



bar, bat & b'nai mitzvah program

# FAMILY GUIDEBOOK

2019/2020 - 5780



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# WELCOME!

Dear Family,

We are honored that you have chosen to join the Tawonga Bar, Bat & B'nai Mitzvah (TBM) Program which we hope creates a meaningful Jewish journey for you. Our intention is to help you dive into a Jewish life that sparks conversation and consideration of important traditions, values and spiritual options. This guidebook is designed to orient you to the program and “guide” you along the journey. Throughout these two years and beyond, we look forward to getting to support and know you and your family.

Mazel Tov (congratulations!) on choosing this journey!

With Gratitude,  
The Tawonga Team

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## Our Story

Over the years, community members kept telling us how much they wished they could experience the joyous Jewish community of Camp Tawonga back home, all year long. This program, the cornerstone of our Tawonga Down the Mountain offerings, seeks to answer that call.

Up until the launch of the Tawonga Bar, Bat & B'nai Mitzvah Program in 2016, during the agency's 90-year history, only four b'nai mitzvot took place at Camp. Two occurred in the early 1980s on the girls' side field, one was in 2000 at Hershey Rock and one was in May 2015 at Makom Shalom (“Place of Peace”). The most recent service was led by Chloe, who shared during her d'rash,

*This past year, my parents asked me if I wanted my Bat Mitzvah in temple or in Israel. I decided I wanted it here [at Camp Tawonga] because it was the only place I felt close to G-d. For me, being isolated in the trees for days was amazing.*

The joyous Judaism in nature Chloe described feeling at Camp has been felt by thousands of children and families during our history. Tawonga Down the Mountain was launched to bring that unique Tawonga spirit to families locally in the Bay Area. Then, to further our mission and inspire children to connect to Jewish life and spirituality, we launched Tawonga's Bar, Bat & B'nai Mitzvah Program as a cornerstone to our Down the Mountain offerings. This two-year program would be an innovative approach to the b'nai mitzvah experience, giving students the opportunity to find and develop their own meaningful path to Jewish adulthood.



## Judaism with Tawonga

During our Saturday morning Shabbat Torah services at Camp, we seek to make Judaism accessible and relevant to all campers. Children are provided the opportunity to explore a variety of Jewish practices, ranging from singing to Torah lessons to reflection in nature, inviting them to consider what resonates the most. We understand and embrace that a positive Jewish and spiritual identity will be discovered and developed in a manner that is unique for each individual.

Past Tawonga campers and staff frequently share that their summers at Camp were instrumental in shaping their religious and spiritual identities. After spending weeks surrounded by community and exploring nature, an overwhelming number of Tawongans report that they feel a closer connection to Jewish community, gain a stronger sense of who they are as individuals and set the intention to continue exploring Jewish traditions, values and customs in everyday life. As a leader in Jewish camping since 1925, Camp Tawonga has specialized in character and youth development, program innovation and team building for thousands of campers. We are delighted to apply our proven methodology and approach in this new capacity to impact even more children as they embark on this meaningful rite of passage.

The Tawonga Bar, Bat & B'nai Mitzvah Program focuses on the process of becoming a more self-confident, socially-aware and inquisitive young adult within the framework of Jewish values and teachings. Through this unique program, your child will interact with nature, get to know their community, engage in thought-provoking discussions about Judaism and teenage life and build leadership skills – all the while defining a personally resonant connection to Judaism that we hope will last a lifetime.





## Goals of this Guidebook

After reading this guidebook, parents and students will...

### Know:

- About all aspects of the program, including important logistical information about what to expect and how to come prepared.
- How to begin visionings and planning a service/simcha
- Our expectations of students and parents as participants
- How to find the answers to your questions

### Feel:

- The Tawonga Bar, Bat & B'nai Mitzvah program is excellent, meaningful, deep and engaging

- Your questions have been anticipated
- Proud of being part of the Tawonga Bar, Bat & B'nai Mitzvah program
- Ready and prepared for your service/simcha
- Supported by Tawonga

### Do:

- Answer your own questions AND know where to go for help
- Enjoy good relations with our teachers, counselors and mentors
- Celebrate a beautiful Jewish right of passage ceremony

## Role of the TBM Student

1. Attend all kitot (classes) and do the work between classes
2. Know and do your homework!
3. Attend all retreats
4. Learn the meaning of and how to lead seven key Shabbat blessings (more to come!)
5. Choose a mentor and work with them as you unpack and reflect on your Torah portion
6. Write your D'rash (Torah interpretation) or choose another way to express your message
7. Work with your service leader to create a service that feels right to you
8. If you choose, lead a Torah Service with help
9. Create and execute a mitzvah project
10. Participate with an open mind and heart
11. Ask questions

## Role of the Parent

1. Read the family guidebook
2. Know the dates and location of the kitot and help transport your child
3. Prepare your child for the retreat (eg: packing, transportation)
4. Attend the parent education and engagement sessions
5. Know what work is due between kitot and support your child in getting the work done
6. Plan and vision your child's service or simcha with your family (more to come! Keep reading!)
7. Support your child's journey through thoughtful questions and encouragement
8. Give us your feedback along the way. We want to hear from you!
9. Ask questions



## Kitot (Classes)

*Kita* means “class” in Hebrew. *Kitot* is the plural, meaning, “classes.”

Once a month from October - April, students will gather for immersive 3-hour classes (*kitot*) focused around either a Jewish prayer and value (Year 1) or Torah learning and personal growth practice (Year 2). Every class will include community building activities, time for spiritual connection to blessings or nature, innovative lesson plans, and breaks for students to run around outside and have a snack.

**Field Trips:** Throughout the year, students will have two field trips, at least one of which will be a community service day. This is a time to live out the values and practices we study. For some field trips, we will request **parent chaperones** or attendance - we are excited to learn with you!

### Homework:

After every *kita*, we will email out to both parents and students the homework that is to be completed before the next meeting. This will likely be completing activities in the student journal and will ALWAYS include practicing the blessings we have learned so far in *kita*. **To practice the blessings, students should use their student journals and the [soundcloud recordings](#) that can be found by going to [soundcloud.com](#) and searching for Tawonga Bar, Bat & B’nai Mitzvah Program.**



### How to Make Up Class:

If you miss a class, you are always welcome to come to the class for the other region. For example, if you are enrolled in the East Bay, you are welcome to join us in San Francisco for the same lesson. Additionally, **doing the homework** is as GREAT way to stay caught up.



### What to Bring to Every Kita (class):

- Backpack with:
  - Student Journal
  - Water bottle
  - An extra layer, just in case
- Shoes you can be active in
- We provide snacks, but if you bring your own, **no nuts!**

## Sample Kita Outline

### Hour 1 - All Together

- Warm up/welcome
- All together activity/learning/games
- Blessings and spiritual connection (different every time and creative!)

### Snack and Break Time

### Hour 2 - Divided into 2 Classes

- Lessons + Learning

### Snack and Break Time

### Hour 3 - Electives

- 2 activities with the same learning outcomes but different learning styles.
- *Closing all together*



# Year 1 Curriculum Overview

*This is subject to change as the year progresses depending on the needs of the learners*

## **Kita 1 - Welcome, Barechu (Call to Prayer), and Gratitude**

In this kita, we will be setting up our learning community, introducing the first of 7 core blessings, and exploring blessings as a practice of gratitude. We discuss the quote: “Who is rich? One who is happy with what one has!”

