Keren Or aims to provide education and rehabilitation programs for children who are blind with multiple disabilities. As a Bar/Bat Mitzvah, you assume the responsibilities of a Jewish adult. You can use this opportunity to share with others what it means to live with multiple disabilities while also helping to support the students at Keren Or's Center in Jerusalem. Some of the activities that you

may enjoy—playing video games, bicycle-riding, and going to the movies—are all challenging tasks for the students at Keren Or. You can help others remember to appreciate these experiences and consider the courage of Keren Or's students who face these challenges every day.

## **Kids Meals**

Interfaith Ministries  
3217 Montrose Blvd., Houston, TX 77006  
(713) 533-4922  
[www.imgh.org](http://www.imgh.org)

Program for children ages 2-6 who are at home and in need of a daily lunch. Volunteers deliver meals weekday mornings. Child volunteers can help deliver meals with a parent during school vacations. Groups of volunteers usually make 300 sandwiches or complete bag lunches.

## **Lovett Elementary School**

8814 S Rice Ave, Houston, TX 77096  
(713) 295-5258

Help out after school during the extended day program. Tutor, befriend, or play with kids. You may find similar opportunities at other elementary schools also.

## **M.D. Anderson Cancer Center**

(713) 792-5646  
[www.mdanderson.org](http://www.mdanderson.org)  
[volunteering@mdanderson.org](mailto:volunteering@mdanderson.org)

The Center's mission is to eliminate cancer through patient care, research, prevention and education. Teen volunteers must be at least 14 years old. However, the Order of the Eastern Star Craft Kits project involves assembling craft kits for patients and family members. Job duties include cutting, counting, sorting and assembling in bags all supplies for a successful craft project. The project is for children (12 years and above) and/or adults with group sizes of 20 or less. Groups arrange date and times (2 - 5 p.m. or 5:30 - 8:30 p.m., optional Saturdays) a month in advance.

## **Meals on Wheels**

Jewish Community Center  
5601 S. Braeswood, Houston, TX 77096  
(713) 729-3200

A national home delivery program for homebound individuals, 60 years and older. No fee for this service. Children volunteers can deliver meals with the aid of a parent/driver during the summer, 10:30-12:30, Monday-Friday, or on Thanksgiving or Christmas mornings for special holiday meals. Meals of non-perishable foods are packed and bagged at the JCC. Several students, in lieu of flower centerpieces at their bar/bat mitzvah parties, purchase and display canned goods that are then delivered / donated to Meals on Wheels.

## **Medical Bridges**

2706 Magnet St., Houston, TX 77054  
(713) 748-8131  
[www.medicalbridges.org](http://www.medicalbridges.org)

Founded by a concerned group of Houstonians interested in impacting the healthcare of individuals in

third world countries. Items considered disposable in the U.S., such as gloves, tubing, and drapes, are often washed and reused in many other countries. Aware of the inherent waste in our own healthcare system, the founding board members established a recycling program that channels reusable medical supplies to third world situations where these materials are scarce. Volunteers are needed to collect, sort, and pack medical supplies to be sent overseas.

## **SEARCH**

2505 Fannin, Houston, TX 77002

(713) 739-7752

[www.searchhomeless.org](http://www.searchhomeless.org)

Service of the Emergency Aid Resource Center for the Homeless is dedicated to helping the homeless get off the streets and into jobs and affordable housing. Volunteers can contribute by working either on-site OR at home. Children volunteers who work on-site need an adult to work with them. Tasks include preparing and serving meals, cleaning, working in the clothing room, and washing SEARCH vans. Work that can be done at home includes the preparation of sack lunches or hygiene kits. Local groceries and drugstores may discount or donate items for this cause. Also, bottled water donations during hot weather months are needed.

## **Seven Acres**

6200 N. Braeswood Blvd., Houston, TX 77074

(713) 778-5719

[www.sevenacres.org](http://www.sevenacres.org)

Children volunteers have several options at this local, Jewish nursing home. If volunteers have a special talent, they are invited to come share it with the residents. For example, musical volunteers are always invited to give short concerts at Seven Acres. Other opportunities include assisting with bingo on Sundays, being a computer tutor to an elderly resident, or delivering mail to residents.

## **Taping for the Blind**

2925 Essex Lane, Houston, TX 77027

(713) 622-2767

[www.tapingfortheblind.org](http://www.tapingfortheblind.org)

The Captain Andy Program is specifically for children volunteers. The volunteers read children's books aloud and these readings are tape recorded for use by blind children. The agency serves adults and children, but there is less demand for children's books.

## **Wilkenfeld Speech Language Learning Center**

2524 Sunset Blvd, Houston, TX 77005

(713) 522-4727

The Center provides Bar and Bat Mitzvah students with a unique opportunity to assist in the therapy of children diagnosed with speech, language, learning and social challenges. Volunteers attend weekly therapy sessions to model and facilitate the targeted skills to groups of children whose ages range from toddlers to young teens. The children in therapy greatly benefit from having a peer model the behaviors they are working diligently to acquire. Student volunteers in turn learn acceptance, compassion, and empathy for others.

