

GRANDPARENTS AND BEYOND

# rites of passage



[www.chaimitzvah.org](http://www.chaimitzvah.org)  
[grandparentsunleashed.com](http://grandparentsunleashed.com)



# BOOKLET 1: RITES OF PASSAGE

The [\*Jewish Grandparents survey\*](#) piqued the interest of the Chai Mitzvah team since so many of our participants are actually Jewish grandparents.

Surely the aspiration to pass on the love of Judaism that Jewish grandparents and others desire for the next generation is there, but while this study showed that Jewish grandparents are very involved with their grandchildren, little of this involvement is specifically Jewish. So Chai Mitzvah has created the *Grandparents and Beyond* curriculum. It contains our signature text-based conversations, as well as fun activities for engaging all ages.

## HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET:

1. Make sure everyone is on board. Always consult with the child's parents before starting any new program.
2. Read the texts, and choose the activities and conversation questions that work for you. Do not feel that you need to complete the entire booklet. The recommended ages for texts, conversations, and activities are marked by these icons:



Pre-K –  
Grade 2



Grades  
3 – 5



Middle  
School



High  
School



Adult



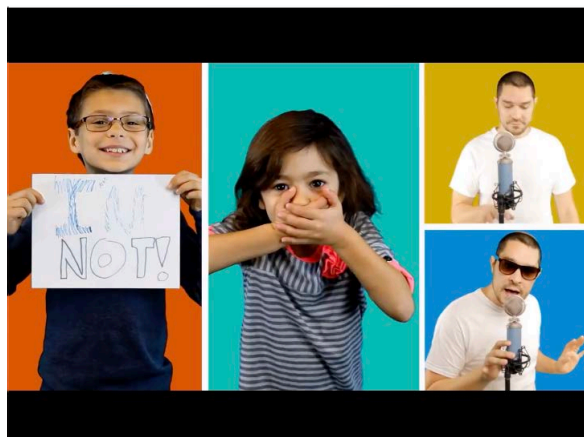
All Ages

## Rites of Passage

### WHAT IS A RITE OF PASSAGE?

Rites of Passage are significant experiences you have that change you in some way. Examples of Rites of Passage include: starting school, going to sleep-away camp, Bar/Bat Mitzvah, getting a driver's license, first paid job, marriage... can you name some?

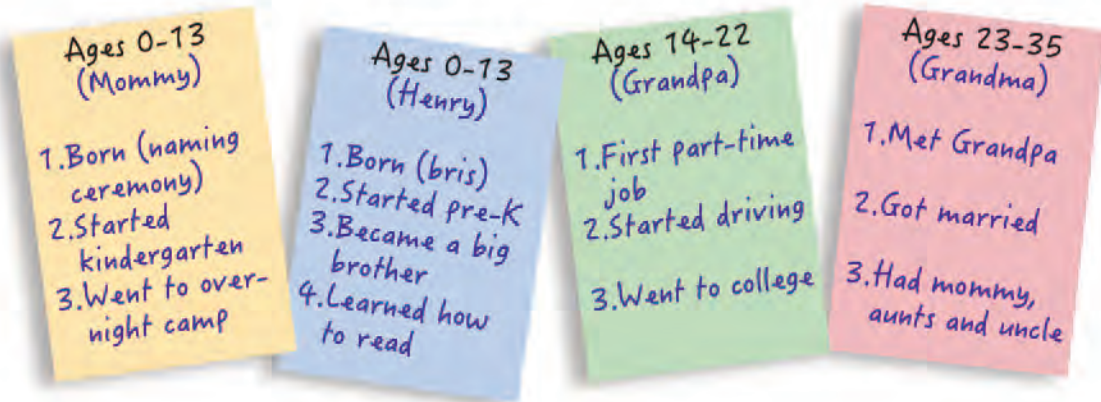
Start with a song about the Rite of Passage of becoming a parent. Click the box below to hear the song. If the video doesn't play, [click here](#).