### **Fall Retreat**

On our first retreat, students should come ready to make new connections in their cohort, celebrate a joyous Shabbat through song, play Tawonga games in nature, and dive deep into meaningful Jewish learning.

Specifically, we will be delving into:

- What does it mean to become a Bar, Bat or B’nai Mitzvah?
- A Mock B’nai Mitzvah Service on Saturday morning
- *Sh’ma* (a central Jewish prayer) and *B’tzelem Elohim* (a key Jewish value that says we are all created in the image of the divine).

## **Kita 2 - Mi Chamocha (Prayer about Miracle) and Shmirat HaGut (Caring for Our Bodies)**

As we appreciate the miracles of our bodies, we will talk about the Jewish value of taking care of ourselves and recognizing the wonders of daily life. For example, what does Torah have to say about tattoos?

## **Kita 3 - V’ahavta (Prayer about love) and Ahavat Ger (Loving the Stranger)**

In this class, we will be learning the prayer about love and discussing the core Jewish value, “loving the stranger.”

## **Kita 4 - Amidah (The Standing Prayer) and Tzedakah (Just action)**

Through thinking about standing up for ourselves and others, in this class we will learn the “standing prayer” and talk about the Jewish tradition of giving *tzedakah* (charity) and *t’rumah* (gifts of the heart).

## **Kita 5 - Community Service Day + Shomrei Adamah**

East Bay: Save the Bay

San Francisco: Alemany Farm

## **Kita 6 - Mourner’s Kaddish at Jewish Cemetery and Kehillah (Community) *Parents invited***

While gathered in an old Jewish cemetery, we will learn the prayer we say in honor of those who have passed and discuss how we show up for our community in times of both celebration and great need.

## **Kita 7 - Oseh Shalom (Prayer for Peace) and Peace Makers Panel *Parents invited 1st hour***

What does it mean to bring peace to the Earth? In this final class, we will learn from our own Bay Area community members and b’nai mitzvah alumni who have completed a meaningful mitzvah project. And then, we will learn the 7th key prayer: the prayer for peace!

### **Spring Retreat**

In our second retreat, we will take some time to reflect on our first year, review all of the prayers through a spirited Shabbat service, explore the beautiful Marin Headlands, and take a deep dive into the Mitzvah Project. Some highlights include:

- A Mock B’nai Mitzvah Service on Saturday morning
- What is a Mitzvah Project? How and why do we do one?
- Deep dive on homelessness in the Bay Area and how we can help



## Weekend Retreats

During our two retreats per year, students will experience a screen free Shabbat of learning, art, nature and play, all in the beautiful Marin Headlands. With the help of song leaders and Tawonga-trained staff, create a camp experience, “down the mountain” and immerse our students in the beauty of our great tradition!



## SAMPLE WEEKEND RETREAT OVERVIEW

### FRIDAY

5:00 - 5:20pm  
 5:20 - 5:30pm  
**5:30 - 6:10pm**  
**6:10 - 6:45pm**  
 7:00 - 7:30pm  
 7:30 - 8:15pm  
 8:15 - 8:45pm  
 8:45 - 9:15pm  
 9:15 - 9:45pm  
 9:45pm

Welcome activities, put bags away, etc..  
 NatureBridge Orientation at the Firecircle  
**Yr 2 Dinner / Yr 1 Meet Your Havurah + Move In**  
**Yr 1 Dinner / Yr 2 Meet Your Havurah + Move In**  
 Kabbalat Shabbat Prep in your Havurah  
 Kabbalat Shabbat Services  
 Living Area “Get to Know You” and 10 Commandments  
 Bedtime Rituals & Lila Tov!  
 Quiet time/reading/journaling in bed  
 Lights out

### Saturday

6:45am  
**7:00 - 7:45am**  
**8:00 - 8:45am**  
 9:00 - 10:15am  
 10:15 - 11:30  
 11:30 - 12:30  
**12:30 - 1:15pm**  
 1:15 - 2:00  
 2 - 3:30pm  
 3:30 - 5pm  
**5:00 - 5:45pm**  
**6:00 - 6:45pm**  
 7:15 - 7:45pm  
 7:45 - 8:30pm  
 8:45 - 9:15pm  
 9:15 - 9:45pm  
 9:45pm

Yr 1 Wake Up & Get Ready for the Day  
**Yr 1 Breakfast / Yr 2 sleep in breakfast**  
**Yr 2 Breakfast / Yr 1 Morning Nature Ritual with Dor**  
 Shabbat Torah Service with Meg + Isaac  
 Shabbat Floats (Free choice activities)  
 Shabbat Learning Part 1  
**Picnic Lunch**  
*Menucha* (rest time)  
 Shabbat Learning Part 2  
 Electives  
**Yr 1 Dinner / Yr 2 Havurah Reflections + cohort games**  
**Yr 2 Dinner / Yr 1 Havurah Reflections + cohort games**  
 S’mores and music  
 Campfire/Talent Show/Havdalah  
 Bedtime Rituals + Living area discussion  
 Quiet time/reading/journaling in bed  
 Lights out

### Sunday

6:45am  
**7:00 - 7:45am**  
**8:00 - 8:45am**  
 9 - 10:45am  
 10:45 - 11:00am

Yr 2 wake Up & Get Ready for the Day  
**Yr 2 Breakfast / Yr 1 sleep in breakfast**  
**Yr 1 Breakfast / Yr 2 Morning Nature Ritual with Dor**  
 Separate Student and Parent programming  
 Grab your bags and head out

## Sample Retreat Packing List

### Clothing

**\*\*Pack layers as the temperature can change quickly on the coast.**

**\*\*Pack rain gear as well!**

- Long Sleeve Shirt
- T-Shirt x 2
- Long Pants
- Shorts
- PJs
- Underwear
- Warm Jacket / Sweatshirt
- Rain Layer
- Closed Toed Hiking/Walking Shoes
- Socks
- Warm Hat
- Sun Hat / Baseball Cap

### Toiletries:

- Sunscreen
- Toothpaste
- Toothbrush
- Hairbrush

### Bedding:

- Twin-Size Sheets, Blanket and/or Sleeping Bag
- Pillow

### Other Items:

- Reusable Water Bottle
- Day Pack
- books, sketchbook, diary, homework, etc.. (for rest hour and bedtime)
- Flashlight or Headlamp
- Sunglasses
- \*Student Journal\***

### Optional:

- Shower Supplies (Towel, Flip Flops, Shampoo, Conditioner, Soap)
- Earplugs and/or Eye Mask
- Stuffed Animal
- Medicine & MAR (to give to staff member at bus or site drop-off)

## Saturday Morning Mock Mitzvah!

Many of our students have never been to a B’nai Mitzvah service, and so Saturday morning during the retreat, we have a “Mock Mitzvah” in which we walk through what it looks like! Parents are welcome to swing by and observe this service as well, from around 9 - 10am.





## Family Engagement

### Havdalah Picnic

Families will have the opportunity to meet regionally to celebrate the end of Shabbat by participating in Havdalah together. We will gather in an outdoor location and sing songs with a Tawonga song leader.

### Shabbat Potluck

Families will gather for a Shabbat potluck to build community, enjoy a meal together, and learn how to create Shabbat in their home.

*We are looking for families to host! If interested, please email Meg at [meg@tawonga.org](mailto:meg@tawonga.org).*

### Family Nature Day

Families will gather for a guided nature walk and learning. This is a great chance to really understand some key connections between Jewish tradition and deep reverence for the natural world.