## **Walk/Run/Bike**

*Volunteers can solicit pledges from family and friends and participate in these events, assist in set-up or clean-up, or help runners, walkers, and bikers during the “races”.*

### **Aids Walk Houston**

3202 Wesleyan, Houston, TX 77027  
(713) 403-WALK (9255)  
[www.aidswalkhouston.org](http://www.aidswalkhouston.org)

This annual fund raiser takes place every March in downtown Houston. Participants walk 5 kilometers (3.1 miles). Aids Foundation Houston, Inc. and Houston area HIV/AIDS service organizations use the funds to provide housing, food, medical care, counseling, and job training to more than 100,000 Houstonians each year.

### **BP M.S. 150**

8111 N. Stadium Dr., Suite 100, Houston, TX 77054  
(713) 526-8967  
[www.ms150.org](http://www.ms150.org)

Two day cycling adventure in April from Houston to Austin that raises funds to help people living with Multiple Sclerosis.

### **Run for the Rose**

#### **Marnie Rose Foundation**

5090 Richmond Ave., PMB-291, Houston, TX 77056  
(713) 993-9288  
[www.runfortherose.com](http://www.runfortherose.com)

5K run and 1K family run/walk in March funds brain cancer research at M.D. Anderson and pediatric initiatives at Memorial Hermann Children’s Hospital.

### **Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation**

#### **Race for the Cure**

5433 Westheimer Rd. Suite 325, Houston, TX 77056  
(713) 783-9188  
[www.komen-houston.org](http://www.komen-houston.org)

Largest foot race in Houston, a 5 K every October, with more than 25,000 participants raising money to save lives and find a cure for those with breast cancer.

### **Step Out to Fight Diabetes**

#### **American Diabetes Association**

2400 Augusta Dr # 175, Houston, TX 77057  
(713) 977-7706  
[www.stepout.diabetes.org](http://www.stepout.diabetes.org)

This is a 3 mile fund-raising walk every September at any of three Houston locations that features health and fitness festivals as well as children’s activities.

## Sales

- Organize bake sales in order to raise funds for a charitable organization.
- Have a garage sale on E-bay and donate the proceeds to charity.

## Still Other Mitzvah Projects

- **Alex's Lemonade Stand:** 3 day national event every June to raise money to fight childhood cancer; [alexlslemonade.org](http://alexlslemonade.org).
- **Bake:** Bake challahs and deliver them in Shabbat gift baskets while visiting the residents of Seven Acres, the Jewish nursing home.
- **Eagle Scouts:** Several boy scouts have done mitzvah projects by completing eagle projects with their troops.
- **Education:** A student made necklaces, sold them, and used the funds to buy books about the Holocaust which were then donated to a school that had no curriculum about the Holocaust.
- **Gardening:** One child planted trees at the synagogue on his birthday.
- **Gift Boxes:** Another student created gift boxes full of art supplies and donated them to Texas Children's Hospital.
- **Handiwork:** Students knit shawls for women undergoing breast cancer treatment. They were contributed to the local Susan G. Komen for the Cure organization. Other kids made knot blankets for children in the hospital with cancer.
- **Jewelry:** Customized friendship bracelets were made and sold by two friends to raise money for charity.
- **Judaica:** One student organized an afternoon with friends at which they designed seder plates on poster board discs. The artwork was then transferred to plates and the finished Seder plates were given to JFS (Jewish Family Service) to distribute to residents of Goldberg B'nai B'rith Towers (a retirement community) during their model seder.
- **Theater:** A student performed in a BCM musical in which the proceeds went to help find a cure for AIDS.
- **Libraries:** Synagogue and school libraries often have a need for help in cataloging, updating, and maintaining their collections.
- **Technology:** Friends created a website to educate people about such topics as the crises in Darfur, Aids/HIV, and breast cancer.
- **Teddy Bears:** Bears were hand made by choosing the fabric, tracing patterns, cutting, sewing and stuffing teddy bears for children in need. Others hosted get-togethers at the store, "Build-A-Bear". The bears made there were also donated to hospitals, toy drives, and emergency shelters.
- **Twinning:** This mitzvah project allows a personal link between children in America and Jewish communities throughout the world. Bar/Bat mitzvah children can share the joy of celebrating with less fortunate children while learning an important lesson in tzedakah. Correspondence is encouraged between the "twins" to help them develop a relationship. Two popular twinning programs are Israel's AMIT's; [www.amitchildren.org](http://www.amitchildren.org) and the North American Conference on Ethiopian Jewry; [www.nacocej.org](http://www.nacocej.org). Other programs can be found by doing a computer search of "twinning" and "twinning mitzvah projects" including twinning projects in which Jewish children who perished in the Holocaust are remembered.

- **Organize a Walk:** One student and her family organized a community-wide walk in downtown Houston to raise awareness about the crises in Darfur and to raise funds which were donated to this cause.

## **Resources**

*On-line listing and profiles of most Houston area non-profit organizations: [www.Donorhouston.org](http://www.Donorhouston.org)*

**Danny Siegel:** Well-known expert on personalized Tzedakah and Tikkun Olam, founder of Ziv **Tzedakah Fund** ([www.ziv.org](http://www.ziv.org)) and author of over a dozen books, including: The Bar and Bat Mitzvah Mitzvah Book; A Practical Guide for Changing the World Through your Simcha and What Kids Can Do to Change the World.

Use the internet and search “Mitzvah Projects” to find no end of articles and ideas!