

## Reaching Out

### Bake Challah for Others

Your teens can make challah for special needs residents or elderly people who live in your area.



### Shabbat Candle Committee

Compile a list of the e-mail addresses of the teens and others who want to be reminded about Shabbat candle-lighting times. A few girls should commit to put together an e-mail reminder to be sent to the entire list. They can include short stories, divrei Torah, jokes and other pertinent information.

**Note:** If the e-mail will be going to others beside the members of your club, you may have to remind them who their audience is, so that the content will be appropriate. You also have to confirm with your administrator that it is okay to send these weekly emails.

## Food and Decor

Set the table as a traditional Shabbos table - with challah, wine or grape juice and candles. If your group will not be having a Shabbaton or Friday night dinner, you can serve a Shabbos style dinner, complete with gefilte fish, matzoh balls and kugel.

## OTHER DIMENSIONS

Discuss the Matriarchs (Imahos) and the three miracles brought through them - the candles, the cloud, and the fresh challah.

## Souvenirs

Shabbat candle and candle-lighting brochure wrapped in cellophane.  
Mini marzipan challah wrapped in tulle or cellophane.

## See Also

For candle crafts, see *Teens Chanukah*

Other ideas on Shabbos, see *Youth Zone Shabbos*, and adapt the ideas to your teenage level.

For an activity on the power of light, see *Teens Chanukah*

## Objective

The teens will understand the importance of happiness, and how a healthy perspective is conducive to a happy life, focusing on any of the following: The commandment in the Torah to "Serve Hashem with joy;" Bitul is the key to simcha; "Hevai Mekabel es kol adam besever ponim yafos."

## Sayings & Invitation

*"Serve G-d with joy"*

*"Joy breaks all bounds"- "Simcha poretz geder"*

*"Smile and the world smiles with you"*

*"Smile, it's the curve that sets things straight"*

*"No one has ever ruined his eyesight by looking at the bright side of things"*

*"Crack a smile, we'll pay for the stitches"*

*"Be happy, the problems that worry us the most are the ones that never arrive"*

*"Worrying is like a rocking chair, you shake back and forth but it gets you nowhere"*

*"Is the me that I see the happiest I can be?"*

*"Pursue happiness"*

*"Cheerfulness is contagious-spread it."*

## Theme Activity / Discussion

### PICTURE PERSPECTIVE SHEET

*With this activity, the teens will learn the importance of a proper perspective.*

**Prepare:** Photocopy the "It's All A Matter Of Perspective" paper (see Appendix page 115) - one for each teen.

**Activity:** Without introducing or explaining the activity, distribute the What's this Picture? papers and a pen to each teen. Give them a few minutes to decipher each picture and answer the questions. Then, discuss the answers. Ask the teen who answered the most questions correctly what strategy she used to decipher the pictures. Most likely her success was due to the way she looked at the pictures - her perspective.

**Alternative:** Distribute the Young/Old Woman drawing (See Appendix page 116) to the teens. Ask them to identify the subject in the drawing without consulting each other. Depending on the way one looks at the drawing, the picture will look like either an old lady or a young woman. One's perspective makes the whole difference.

**Discussion:** The perspective - the way we look at things- is very important. This is also the key to happiness. When our lives seem difficult and full of challenges, we must change our perspective and look for the positive in the situation. We can choose to see the good and remain happy, or we can see the bad and feel despair. We must remember that Hashem is in control of the world and He does what is best, although we may not appreciate or recognize it as such.

## Theme Activity / Discussion

### Simcha Cards

*In this activity your teens will learn all about simcha; the leader will not be doing the talking, rather the teens themselves will lead the conversation.*

**Prepare:** On index cards, write a short thought, lesson, or quote about simcha (see Appendix pages 117-121). Include as much substantial content as possible; all the information that you want to teach should be included collectively in the cards.

**Activity:** Set a card by each teen's seat - by placing it under the plates or chairs. Alternatively, simply distribute the cards at the beginning of the meeting. To begin, every participant should be sitting with a serious face. The leader starts by smiling and pantomime wiping the smile off her face and throwing it to one of the teens. When the girl catches the smile, she should spread her lips into a smile and read her card out loud. After she has read her card, she throws her smile to another. As the imaginary smile gets thrown about, each girl should read her card. Continue until all cards are read. Discuss the thoughts written on the cards.

### Seeing the Full Picture

*From this activity the teens will understand that although Hashem has a master plan, we, humans, cannot see nor understand the events in our lives.*

**Prepare:** 1. Photocopy the pictures from Appendix page 122-125 or prepare your own. Each picture should be a close-up of part of an object, such as the drain of a kitchen sink, the top of a pepper, the middle part of a pencil, etc. Number each picture.

2. Prepare a worksheet - numbers with blank lines.

**Activity:** Distribute the worksheets and pens. Then pass around the pictures. The teens should try to determine what the picture is, and jot it down on their worksheets near the corresponding number. Once all the cards have been passed around, present the pictures once more and announce what each one is.

**Discussion:** In life, we do not see the full picture. When something seems negative, we must realize that we, humans, see only part of the picture; Hashem has a master plan that we cannot understand or see.

**Alternative:** Instead of passing around the pictures, enlarge the picture close-ups on to full size sheets of paper. Divide the teens into two groups, and hold each picture up for all to see. Whichever team guesses what the picture is first, they get to keep that sheet. Winning team is the team that has collected the most papers at the end.