## Parent Learning

### Retreat Sessions

On the Sunday morning of each student weekend retreat, parents/guardians are invited (and strongly encouraged!) to join a 90-minute learning session focused on supporting your child's journey in the Tawonga program - along with some Jewish learning for you.

### Online Learning

Throughout each year, there will be 6 online learning sessions that dive even deeper into Jewish topics. Instructions will be sent out as the first session in October approaches. Some topics we will be covering include:

- What is Shabbat and how can we celebrate at home?
- What is the history of the B'nai Mitzvah ceremony?
- Torah 101 - How do we and can we read Torah today?

We will send out many reminders before each date and include these sessions on all of our calendar documents. The sessions will be recorded in case you cannot attend them.

### Self Directed Learning

For folks who want to go even deeper into their learning journey, alongside their child, please see "Self Directed Parent Learning" at the back of this guidebook, for a curated bibliography of books, websites and podcasts relevant to the B'nai Mitzvah experience. As always, give us a call if you want to discuss anything you are learning or want further recommendations.



## Mitzvah Project

One of the main goals of the Tawonga Bar, Bat & B'nai Mitzvah Program is to expose students to ideas of social justice and community engagement. In order to bring these concepts into a tangible experience, each student will participate in a Mitzvah Project. Kita (class) leaders and students will spend time working together to brainstorm projects and students will choose to either work as a group or individually on their chosen project, or can select and create an alternative project. We encourage students to create a substantial project that **requires up to 30 hours of preparation and service.**

This program requirement emphasizes that becoming a Jewish adult involves giving back to one's community. Our goal is for students to feel empowered and inspired to be responsible global citizens.

While kita leaders will help students think about how to come up with a project, families should be prepared to be an integral part of this process. At the end of year two, families will be invited to a Tawonga Bar, Bat & B'nai Mitzvah Program graduation at which time students will present their Mitzvah Project. The graduation is a wonderful opportunity to kvell over our collective journeys and hard work!



## Mitzvah Project Timeline

- **Year 1, Kita 7**
  - Students engage in a mitzvah panel, learning from past students and local organizations, what it means to create an implement a mitzvah project
- **Year 1, Spring Retreat**
  - Students engage in a deep dive on what are the possible projects they can do and how they relate to Jewish values
- *Students can begin their project! Summer is a great time to get to work!*
- **Year 2, Kita 1**
  - Students are given homework to write out their mitzvah project plan (in student journal) due at Kita 2.
- *If students have already started, then can write what they have already done and what they plan to do moving forward*
- *Students are working on their project*
- **Year 2, Kita 2**
  - Students hand in their mitzvah project plans and workshop in small groups
- *Students are working on their project*
- **Year 2, Kita 4**
  - Short mitzvah project checkpoint, to make sure students are on track
- *Students are working on their project*
- **Year 2, Spring Retreat**
  - Students present about their mitzvah project at graduation



## → Examples of Past Mitzvah Projects ←

Category	Organization	Description
Animals	Berkeley Humane Society	Walked dogs and visiting animals at the Berkeley Humane Society
Animals	Self Directed	Made dog toys from recycled materials
Homelessness / Hunger	Glide Memorial Church	Helped prep and serve meals in a food kitchen
Hunger	Meals on Wheels	Bringing meals to people's homes
Environment	Grassroots Ecology	Picked weeds and learned about native plants
Environment	Self Directed	Cleaning up Crab Cove in Alameda
Kids / Education	Head Start	Volunteering in preschool classes
Kids / Health	Self Directed	Volunteered teaching dance in a hospital
Kids / Health	Salima AIDS Support Org.	<u>Created a website to raise money for kids with HIV/AIDs in Malawi</u>
Refugees	JFCS: Refugees and Immigrants	Raised money and collected products at his graduation for refugees
Literacy	Prisoners Literature Project	Collected books to send to prisoners in the US
Made Up!	Self Directed	Contacted the Giants to get sports equipment that they didn't need anymore, and then drove picked it up and then drove it to those who had lost their sports equipment in the fires in sonoma
Made Up!	Self Directed	Baked cakes and brought them to a retirement home for each person on their birthday. Gave them a cake and hung out with them

***"It is not your responsibility to finish the work [perfecting the world], but you are not free to desist from it"***  
*(Pirkei Avot 2:16)*



## Mentorship

We hope that in participating in our program, our students will not only grow more connected to the Tawonga community, but to their families and surrounding communities. One way we will help facilitate these connections is through mentorship. Around seven months before a student's simcha, we ask that each student choose a mentor from their life who can help them on their TBM journey. **This mentor can be a family member, coach, music or school teacher, camp counselor, family friend, or any other person from the student's life.** The mentor will receive training from Meg, the Program Manager, on how to assist the student as they read their Torah portion and write their Drash/D'var Torah (sermon or teaching). Students will receive guidance on how to select and ask someone to be their mentor, and of course, we are always here to help along the way!

### → Sneak Peak at the Mentorship Experience ←

*Mentors meet with the student 4-6 times (in the second year of our program)*

#### First meeting (1 hour)

- Get to know each other!
- Discuss: Why are you having a bat mitzvah?
- Share about your own bar/bat mitzvah experience (if the mentor had one)
- Together watch the [Bimbam.com](https://www.bimbam.com) presentation of the Torah portion and discuss
- **Homework for both:** Read the Torah portion and come with a summary and questions

#### Second Meeting (1 hour)

- Read the Torah portion out loud, taking notes on questions that you both have as you read.
- Discuss and draw thoughts on the text
- Pick a theme or two to focus that relate most closely to the student's life/interests
- **Homework:** Write a paragraph about what it means to the student to become B'nai Mitzvah.

#### Third meeting (45 min)

- Review homework from previous meeting
- Discuss mitzvah project and how it connects to the theme the student has picked to discuss from their Torah portion.
- **Homework:** Write a short summary of the Torah portion.

#### Fourth Meeting (45 min)

- Review homework and revisit the themes discussed in the second meeting.
- Discuss how what the student might write about in their *d'var Torah* related to the Torah portion. EG: What questions do you have about this Torah portion? How might you answer those questions?
- **Homework:** Write a couple paragraphs about the ideas they have chosen to discuss in their *d'var Torah*, and how that is relevant to their life/becoming a B'nai Mitzvah or their mitzvah project.

#### Fifth Meeting (30 min)

- Discuss what student has written/edit together
- Discuss how to take all the parts of their speech and tie it together into one *d'var Torah*.
- **Homework:** Compile the parts of their *d'var Torah* together into one cohesive speech. Write a "thank you" paragraph + introduction.

#### Sixth Meeting (45 min)

- Review *d'var Torah* and practice reading at least 3 times
- How is the mentee feeling about the upcoming Bar/Bat/B'nai Mitzvah?



## What is The “Simcha?”

When a child turns 12 (traditionally for girls) or 13 (traditionally for boys), they become Bat or Bar Mitzvah whether they want to or not! We don’t actually have to do anything to become Bat, Bar or B’nai Mitzvah, it happens to us as we grow and take on more responsibilities in our family and community.

For Jewish people who observe all of the *mitzvot* (commandments), becoming B’nai Mitzvah means being obligated to fulfill all of the commandments as an adult does. For example, it means being “counted” as a Jewish adult when a *minyan* (a quorum of 10 Jewish adults) are needed to say certain prayers



So actually, **someone does not have a Bar, Bat or B’nai Mitzvah, but they become Bar, Bat or B’nai Mitzvah.** The ceremony (or what we call, “simcha,” meaning “joyful occasion”) is a way to mark this transition into adolescence and taking on more responsibility.