# BOOKLET 1: RITES OF PASSAGE



**ACTIVITY:** Each family member make a list of Rites of Passage that they have experienced, both Jewish and secular, at different ages: (0-13), (14-22), (23-35), (36-55), (56-70), (71+) Here are some fun examples:



**TEXT:** *(Thinking more deeply about Rites of Passage)*

Each rite of passage ... has a three-part structure. As the rite begins, there is a stage of "separation," in which the individual is removed or taken away from the group or identity in which he or she has been living up to this point. The person then is taken through some type of "transition" from the earlier stage of life to a new stage. This is sometimes called the "liminal" stage, from the Latin *limen*, meaning a boundary. Finally, the individual goes through the third stage of "incorporation" during which he or she is made part and parcel of the new stage of life. The individual, then, goes from something old, through something in-between, and into something new. This schema explains how at each stage of development a person stops being what he or she was, travels along a path of change, and then adjusts to living a new pattern of living.

Marcus, Ivan G., *The Jewish Life Cycle: Rites of Passage from Biblical to Modern Times*

# BOOKLET 1: RITES OF PASSAGE



## ACTIVITIES:

- **PRE-K through GRADE 2:** • Compare how milestones were marked for each generation in your family. Do you have keepsakes from different family members from these milestones? (For example, a needlepoint or an old siddur; photos; home movies; and, for the current generation, group texts with photos and videos)? If those keepsakes could talk, what kind of stories would they tell? Tell your family stories in person or virtually, or get [ChatterPix Kids](#), a free app by Duck Duck Moose. Take photos of those keepsakes and give them a voice! Click on the photo below for an example. If the video doesn't play, [click here](#).



- **GRADES 3-5 through ADULT:** Grandparents and grandchildren each create a personal timeline using your list from above, incorporating Jewish and secular events. Include photos, drawings, and/or videos. Use the template on page 4, or for a good on-line template, try [Smartdraw](#).



- **MIDDLE SCHOOL through ADULT:** Using a smartphone, have your grandchild share music, a video clip, or other pop culture that they enjoy. Show your grandchild something you enjoyed when you were their age.



## CONVERSATION:

- Compare your lists, timelines, and photos. What is different and what is the same in each one? Which events are Jewish, and which are not specifically Jewish?
- Which events have you found personally most meaningful?

# BOOKLET 1: RITES OF PASSAGE



Learned to Drive

1963

**HOW TO USE THIS TEMPLATE:** Fill in each branch with a Rite of Passage. Write the year each one took place in the box below the branch. If you like, include a photo or drawing with each Rite of Passage. Print this page out multiple times, until you have enough branches for your personal timeline.


# BOOKLET 1: RITES OF PASSAGE

## CHANGING EXPECTATIONS



### ACTIVITY:

What do you expect? Imagine your future. Describe it below.

At age \_\_\_\_\_ I expect...



### INTRODUCTION:

#### FOR GRADES 3 - 5 READ THIS INTRODUCTION:

*Pirkei Avot* translates to English as "Chapters (or ethics) of the Fathers." It contains the ethical teachings and sayings passed down by the rabbis, beginning with Moses, until the end of the time of the *Mishna*, around 200 CE (Common Era)



#### FOR MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL READ THIS INTRODUCTION:

The *Avot* treatise of the Mishnah is often called "Chapters of the Fathers" or "Ethics of the Fathers" in English. It contains ethical teachings of the Rabbis. The Rabbis of the Mishnah were living in a time when all they knew had turned to chaos as a result of the destruction of the Temple. The writing of the Mishnah was an attempt to restore order to the chaos. Rabbi Jacob Neusner teaches that the lists found in Chapter Five of *Avot* reveal the order beneath the chaos.

He goes on to teach that this mishnah highlights that order can endure, patterns can be found, and isolated facts can be drawn together to bear meaning. Similarly, life cycle events, celebrated by Jews through specific rituals, can be described as an attempt to bring order to chaotic times in our lives. As we move through the lifecycle, these moments are not necessarily chaotic in terms of crisis, but chaotic in terms of changing identities. These transformational moments force us to acknowledge that we are, in some way, forever changed and transformed..

# BOOKLET 1: RITES OF PASSAGE



TEXT: PIRKEI AVOT 5:2

הוא היה אומר:  
בן חמש שנים למקרא;  
בן עשר למשנה;  
בן שלוש עשרה למצוות;  
בן חמש עשרה לתלמוד;  
בן שמונה עשרה לחופה;  
בן עשרים לרדוף;  
בן שלושים לכוח;  
בן ארבעים לבינה;  
בן חמישים לעצה;  
בן ששים לזקנה;  
בן שבעים לשיבה;  
בן שמונים לגבורה;  
בן תשעים לשוח;  
בן מאה כאילו מת ועבר ובטל מן העולם.