## Supporting Handouts

'The Cookie Thief' Not everything is the way it seems. See Appendix page 156

'The Hidden Treasure' Happiness comes from within, see Appendix page 126

'Story of R' Zushe' Who is happy? One who is satisfied with what he has. See Appendix page 127

'Choice' It's our choice whether or not to make the best of things. See Appendix page 128

'Blind Man Sick in Bed' Happiness comes from giving to others See Appendix page 129

'Smile' The power of a smile. See Appendix page 130.

'I Offered a Prayer to G-d' We get what we need, so there's everything to be happy about, see Appendix page 131.

'The Boy with the Temper' The negative effects of a bad temper, see appendix page 132

## Activities

### PAINT THOSE WALLS - A WALL MURAL

*This activity can be done during the course of a few meetings. The teens will create a wall mural depicting a message or theme about happiness. This activity is very exciting and the teens will look forward to continuing it at the subsequent meetings.*

#### **You will need:**

A room or wall that is available to be painted.

Painting supplies. Acquire (purchase or ask for donations) all the basics that you will need for painting a wall, such as painting guide book ("Paint for Dummies"), brushes, drop cloths, base coat paint, oil paint, paint pans, etc. A sales associate at the local home store can guide you.

Overhead Projector

Pencil (one for each teen)

Picture for mural

Select the picture that you would like for your wall mural. It is best to use a simple outline or sketch rather than a detailed painting. Discuss the picture and its message and relevance to your group. During the initial phase, the teens should paint the walls with the base coat. At the next meeting, project the picture on the wall, using the overhead projector. The teens should then trace the outline onto the wall. In the subsequent meetings, they can fill in the outline with the paint.

**Alternative:** The teens can paint freehand.

## Activities *continued*

### Seat to Seat

*This is a great game where the teens get to move around. This can also be used as a 'getting to know you' game.*

Set up chairs in a circle - one for each teen. To start the game, everyone sits on a chair. Announce a characteristic, personality trait, habit, or experience that is applicable to the teens in your group. Some examples are: has freckles; wears glasses; is wearing lace-ups; wears contact lenses, has five people in family; loves roller-blading; loves to read, has been to Israel, has traveled out of the country. Following each question announce a number of seats that they should move over to. As the game progresses, many participants will be seated on the same chair, or on each other's laps. This game brings lots of laughs as the children get to know more about each other.

See appendix page 138 for a list of seat-to-seat questions.

### Simcha Dancing

*Share the joy of dancing with your teens by teaching them some simple dances*

For this activity you can get a dance instructor who knows some wedding or Israeli dances and teach a few dances to your teens. If you don't have an instructor available, you can become the instructor and teach the dances.

#### **You will need:**

Music player

Dance music that will fit to the dances you are teaching

### Finding Solutions

*The teens will learn that every situation can be solved with the resources at hand through a fun game of musical chairs*

#### **You will need:**

Bags filled with miscellaneous items: cups, cutlery, paper goods, toys, sticks, whatever

Music

List of situations

### Activities *continued*

**Activity:** Divide the teens into groups of three to four and give each teen one item-filled garbage bag. Set up chairs as you would for musical chairs, with one chair per group minus one. Read a situation and turn on the music. The groups must quickly go through their objects and find something that will solve the situation. As soon as they find it, one member of the group takes the item and runs to sit down on a chair. The group that finishes last won't have a chair and they get a point. But then, all the seated teens have to explain their solution. They must show their item and explain how it would solve the problem. If a solution is completely off-mark, then that solution is disqualified and that group receives a point as well. The group with the least points at the end wins the game.

**Discussion:** We often explain our happiness as not our personal nature but simply a state that circumstance has forced upon us. We say that we find ourselves in situations that we can't do anything about, so of course we're unhappy. We've just proven that we could make do with very little---that the key to happiness is recognizing that the solutions are right in our hands!

### Finding Yourself and Happiness Within Yourself

*Getting to know yourself charts that help you realize your strengths, and accept and work on your weaknesses*

**You will need:**

Copies of Appendix pages 133-136

**Activity:** Give each teen an "Analyze Yourself" booklet. Go through them together and fill them out, reassuring the teens that the papers are theirs to keep and you will not be looking at their responses.

**Discussion:** The first step to joy is accepting who we are and being grateful for the strengths and qualities that make us special.

## Crafts

### Simcha Frame Decorating

*These beautiful frames will hold a poem about the importance and benefits of happiness. The teens will be able to display these in their rooms or lockers. The children can compose the poem together.*

#### Wire Frames

##### You will need:

Wire or lattice style frames

Artificial flowers, ivy, ribbons, raffia, or other such decorations.

Using wire or lattice-style frames, the teens can weave ribbons, garlands, artificial ivy, flowers and raffia through the holes and wires. They can then place a poem about happiness in the frame.

#### Painted Wood Frames

##### You will need:

Solid wood frames

Paints, stickers, etc.

The teens can decorate the frames with puff paint, stickers, marbling kits, sponge painting or similar techniques. Affix a hanging hook in the back. Then the teens can place a poem about happiness in the frame.

**Suggestion:** If the frames are light-colored, and unfinished, the teens can stain the wood before decorating: Mix food coloring with alcohol and paint onto the wood. The stain will dry in a few minutes. The original sheen will be preserved so that the frame looks like colored wood.

### Potpourri Flowers

*These potpourri flowers are pretty and can bring joy with just one sniff.*

##### You will need for each teen:

Tulle

Potpourri

Skewer

Green floral tape

Dried silk

Rubber Bands