The question then becomes, **how do we mark this incredible life occasion?** Over the centuries, the answer to this question has changed: a Bar Mitzvah service 200 years ago looked different than it does today and Bat Mitzvah services only began in the 20th century!

At Tawonga, we embrace that every child approaches Jewish life and the B’nai Mitzvah journey differently. To support our “choose your own adventure” model of Judaism, we will work with you and your child to design a TBM service that incorporates your family’s values and preferences.

### Leading a Shabbat Morning Service in one of the following ways:

1. Share a *d’var Torah* (sermon)
2. Share a *d’var Torah* and lead community in prayers
3. Share a *d’var Torah* and lead community in prayers and a Torah Service (receiving an *aliyah*\* or chanting Torah)

### Other Simcha Options: *(contact Meg for more sample outlines of the following)*

1. Leading Shabbat dinner blessings and *d’var Torah*
2. Leading a Havdalah (end of Shabbat) service and *d’var Torah*
3. Leading or embarking on a Jewish-themed nature hike or other physical challenge
4. TBM Program Graduation (completing this program and no additional simcha)

***If you have other ideas or need help envisioning your simcha, Meg is here to support you!***



## Simcha Visioning Quiz! *Circle the answer that is best for you and your family:*

- |                                     |                 |                      |                        |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. I want my simcha to be           | inside          | outside              |                        |
| 2. I want my simcha to have         | lots of people  | not a lot of people  |                        |
| 3. I want my simcha to feel         | fancy/formal    | casual/laid back     |                        |
| 4. During my simcha, I want to      | lead prayers    | not lead prayers     |                        |
| 5. During my simcha, I want to      | chant Torah     | not chant Torah      |                        |
| 6. During my simcha, I want to have | lots of singing | not a lot of singing |                        |
| 7. I want my simcha to be           | Fri. Night      | Sat. Morning         | Sat. Afternoon/Evening |

### For the Parents/Guardians and Student to Discuss and Write:

*What will it mean to become Bar/Bat/B'nai Mitzvah?*

*Why is it important to you and/or your family to become Bar/Bat/B'nai Mitzvah?*

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*What questions do you have about becoming Bar/Bat/B'nai Mitzvah?*

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## Mitzvah Menu

### *Possible Elements of a B'nai Mitzvah Celebration*

#### **1. Friday Night Shabbat dinner and blessings**

Usually, this would mean saying the blessing over candles, wine, Shabbat, and challah. Sometimes, the women (or whoever!) in the family are honored to light the Shabbat candles and say the blessings beforehand.

#### **2. Leading a Shabbat morning service (blessings, songs, etc..)**

This is the typical “bar/bat mitzvah” service people are talking about. Really, all the bar/bat mitzvah student is doing is leading the weekly Shabbat service. There are blessings and songs and readings and the student facilitates prayer for their community by leading this service!

#### **3. Teaching about Torah / sharing a *d’var Torah***

By interpreting the weekly Torah portion and sharing a teaching, the student is showing the community that they have something to teach and can be counted among the adults. In the Tawonga program, this is our core element that we ask everyone to do! It can be creative, traditional, artistic, theatrical - whatever language speaks to you!

#### **4. Receiving an *Aliyah* (“Saying a blessing before and after the chanting of Torah”)**

In fact, for many Jewish communities, the ONLY thing that makes someone a bar/bat mitzvah (officially) is to say the blessing before & after Torah reading!

#### **5. Chanting Torah and/or Haftarah**

Every week we read a new section of the Torah and an accompanying section from the other Jewish biblical books. These texts are chanted for the whole community to hear.

#### **6. Receiving a blessing from parents and/or clergy**

This is a huge moment for the entire family and community and often the parents and/or clergy who are helping lead the service will take say a blessing for the child.

#### **7. Celebratory meal!**

As with most Jewish special days, it is traditional to have a celebratory meal.  
*L’chaim* (to life!)

#### **8. Engaging in a “Mitzvah Project”**

Being a Jewish adult means (among other things) engaging in a life of serving the community and doing good in the world. Students get to engage in a project that inspires and launches them into a life of good work! It is totally possible to incorporate your mitzvah project into your simcha. Have people bring donations to the event or teach people throughout the day what you have been working on!



## Sample Shabbat Morning Service Outline

*This outline requires no external tutor but does require a service and/or song leader*

- 
- Welcome Songs, opening words and blessings
    - This is a great place to personalize, with songs, prayers and poems that inspire you
  - B'nai Mitzvah receives a tallit other family heirloom: **tallit blessing\*** @
  - Blessing for reaching this season: **Shehechyanu** @
  - Welcoming words from the B'nai Mitzvah

- 
- Call to Prayer: **Barechu** @
  - Prayer about Oneness and Listening: **Sh'ma** @
  - Prayer for Love: **V'ahavta** @
  - Celebrating Miracles and Wonders: **Mi Chamocha** @
  - Personal Prayer: **Amidah** @
  - Prayer for Peace: **Oseh Shalom** @

- 
- Passing Torah or other family ritual item: **L'dor V'dor\***
  - **Torah Service (if doing so)**
  - A teaching from the B'nai Mitzvah: **D'var Torah**
  - Blessing from parents/family\*

- 
- Prayer for Those Who Have Passed: **Mourner's Kaddish** @
  - Closing songs

---

**Orange:** Is prepared with program support  
**Light Green:** Taught in kita/throughout the program  
\* Great opportunity to honor family members  
@Recording can be found on soundcloud





## **In-Depth Shabbat Morning Service Outline**

Below are even **more** prayer options to include in a Shabbat morning service. You do not need to select every option below; rather, we recommend selecting what might be meaningful for your family. You can use this as a guide when discussing what you would like to include with your service leader.

\* The Seven Prayers that students have learned during the kitot

**BOLD:** Prayers traditionally included during a Camp Tawonga Saturday morning service

---

### Introduction

- Niggun**
- Mah Tov**
- Welcome from Service Leader**
- Hinei Ma Tov**

### Birchot Hashachar -- Gratitude & Awareness

- Traditional morning blessings for gratitude and awareness -- *(Choose 2-3 melodies)*
  - Modeh Ani: (You have restored my soul to me)**
  - Mah Tov: (What a great people)**
  - Elohai: (My soul is pure)**
  - Adama V'shamayim: (Connection to nature)**
  - Asher Yatzar: (Blessing for body)
  - Daily Miracles**
  - Chatzi Kaddish: (Gratitude to hashem)
- Talit Blessing
- Shehechyanu
- Welcome from Bar/Bat/B'nai Mitzvah

### P'sukei D'zimrah -- Praise With Joy *(Choose 1-2 melodies)*

- Psalm 150 Hallelujah: (Let all that breathes praise Hashem)**
- V'asu Li Mikdash: (Lord prepare me to be a sanctuary)
- Esa Einai: (My help will come from Hashem)
- Mizmor Shir: (It's good to praise Hashem)
- Ashrei: (Happy are those who dwell in your house)
- Illu Finu: (We could never thank you enough)

### Bringing Together Community

- \*Barechu: (A call to prayer)**
- \*Sh'ma: (Hashem is one)**
- \*V'avavta: (You shall love Hashem with all your heart)**
- \*Mi Chamocha: (Song of miracles and redemption)**