He (Yehuda ben Tema) used to say:  
At five years of age the study of Scripture;  
At ten, the study of Mishnah;  
At thirteen, subject to the commandments;  
At fifteen, the study of Talmud;  
At eighteen, marriage;  
At twenty, pursuit [of a livelihood];  
At thirty, the peak of [mature] strength;  
At forty, wisdom (mature intellectual powers);  
At fifty, able to give counsel  
(mature judgment of situations);  
At sixty, old age creeping on;  
At seventy, fullness of years;  
At eighty, the age of strength;  
At ninety, body bent;  
At one hundred, as good as dead and gone,  
completely out of the world.



## CONVERSATION:

PRE-K through HIGH SCHOOL

- What do you want to be when you grow up?
- What will you need to do to become this?
- What character traits or abilities do you hope to gain as you grow up?



ADULT

- Do some of the stages listed in this text surprise you? Are they different from your view of the stages of life?

# BOOKLET 1: RITES OF PASSAGE



## ACTIVITY:

- **Celebrate your journey!** Create a new ritual that you can share together. When one member of a family transitions to a new stage of life, it affects all the members of the family. Planning and preparation leading up to these moments push us to acknowledge and find meaning in the transition as we move from one stage of life to the next.

Create a personally meaningful new rite of passage for your family to mark a transition into a new stage of life that might otherwise pass without formal acknowledgment. Suggested examples for grandchildren: Potty training, first ride on a school bus, going to overnight camp, getting a driver's license, going away to college... For adults in the family: Changing jobs or retiring, becoming a grandparent...

Consider including the following elements in your planning:

- Purpose: What are we marking?
- Place: Where should the ritual take place?
- Community: Who should be present?
- Ritual and Symbols: What should we do?
- Commitment: What promises will we make?

It is meaningful to include social action as part of your rite of passage. For example, a ritual celebrating getting your driver's license might include using your newfound ability as a means to deliver Meals on Wheels.





# BOOKLET 1: RITES OF PASSAGE

## A TIME FOR EVERYTHING



### INTRODUCTION:

#### FOR GRADES 3 - 5 READ THIS INTRODUCTION

Ecclesiastes, *Kohelet* in Hebrew, is one of 24 books of the *Tanach* or Hebrew Bible where it is classified as one of the *Ketuvim*, writings. It was written by King Solomon.



#### FOR MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL READ THIS INTRODUCTION:

Similar to other books of the Bible like Proverbs and Job, *Kohelet* (Ecclesiastes) belongs to a category of literature known as wisdom literature. "Wisdom texts reflect on the nature of the world and the God who created and controls it, and on the place of humans in this divine creation" (*Jewish Study Bible*, p. 1603). The following text provides an approach to dividing the stages of life.



#### TEXT: *Kohelet* 3:1-8

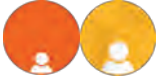
- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1 לכל זמן ועת לכל־חפץ תחת השמים:                         | 1 A season is set for everything, a time for every experience under heaven:  |
| 2 עת ללדת ועת למות עת לטעת ועת לעקור נטוע:               | 2 A time for being born and a time for dying, A time for planting and a time for uprooting the planted;              |
| 3 עת להרוג ועת לרפוא עת לפרוץ ועת לבנות:                 | 3 A time for slaying and a time for healing, A time for tearing down and a time for building up;                     |
| 4 עת לבכות ועת לשחוק עת ספוד ועת רקוד:                   | 4 A time for weeping and a time for laughing, A time for wailing and a time for dancing;                             |
| 5 עת להשליך אבנים ועת פגוס אבנים עת לחבוק ועת לרחק מחבק: | 5 A time for throwing stones and a time for gathering stones, A time for embracing and a time for shunning embraces; |
| 6 עת לבקש ועת לאבד עת לשמור ועת להשליך:                  | 6 A time for seeking and a time for losing, A time for keeping and a time for discarding;                            |
| 7 עת לקרוע ועת לתפור עת לחשות ועת לדבר:                  | 7 A time for ripping and a time for sewing, A time for silence and a time for speaking;                              |
| 8 עת לאהב ועת לשנא עת מלחמה ועת שלום:                    | 8 A time for loving and a time for hating; A time for war and a time for peace.                                      |

# BOOKLET 1: RITES OF PASSAGE



## CONVERSATION:

- How would you describe the time we're living in today, and how does the time we are living in today relate to the time of life when parents and grandparents were the age the children in the family are now?



