

# Acts of Loving Kindness

# גמילות חסדים

## Tzedakah Initiative

There is no better way to learn about tzedakah than to put the power of tzedakah into one's own hands. Through the Tzedakah Initiative, a program established at Central Synagogue in 2010 in conjunction with New York's Jewish Communal Fund, our children are able to integrate the rewards of tzedakah in an entirely new and interactive way. At the time of their becoming b'nai mitzvah our students and their families are given the opportunity to make a contribution to a shared tzedakah collective; in the following year, the same students who participated meet as a Tzedakah Board to determine where these funds will be directed.

There are three basic goals embedded in this initiative:

1. To educate students in Tzedakah and Philanthropy
2. To encourage participation in the act of Tikkun Olam (social justice)
3. To empower children to make meaningful and responsible choices about how to improve the lives of others.

*Continued inside*



Within the 7th grade Religious School curriculum, our students will learn to research and evaluate various charitable organizations. Then, at the time of the bar or bat mitzvah, families will be asked to make a modest contribution to the Tzedakah Initiative. No specific amount is required, rather we are hoping that the more than 100 children who are bar and bat mitzvahed at Central Synagogue each year contribute something.

During their 8th grade year those students who donated will become active participants on the Tzedakah Board. Board members will read grant proposals and meet with potential funders from a variety of charitable organizations that interest them. Ultimately, they will decide where and how the tzedakah collective money will be distributed. Through researching, evaluating, and choosing an organization in which to make their contributions, it is our hope that children will learn the power of giving on a whole new level.

Through the Tzedakah Initiative our children will experience firsthand the joys of tzedakah alongside the empowerment garnered through independent decision making. There is no better way to lead our children into adulthood than to teach them the importance of this mitzvah.

More information regarding your child's participation in the Tzedakah Initiative will be sent out later this month; it will also be introduced at the 6th Grade Masah Mitzvah retreat on January 27 – 28, 2012. Until then, additional questions can be answered by either Daniel Nadelmann at (212) 838-5189 or [dan@censyn.org](mailto:dan@censyn.org) or Zach Rolf at (212) 838-5122 ext. 4039 or [rolfz@censyn.org](mailto:rolfz@censyn.org).



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*Herbert-Lewis becoming bat mitzvah*

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