## Meditation, Reflection and Introspection

- \*Amidah
  - \*Adonai S'fatai Tiftach: (Hashem, open up my lips)
  - Avot V'imahot: (God of our ancestors)
  - Atah Gibor: (You are forever mighty)
  - K'dushah: (Holy Holy Holy)
  - Yismechu: (Those who keep Shabbat will rejoice)
  - V'shamru: (Our people shall keep Shabbat)
  - Silent Prayer**
- Prayers for Peace
  - Sim Shalom: (Grant peace to all your people)
  - \*Oseh Shalom: (Make peace for all of us)

## Torah Service

- (Action): Opening the Ark + **Ki Mitzion (The Torah comes from Zion)**
- (Action): Passing the Torah through generations + **L'dor Vador**
- Receiving The Torah
  - Baruch Shenatan
  - Sh'ma + Echad**
  - Gadlu exalting Hashem with the Torah**
- (Action): Torah Parade
  - Al Shlosa D'varim: (the world stands on three things)**
  - Romemu: (exalt Hashem)
  - Yisrael: (Israel, Torah and Hashem are one)
  - Lo Yisa Goy: (nation shall not raise sword against nation)
- Reading of the Torah
  - Aliyot: up to 7 ----->
- Mi Shebeirach: (prayer for those in need of healing)**
- (Action): Lifting, dressing and returning the Torah
  - V'zot Hatorah: (declaration of the torah while raising it)
  - Eitz Chayim: (tree of life)**
- D'var Torah (Teaching from the Bar/Bat/B'nai Mitzvah)
- Blessing from Parent/s

1.	_____
2.	_____
3.	_____
4.	_____
5.	_____
6.	_____
7.	_____

## Aleinu -- Conclusion & Integration

- \*Mourner's Kaddish
- Hamakom: May our love embrace you, the mourners
- Conclusion by Service Leader and/or Bar/Bat/B'nai Mitzvah Student
- Motzi & Kiddush: Blessing Challah and Fruit of the Vine

## Closing Melody

- Adon Olam: (Hashem is good)
- Ein Keloheinu: (There is none like Hashem)
- Od Yavo: (There will be peace)



## Simcha Date

Because the Tawonga program does not have one central location at which all simcha's occur, there is flexibility in when you can have your simcha.

For many families, having the simcha be around the 13th birthday feels very important. **It is not necessary that the simcha date be at the same time as the 13th birthday.** It is perfectly fine to have a simcha after a child has turned 14 - what matters most is that it is the right time for your family.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

### To Secure a Date for Your Simcha, Please follow this Step by Step Process:

1. Look at the Tawonga Bar, Bat & B'nai Mitzvah Program Service/Simcha Google Calendar to determine a few possible dates for your child's service/simcha (celebration).
  - a. **You should have been invited to this calendar following the Kick-Off Family Orientation. If you would prefer not to use this calendar, please email or call Meg to check for available dates. (415) 543 - 2267**
  - b. Aim to schedule your child's simcha on a date that does not have a service scheduled.
  - c. If there is already a service on the date you want, you can schedule your service on that same date only if the other service scheduled is for a student from the other region.
  - d. If you schedule a service during Tawonga Family Camp, you will not necessarily have access to the Tawonga Torah (see Family Camp dates on the Tawonga website at [tawonga.org](http://tawonga.org)).
2. Email your preferred service leader and/or song leader (can be the same person) with the dates you are interested in.
3. Once you and the service and/or song leader have decided on a date, email or call Meg and she will add your child's date to the calendar.
4. Your date will be officially reserved once it has been entered into the Google Calendar.
5. Your service and/or song leader will be officially confirmed once you have signed a contract or made an agreement with them.

## A Bit About the Torah Portion

As a Jewish people, we read the Torah from start to finish every year, reading one portion, or *parasha* every Shabbat morning (Saturday morning). This means, as soon as you know your child's simcha date, we can send you the Torah portion that falls on that date!

We have packets for every single Torah portion so as soon as you schedule a date, you can receive that packet. Mazal tov! If you ever want to receive any other packets to explore other parts of the Torah, just let us know!



## Simcha Materials

In order to reserve any or all of the following materials, please email or call Meg, [meg@tawonga.org](mailto:meg@tawonga.org) (415) 543 - 2267

**Torah:** To rent a Torah for your service, there are two great options:

### Option 1: The Tawonga B'nai Mitzvah Torahs

In the last year we have acquired two beautiful, old, Torahs for your use!

#### Notes about Our B'nai Mitzvah Torahs

- Each of our Torahs costs \$54 to rent
- We will loan the B'nai Mitzvah Torahs on a first-come first-served basis.
- The torah comes with a yad (which means "hand" in Hebrew) and is used to read the Torah

**Option 2: JCCSF Torah:** If you would like to use the JCCSF Torah, a year before your child's service, email the Ritual Resource center at the JCCSF [ritualresource@jccsf.org](mailto:ritualresource@jccsf.org)

**Aron Kodesh (Ark):** At this time (July 31, 2019), we are able to loan one ark (see it pictured left. For reference, Meg is 5ft tall). The legs are detachable for transport and can fit in most cars in which the backseats can fold flat.

**Siddurim (Prayer books):** We are able to loan up to 180 siddurim per simcha.

**Kippot (Yarmulkes/skullcaps):** We are able to loan up to 80 kippot per simcha.



### To Get On Your Own: Other Materials You Might Want for Your Simcha

- Program for the service (a personal insert celebrating your unique simcha)
- Talit (prayer shawl)
- Kiddush cup (to use to say the blessing over the fruit of the vine)



## Service Leaders, Song Leaders and Hebrew Tutors

In the Tawonga B'nai Mitzvah experience, every simcha is unique. If you are planning on having a more structured ceremony or service, you will need to work with a service leader and/or song leader.

Service leaders can be family members, friends or local community leader who volunteer. Or, they can be professional service leader for hire.

Please find below a list of professionals you can hire to work with. Remember, we have many prayers recorded on soundcloud (go to soundcloud.com and search: Tawonga Bar, Bat & B'nai Mitzvah Program) that students can use to study on their own.



### Service Leaders

#### **Aaron Mandel | [aaron@tawonga.org](mailto:aaron@tawonga.org)**

Aaron is Tawonga's Associate Director and has been a member of the Tawonga community for over 20 years. He has led numerous Saturday morning Shabbat services during his summers as a director and has a passion for channeling Judaism through the context of service learning. Aaron is a Lekhu Lakhem Fellow, a Jewish and Educational Journey for Camp Directors.



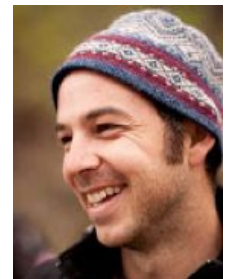
#### **Deborah Newbrun | [deborah@getsetgoca.com](mailto:deborah@getsetgoca.com)**

Deborah, Tawonga's Senior Jewish Educator, was the director of Tawonga for 26 years and has continued to remain an integral leader of our community. She founded Tawonga's Keshet LGBTQ Family Camp Weekend over 20 years ago – the first of its kind in the world of Jewish camping.



#### **Rabbi Evon Yakar | [rabbi@tbytahoe.org](mailto:rabbi@tbytahoe.org)**

Rabbi Evon Yakar is the Tawonga B'nai Mitzvah Program's Rabbi in Residence. He was ordained as a Rabbi in June 2007 from Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati, Ohio. He is currently a Rabbi at Temple Bat Yam: The South Lake Tahoe and Carson Valley Jewish Community and is also one of the Two Adventure Rabbis. Rabbi Evon is passionate about sharing Judaism with those around him and has a multitude of experience teaching and leading services outdoors.