## ACTIVITIES:

- **PRE-K through GRADE 2 and GRADES 3-5: Pick-a-Passage Card Game**

Pages 10-15 contain playing cards that can be printed out, cut apart, and used to play different games for players of varied ages and abilities. The last pages have templates for players to create their own cards, if desired, which can be added to the deck. Our passage through the stages of life is made more meaningful when shared with community in a spiritual way. For this reason, instead of spades, clubs, diamonds, and hearts, these playing cards have passages, family, community, and ritual. For younger players, print out double sets of the cards so that they can play "Go Fish" or Memory. Another way to play with these cards is to put just the cards in a bowl. Take turns picking one and telling a story about the card you have chosen.



- **Cook Up Some Memories:** Prepare a recipe that has been in your family. What does this recipe tell you about your family?



- Click the photo below to play the Byrds' *Turn Turn Turn* song. If the video doesn't play, [click here](#).



## SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS:

- GRADES PRE-K through 2 and 3 - 5: [Honi's Surprise](#)
- ALL AGES: [How to Say the Jewish Blessing Over Children](#)



# BOOKLET 1: RITES OF PASSAGE

PASSAGE 			Brit Milah	CHAI MITZVAH
PASSAGE 			Naming	CHAI MITZVAH
PASSAGE 			Ushperin (first haircut)	CHAI MITZVAH
PASSAGE 			Starting School	CHAI MITZVAH
PASSAGE 			Bar/Bat Mitzvah	CHAI MITZVAH
PASSAGE 			Confirmation	CHAI MITZVAH
PASSAGE 			Marriage	CHAI MITZVAH
PASSAGE 			Mourning	CHAI MITZVAH

# BOOKLET 1: RITES OF PASSAGE

FAMILY F		1 Father	CHAI MITZVAH
FAMILY F		2 Mother	CHAI MITZVAH
FAMILY F		3 Brother	CHAI MITZVAH
FAMILY F		4 Sister	CHAI MITZVAH
FAMILY F		5 Aunt	CHAI MITZVAH
FAMILY F		6 Uncle	CHAI MITZVAH
FAMILY F		7 Grandmother	CHAI MITZVAH
FAMILY F		8 Grandfather	CHAI MITZVAH