#### **Ken & Ben Kramarz | [ken@tawonga.org](mailto:ken@tawonga.org) | [benkramarz@gmail.com](mailto:benkramarz@gmail.com)**

Ben and Ken provide one-stop shopping for all your service needs of officiation, prayer and song leading. Ben is a nationally known Jewish educator, organizer and musician, author of A Guide to Songleading and Communal Singing and Editor-in-Chief of the Tawonga Songbook. Ben grew up at Tawonga during the decades when his father (Ken) was the camp director. Ken brings a wealth of experience in group facilitation and sets a fun and funny tone that blends with the seriousness of the B'nai Mitzvah rite of passage. Together, Ben and Ken will help you create a warm, loving, and memorable experience.





**Rebecca Meyer | [becca@tawonga.org](mailto:becca@tawonga.org)**

Becca is Tawonga’s camp director and has worked on Tawonga’s year-round team since 2007. Her passion for Judaism and nature inspires campers and staff alike. Becca has led countless beautiful Shabbat services at Makom Shalom.

**Ellizheva Hurvich | [elizheva@gmail.com](mailto:elizheva@gmail.com)**

Ellizheva helps families create a meaningful rite of passage. A Bay Area native, she grew up in a conservative community but spent time in Renewal and Reconstructionist communities. She has been teaching torah, leading services, and delivering drashes (Torah interpretations) for over a decade, and still loves the work.

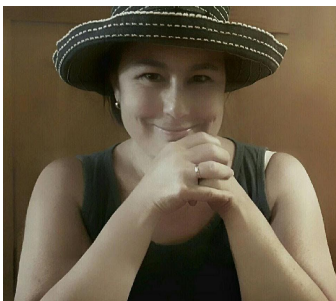


**Miriam Kanani | [miriam33@gmail.com](mailto:miriam33@gmail.com) - service leader + tutor**

Miriam is a service and song leader passionate and dedicated to living Judaism and has worked as a Jewish educator for 10 years. In her work as Lead Educator in the Tawonga Bar, Bat & B'nai Mitzvah Program, she loves to integrate experiential learning, art, music, storytelling, Hebrew and knowledge of Jewish traditions. Learn more at [miriamraziel.com](http://miriamraziel.com)

**Mia Zimman | [mia.zimman@gmail.com](mailto:mia.zimman@gmail.com) - service leader + tutor**

Mia guides families and students as they learn and prepare for their B'nai Mitzvah, coming of age ceremony. Through study, creativity, and music, she empowers individuals to find their own voice inside of the tradition and co-create a meaningful B'nai Mitzvah experience. Mia has been leading Shabbat and Holiday services and life cycle rituals for more than fifteen years. She is a Jewish Spiritual Director and a lead Educator for the Tawonga B'nai Mitzvah Program.



**Marla Kolman Antebi | [marlainpeace@yahoo.com](mailto:marlainpeace@yahoo.com) - service leader + tutor**

Marla Kolman Antebi is an award-winning Jewish educator who has been teaching kids, teens and adults for over twenty years all around the Bay Area. She has a B.A in Child Development, an M.S.W. in Community Organizing, is a certified Teacher of Jewish Meditation and Mysticism, and completed a training program in (interfaith) Spiritual Direction. Currently she works p/t as the Director of Congregational Learning at Temple Beth Torah in Fremont, CA where she runs a school, a teen program, and oversees adult education. She also teaches mussar (a system for increasing self-awareness and improving relationships to self and others through the cultivation of middot, virtues) to adults and has worked with dozens of families – both in a synagogue setting and independently - to prepare for B'nei Mitzvah. Her family has been involved with Camp Tawonga since 2007 when she not only began a six-year term on the Tawonga Board of Directors but also went through staff training and then co-led the teen Israel trip. This fall (2019) her older son Matan will begin his Bar Mitzvah training with Tawonga.



## Song Leaders



**Maya Abramson | [abramson.maya@gmail.com](mailto:abramson.maya@gmail.com) - Song Leader and Service Leader**

Maya has been surrounded by music for as far back as she can remember. She started learning violin at age seven, was the concertmaster of her high school's symphony and majored in Music Theory at Whitman College. Maya has worked as a song leader at Camp Tawonga for three summers and has led our community of 300+ in song and prayer during countless song sessions and numerous Kabbalat and Saturday morning Shabbat services.

**Isaac Zones | [eyezones@gmail.com](mailto:eyezones@gmail.com) - Song Leader and Service Leader**

Isaac Zones specializes in Jewish, spiritual, folk and family music and leads the popular local band, Shamati. He has spent his summers at Camp Tawonga since 2001 and has dedicated the majority of his time in the mountains leading an entire dining hall of campers and staff in song twice a day. After graduating with a degree in religious studies, Isaac spent time leading many Jewish young adult programs including those through the Moishe House, where he served as a founding director.



**Nathaniel Markman | [nsmarkman@gmail.com](mailto:nsmarkman@gmail.com)**

Nathaniel is the music director for Wilderness Torah, and for the past five years has led musical High Holiday and Shabbat Services at Urban Adamah. He has toured with the Magnetic Zeros, led services with Craig Taubman and played in the band Moshav in Los Angeles, and currently plays in Shamati, the Jewish wedding band he founded with Isaac Zones.

**Melita Silberstein | [gaiamelita@yahoo.com](mailto:gaiamelita@yahoo.com)**

Melita is a musician, recording artist, music teacher and song-leader based out of Berkeley, CA. She has worked with children of all ages for over fifteen years, and has also recorded and co-produced an array of albums both for children and adults. Melita is the founding member of the popular Bay Area band for children, Octopretzel and has also collaborated extensively with Tawonga song-leader Isaac Zones. Melita is available as a song leader, alongside a rabbi or cantor, for your child's bar or bat mitzvah. Melita is available as a solo act but really loves to play at events like this with one of her band mates, Dave Rosenfeld, who accompanies her on the mandolin, violin and/or percussion.

To learn more about Melita visit [www.melitamusic.com](http://www.melitamusic.com), and specifically <https://www.melitamusic.com/services/jewish-music/bar-bat-mitzvah-music/>





## Hebrew Tutors

**George Rubin** | [gorubin@mac.com](mailto:gorubin@mac.com) | South Bay

George has an MA in Hebrew Education from the Hebrew Union College in Los Angeles and was the Director of Education locally at Congregation Beth Am in Los Altos Hills for eight years. He teaches privately, full-time—Bar/Bat Mitzvah preparation, Hebrew Language, and Jewish Studies. He teaches students of all learning styles/special needs, in person or over video chat.

**Talia Dvir** | [gingit81@gmail.com](mailto:gingit81@gmail.com) | South Bay

Talia Dvir is a California credentialed teacher with an emphasis in middle school level. She has been teaching Jewish studies and Hebrew since 2006. Talia teaches how to read Hebrew and chant the prayers required for a Bar or Bat Mitzvah service. Talia tutors in person or over video chat.

**Merav Singer** | [merav@nebulous.org](mailto:merav@nebulous.org) | East Bay

Merav grew up in Jerusalem and has degrees in Music and Jewish Studies, and has been a freelance violinist and teacher for many years. She recently completed her doctorate in Ethnomusicology at UC Berkeley, writing about Israeli women singer-songwriters, and is now tutors B'nai Mitzvah students in Hebrew and Trope.

**Elana Lahav** | [elanalahav@yahoo.com](mailto:elanalahav@yahoo.com)

Elana Lahav teaches Hebrew and Judaic studies at Brandeis San Francisco as well as for a temple in the Peninsula in a special program geared towards families and children. She also tutors children and adults for their B'nei Mitzvah. She promotes love and pride in people's heritage and the chain of Jewish traditions and culture.

**Sameya H-G Pasquale** | [learningbysam@gmail.com](mailto:learningbysam@gmail.com)

Specializing in Hebrew, Judaic and Secular subject tutoring both in-person and via facetime and skype. We also handle curriculum development, study skills and other educational support

**Yaffa Tygiel** | [yaffa.tygiel@gmail.com](mailto:yaffa.tygiel@gmail.com) | SF

Born in Israel, Yaffa is an experienced Jewish Educator, who has lived in the US for over 30 years, always working in Jewish education. She has prepared many students for their B'nai Mitzvah. She charges \$100/h and meets the student at their home.

**Jewlia Eisenberg** | [jewliaeisenberg@gmail.com](mailto:jewliaeisenberg@gmail.com) | [www.radicalritual.com](http://www.radicalritual.com)

Jewlia Eisenberg is interested in Jewish study which is visceral, participatory and down-to-earth. She works with students on all aspects of their bat/bar mitzvah: Hebrew language, prayers, songs, modern interpretation, writing, and Torah cantillation. Fees are \$75/hr for the first student, \$25 each additional student, up to 4 students.

**Rabbi Sara Shendelman** | [songbirds22@gmail.com](mailto:songbirds22@gmail.com) East Bay

Rabbi Sara connects really well with this age group is a very spiritually based teacher and storyteller. With a background in Speech and Drama, she easily prepares her students for their ceremony. Rabbi Sara can provide the sound system, Torah and prayer books for the ceremony if desired. Her rate is \$80-100 but is always sensitive to family circumstances.

**Rabbi Carol Caine** | [RabbiCarol@gmail.com](mailto:RabbiCarol@gmail.com) | East Bay

Rabbi Carol Caine is a graduate of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College who has also received private ordination from Jewish Renewal founder Rabbi Zalman Schacter-Shalomi. She has helped many students prepare for bar/bat mitzvah!

**Robert Bonem** | [RBonemajr@hotmail.com](mailto:RBonemajr@hotmail.com) | East Bay

Robert has a masters in Jewish education and is a Rabbi. He offers Bar/Bat Mitzvah tutoring and also leads the service itself. His rate is \$100 an hour.

**Julie Emden** | [jbemden@gmail.com](mailto:jbemden@gmail.com) | East Bay

The Founding Director of [Embodied Jewish Learning](http://www.embodiedjewishlearning.com), she specializes in the somatic exploration of Jewish wisdom teachings as a resource for living in balance and wholeness. A graduate of five fellowship and teaching certification programs, Julie has two decades of experience as a Jewish educator, including a decade of B'nai Mitzvah preparation at Kehilla Community Synagogue. Julie specializes in teaching trope/Torah cantillation.

**Amanda (Malka) Brief** | [akbrief@gmail.com](mailto:akbrief@gmail.com).

Amanda has been a Hebrew, B'nai Mitzvah, Prayer & Drash, Jewish Song tutor since her own Bat Mitzvah. As a musician, she enjoys leading services and teaching others to do the same.





## Venues

### Considerations When Choosing a Venue:

- Number of people attending
- Season and whether you will need indoor space in case of inclement weather
- Will you be serving food and does the venue require that you hire their caterer?
- Are you allowed to amplify sound?
- Do you need electricity?
- Is there a table for the Torah and chairs for the guests?
- Is there parking and bathrooms, and is the space handicap accessible?

### Some Venues People Have Used in the Past Include:

- **Family/Friend's Home or Backyard!!!**
- **East Bay**
  - **Tilden Park:** Redwood Grove, Brazilian Room
  - Mills College - Reinhardt Alumnae House
  - Kennedy Grove Regional Rec Area, El Sobrante
  - Piedmont Community Hall
  - Leona Lodge, Oakland
  - UC Berkeley Botanical Gardens
  - Mills College Chapel
  - Berkeley Arts Center
  - Berkeley City Club
  - Albany Community Center
  - MLK Shoreline Park - Shoreline Center
  - Temescal Beach House
  - Urban Adamah in Berkeley
  - Sanctuary at Congregation B'nai Tikvah in Walnut Creek
- **Peninsula/South Bay**
  - Mavericks Event Center, Half Moon Bay
  - Holbrook-Palmer Park, Atherton
  - University Club of Palo Alto
  - Portolla Valley Town Center (available to town residents)



- **North Bay**
  - Sausalito Womens' Club
- **San Francisco**
  - **Golden Gate Park Meadows:** George Washington Grove, Elk Glen, Marx Meadow, Lindley Meadow, Hellman Hollow
  - General's Residence in Fort Mason
  - Women's Building in the Mission
- **Israel/Family Trip**
- **On a Hike**
- **Camp Tawonga Family Camp**
  - Makom Shalom



## Other Simcha Planning Resources



### Simcha Sisters | [simchasisters.com](https://simchasisters.com)

The Simcha Sisters are here for those that need a little extra help with **event planning**. They have worked with Tawonga and its families and understand all the necessary steps that need to be taken as well as the nuances of planning a Tawonga event!

#### Here are some of the services Simcha Sisters offers:

- Initial meeting to scope and discuss the overall event
- Site selection of venue (if not already selected)
- Vendor References:
  - Caterers, Bakeries,
  - DJs, Bands,
  - Photographers, Videographers,
  - Florists, Rentals, Prop Companies, and more
- Event design and creation
- Reception site location coordination
- Timeline and production schedule for vendors
- Vendor coordination and management
- Transportation needs
- On-site Bar/Bat Mitzvah management



For more information, please email [info@simchasisters.com](mailto:info@simchasisters.com) or call 925.984.7024



## Simcha Planning Checklist

### Visioning and Setting a Date

- Complete simcha visioning quiz with family
- Look at simcha calendar and find some dates that work for the simcha
- Research and reach out to potential service leaders/song leaders/venues and confirm those dates work for them
- Email or call Meg and confirm date is set on the calendar
- Double confirm with service leader/song leader/venue and sign all contracts

### Service Leader/Song Leader

- Decide who your service leader and/or song leader will be (family member, friend, or professional)
- Set up a date for an initial planning meeting with your service leader/song leader
- Meet with service leader/song leader and make a plan for future meetings/rehearsals

### Materials

- Reserve simcha materials with Meg, if you are planning on using them
  - Torah
  - Ark
  - Siddurim
  - Kippot
- Make a plan for getting other materials you might need
  - Talit
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### Mentorship/D'var Torah

- Brainstorm who would be a great mentor to work with
- Ask that person to be the mentor
- Connect the mentor to Meg so she can train them and give them the curriculum
- Students should start working with the mentor about 5 - 6months before the simcha so they have enough time to write a d'var Torah (interpretation of the Torah portion)

### The Celebration

This can be a potluck! It can be a picnic! It can be catered or at a restaurant. There is no wrong way to celebrate this miraculous day. You can write in your own steps below:

- Choose a venue
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



## Frequently Asked Questions

- Does the program teach Hebrew?
  - Teaching Hebrew is not a component of the TBM Program. However, we provide a list of Hebrew tutors. If your child wants to learn Hebrew, we recommend that you start soon - this takes time.
- What does this program include?
  - Seven 3-hour kitot (classes) per year.
  - Experiential-learning curriculum that is engaging and thought provoking.
  - Two weekend retreats per year
  - Education and music
  - Family learning opportunities (Havdalah, Shabbat and Nature Day).
  - Parent learning opportunities
  - Prayer coaching in transliteration.
  - D'rash (sermon) preparation (during year two only).
  - Mentorship from a mentor of your choice.
  - Support from Program Manager with planning and preparation for the service
  - Help securing materials for your simcha
  - A parent resource book with contact information for Hebrew tutors, service leaders and song leaders
- What does the cost of this program not include?
  - Service/Song Leaders for simcha
  - Venue rental for simcha
  - Additional tutoring your child may want or need to prepare for their simcha
  - Celebration expenses (i.e caterer, band/dj)
- How does mentorship work?
  - If you have even more questions after reading the mentorship section of this guidebook, know that we have an entire other guidebook to help with the mentorship process that we will be giving out at the end of the first year of the program. If you would like to learn about it sooner, give us a call!
- What if I miss a kita (class)?
  - If you miss a class, you are always welcome to come to the class for the other region. For example, if you are enrolled in the East Bay, you are welcome to join us in San Francisco for the same lesson. Additionally, doing the homework is as GREAT way to stay caught up.
- What is family engagement, and are we required to attend?
  - We sincerely hope all families will attend! These opportunities are a great way to strengthen the community and gain insight into your child's experience.
  - We will send out invitations to each engagement activity and we ask that you RSVP so we know how many people to expect. See the family engagement part of the guidebook
- Kitot - When and where do they meet?
  - Please refer to the list of dates, times and locations that have been emailed to you. You can always email Meg [meg@tawonga.org](mailto:meg@tawonga.org) for a new copy.

## Still Have Questions?

You can reach Meg, our program manager: [meg@tawonga.org](mailto:meg@tawonga.org) or at (415) 543 -2267.



## Glossary of Terms

<b>ADAMAH</b>	Earth
<b>ADON OLAM</b>	Ruler of the World - The title of the last liturgical poem sung at a Tawonga service
<b>ALIYOT/ALIYAH</b>	To go up - Refers to the honor being invited up to the Bimah to sing the prayer before and after a part of the Torah is read
<b>AMIDAH</b>	The standing and central prayer of the service - done silently after an opening blessing.
<b>ASHER YATZAR</b>	Who has formed - a blessing thanking God for our bodies
<b>BAR'CHU</b>	Blessed are You - A call and response blessing that ensures the congregation is ready to get into the meat of the service.
<b>BAT/BAR/B'NAI</b>	Daughter/Son/Children
<b>BIMAH</b>	Pulpit
<b>CHATZI</b>	Half
<b>DRASH/D'VAR TORAH</b>	Sermon or teaching of Torah
<b>EITZ CHAYIM</b>	Tree of Life (One of the names of the Torah)
<b>ELOHAI</b>	A name for God
<b>HAVDALAH</b>	The short service that ends Shabbat - comes from the word to separate
<b>HINEI MA TOV</b>	How good - the title of a song
<b>KADDISH</b>	Comes from the root word that means holy - Kaddish is a series of hymns of praises sung to honor and remember the dead. It is sung in Aramaic not Hebrew.
<b>KASHRUT/KOSHER</b>	Fit to eat
<b>KI MITZION</b>	Out of Zion - we say this when we raise up the Torah meaning we got the Torah from Moses on Mt Zion.
<b>KIDDUSH</b>	Comes from the root word that means holy - Blessing for drinking wine/grape juice
<b>KIPPAH/YARMULKE</b>	Skull cap or head covering
<b>KITOT/KITA</b>	Classes or class
<b>LECH LECHA</b>	Go forth - God said these words to Abraham



<b>MA TOVU</b>	How good - a song
<b>MI CHAMOCHA</b>	Who is like you? A Blessing for G*d taking the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt.
<b>MI SHEBEIRACH</b>	The one who blesses - The title of a prayer for healing.
<b>MITZVAH</b>	Commandment - there are 613 in the Torah - has come to mean a good deed.
<b>MODEH ANI</b>	I give thanks - a morning blessing
<b>MOTZI</b>	Blessing before eating bread
<b>NIGGUN</b>	A wordless melody
<b>OSEH SHALOM</b>	Who makes peace - Oseh Shalom is a prayer that asks God who makes peace in the heavens to make peace for us on earth.
<b>P'SUKEI D'ZIMRAH</b>	Verses of praise
<b>TORAH SERVICE</b>	With songs and prayers before and after the Torah is read, a portion of the Torah is read, advancing each week until the entire five books of Moses are completed in a single year
<b>SHABBAT</b>	The sabbath - the 7th day of the week, a day of rest because God rested on the 7th day after creating the world in six days.
<b>SHEHECHEYANU</b>	Who has granted us life - The blessing for arriving at a specific time and often said for doing something for the first time that year.
<b>SHE'MA</b>	Listen - the name of Judaism's central blessing that declares the oneness of God and the connection of all things.
<b>SIDDUR</b>	Prayer Book
<b>SIMCHA</b>	Joyful occasion
<b>TALIT</b>	Prayer shawl often given to a TBM student at their first service leading
<b>TORAH PORTION</b>	The weekly part of the Torah that is read
<b>SHAMAYIM</b>	Heaven
<b>V'ZOT HATORAH</b>	"This is the Torah"
<b>V'AHAVTA</b>	You shall love - V'ahavta follows the Sh'ma blessing almost as a lesson plan of how to enact the belief that everything in the world is connected and created by the Divine.



# Resources for Parent Self-Directed Learning

## History & History of B'nai Mitzvah

### Books

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

- A look at all rites of passage in Jewish tradition and how they have evolved

***The Ambivalent American Jew* by Charles Leibman**

- An academic look at the origins of American Jewry and how we got here

***Who Wrote the Bible?* by Friedman, Richard Elliott**

- A historical look at a dominating theory about the authorship of the Torah

## Creative Jewish Practice

### Books

***Inventing Jewish Ritual* by Vanessa Ochs, Ph.d.**

- A dive into how rituals are formed and why

***The Bar Mitzvah and the Beast* by Matt Biers-Ariel**

- One family's cross-country bike ride as their son's "ride" of passage

***Putting God on the Guest List: How to Reclaim the Spiritual Meaning of Your Child's Bar Or Bat Mitzvah* By Jeffrey Salkin**

- A guide for thinking about the simcha and how to make it really connect to you

### Podcasts

**Judaism Unbound | [Judaismunbound.com](http://Judaismunbound.com)**

- An ongoing contemporary and creative conversation about all things Jewish!
- Check out episode 85: B-Mitzvah Revolution - Isa Aron.

## New to Jewish?

### Books

***Judaism's 10 Best Ideas: A Brief Guide* by Art Green**

- A short intro to some key Jewish concepts

***The Sabbath* by Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel**

- The seminal and spiritual understanding of Shabbat and Jewish time as boundaries of holiness. A MUST READ.

***The Jewish Way: Living the Holidays* by Irving Greenberg**

- An in-depth look at all of the holidays and how they fit together in Jewish time

### Videos

**Bimbam.com**

- A one stop shop for the best short informational videos about all Jewish topics, including every Torah portion and holiday

### Websites

*The following are websites that regularly publish articles and learning materials on a variety of Jewish topics. They all have different perspectives - it's important to read many sources!*

- [Myjewishlearning.com](http://Myjewishlearning.com)
- [Reformjudaism.com](http://Reformjudaism.com)
- [Jewishfaq.org](http://Jewishfaq.org)
- [Chabad.org](http://Chabad.org)
- [Jewishvirtuallibrary.org](http://Jewishvirtuallibrary.org)