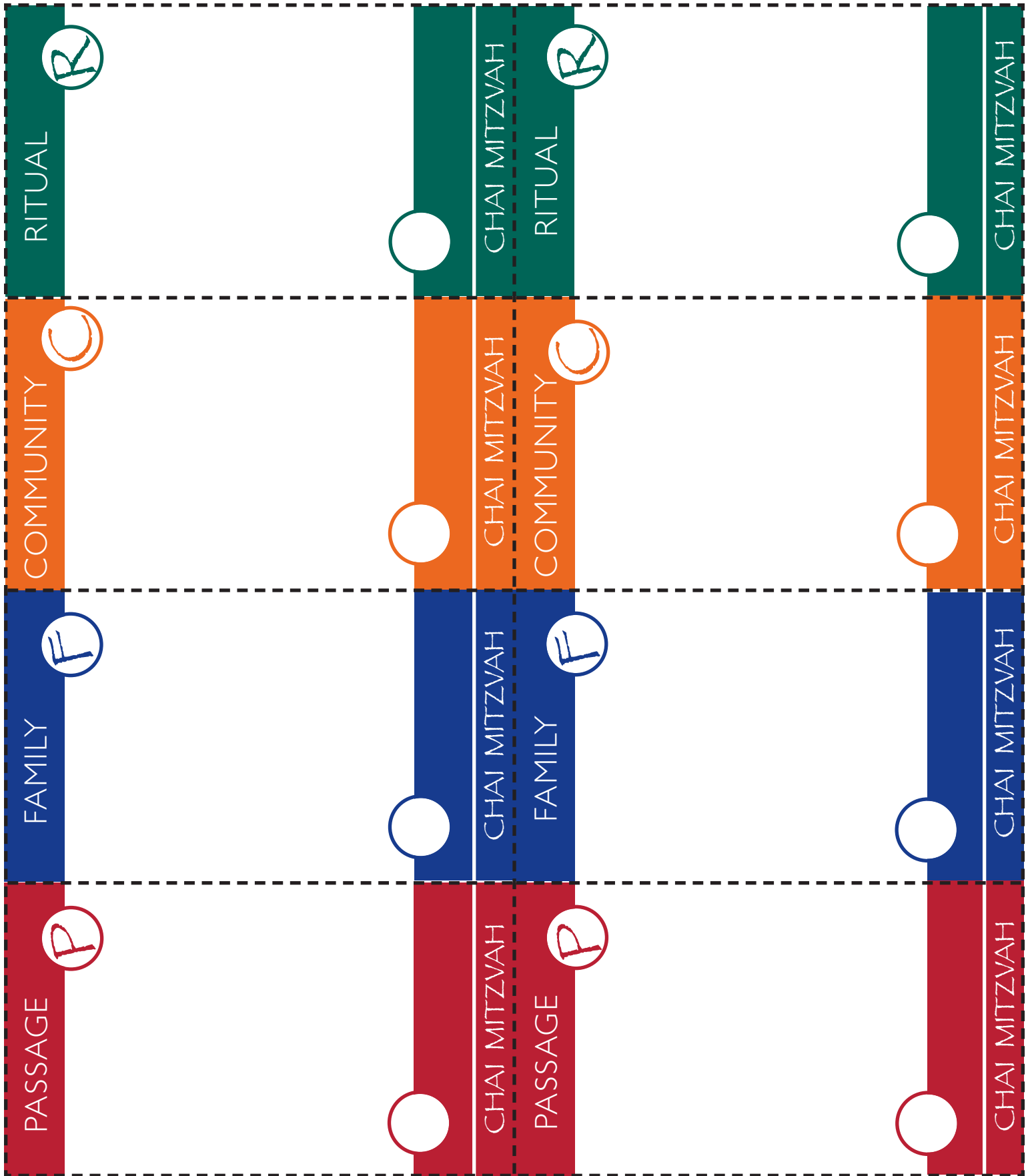
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COMMUNITY 	 Teacher	1	 Rabbi	2	 Neighbor	3	 Neighbors	4	COMMUNITY 
CHAI MITZVAH	COMMUNITY 	5	 Doctor	6	 Police Officers	7	 Shopkeeper	8	CHAI MITZVAH
CHAI MITZVAH	CHAI MITZVAH	CHAI MITZVAH	CHAI MITZVAH	CHAI MITZVAH	CHAI MITZVAH	CHAI MITZVAH	CHAI MITZVAH	CHAI MITZVAH	CHAI MITZVAH

# BOOKLET 1: RITES OF PASSAGE

RITUAL 	RITUAL 	RITUAL 	RITUAL 
1 Kiddush Cup	2 Torah	3 Candles	4 Siddur
CHAI MITZVAH	CHAI MITZVAH	CHAI MITZVAH	CHAI MITZVAH
RITUAL 	RITUAL 	RITUAL 	RITUAL 
5 Chuppah	6 Tefillin	7 Tallit	8 Kippah
CHAI MITZVAH	CHAI MITZVAH	CHAI MITZVAH	CHAI MITZVAH

# BOOKLET 1: RITES OF PASSAGE



**Chai Mitzvah** was created as a way to engage adults, teens, and families in a Jewish journey throughout their lives. Combining texts to spark discussion, ritual, and social action, Chai Mitzvah provides the framework for a meaningful Jewish journey through small group conversation and personal discovery.

**Chai Mitzvah** has partnered with **The Grandparent-Grandchild Connection School Program** to create this exciting curriculum that is designed to stimulate intergenerational connections. We hope it will be used by grandparents and other multigenerational relationships. Now, more than ever, we are happy to provide opportunities for greater understanding and connection across the generations.

It is also our hope that your experience will ignite deeper Jewish engagement and continued growth for you and your extended families.

**The Grandparent-Grandchild Connection School Program** invites grandparents to unleash their creativity and share the things they are passionate about with their families. When grandparents enter the world of their grandchildren at school, there are positive, measurable outcomes for families and schools. Connections across the generations are good for everyone's mental health, including improved academic performance and social skills for students and a support network for grandparents, students, and parents. Through a series of workshops grandparents, adult children, and grandchildren learn to Bridge the Generations; Enter Each Other's World; Tell Stories; and Give Voice to Your Values. Learn more at [grandparentsunleashed.com](http://grandparentsunleashed.com).



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