

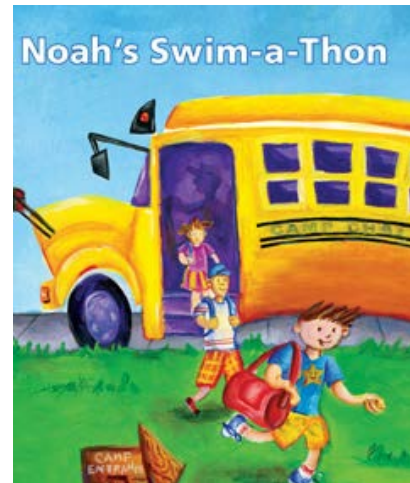
Noah's Swim-a-Thon

Written and Illustrated by: Ann D. Koffsky

Program Focus

Central value: Tzedekah/helping others;
Joys of Jewish Camping

Age group: Age 3 and older
Time frame: 75 minutes



Synopsis

Noah loves everything about summer camp -- except swimming. When he swims, Noah's arms feel goose-bumpy, his eyes feel stingy, and his nose feels stuffy; and so, day after day, Noah refuses to swim. One day, however, Noah learns that the camp will be holding a swim-a-thon that will help raise tzedekah to enable other children to attend camp. Anxious to help others participate in the camp he loves, Noah overcomes his fears and learns to swim just in time. Buoyed by the cheers of the entire camp and spurred on by the knowledge that completing one lap will earn \$25 for tzedekah, Noah proudly swims the length of the pool.

Goals

Through a series of fun, sports-type activities, families will experience the joys of earning points/money and then donating that money to tzedekah. Not only will this program enhance families' understanding of tzedekah, but it will also result in children creating their own beautiful tzedekah boxes which can be used at home on a daily basis. As part of the tzedekah-box-making process, children will be encouraged to designate specific tasks that they can perform at home in order to continue to raise money for tzedekah. When held in a camp setting, this program can serve as a means of introducing families to the joys of Jewish summer camping, perhaps even encouraging families to enroll their children in camp.

Submitted by

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Plan in advance

Camp Option

This book takes place in a camp. You may want to consider holding this program at a local Jewish day camp, preferably a camp with an outdoor and/or indoor pool.

Materials Needed & Advanced Prep

Tzedekah Boxes-

- Plain white boxes and/or containers with a slit cut into the top. (Blank white banks and/or cylindrical Tzedekah containers can be purchased from Oriental Trading Co. and /or Just for the Mitzvah Inc. (<http://www.jewishcrafts.com>)
- Modge podge
- Paint brushes
- Colored tissue paper, cut into a variety of small shapes
- Paper bowls for holding modge podge and tissue shapes
- Tzedekah pledge cards (template provided at end of program)
- Masking tape and pen-for writing names on the bottom of the tzedekah box



Every time _____ (name)
_____ (chore)
_____ (monetary amount)
will be donated to Tzedekah.

Foam Coins

Children will wear on their wrists as a means of keeping track of the number of activities in which they participate.

Materials Needed:

- Craft Foam (gold or silver)
- Hole Punch
- Elastic bands or elastic thread

Directions:

- Cut foam into a circular (coin shape)
- Punch one hole at the top of the circle
- Thread Elastic or rubber band through hole



Sports Challenges

- Hole puncher
- Exercise mats (approximately 4)
- Brown Grocery Bags (approximately 10-12)
Pack each grocery bag with:
 - Balloon (one inflated, one extra, un-inflated balloon)
 - Small brown lunch bag w/10 drinking straws (can be cut in half)
 - Strand of yarn or string
 - Small one minute sand timers (optional)
 - 5 newspaper balls
 - Pencil
 - Sports challenge form (see template at end of program)



Bean Bag Challenges

- Hole punch
- Brown Grocery Bags (approximately 10-12)
Pack each grocery bag with:
 - 2-3 Bean Bags
 - Stack of paper/ plastic cups (10 cups)
 - Bean Bag Challenge form (see template at end of program)
 - Pencil



Swim Challenges

- Hole Punch
- Ping pong balls (20-40)
- Pennies (20-40)
- Swim team timer, or regular timer

Final Tzedekah Station

- Pennies
- Tzedekah Box
- Lollipops
- Parent Evaluation Forms



Introduce families and the story

Greet Families

As families arrive encourage them to either begin swimming (if program is being held at a pool) and/or begin making their Tzedekah boxes.

Making Tzedekah Boxes

- Today we'll be learning about the Jewish custom of giving **tzedekah**. Do you know what tzedekah is? Tzedekah can be money, or food, or clothes, or toys, or any material type of aid which we give to a person who needs our help.
- When we read our book, **Noah's Swim-a-thon**, we'll meet a boy named Noah who swims in a pool in order to raise tzedekah- money which will be used to send children to camp. Before we read our book and learn all about Noah, we thought that you might like to make your very own tzedekah box.
- Do you know what we put inside a tzedekah box? That's right we put money inside of it. What do we do with the money in our tzedekah box? Do we use it to buy something special for ourselves? No, we give this money to someone or some special group that really needs it. Whom do you think may need some tzedekah money?
- Today, you will be making a special tzedekah box that you can keep in your home and fill with money. Once your tzedekah box is full, you and your family can decide to whom to give the money.
- If you'd like, you and your family can also create one of our special tzedekah cards. This card will help to guarantee that money is always being placed in your tzedekah box. Together, you and your parents can decide what special chore or action you can do at home that will raise money for tzedekah. Once you've decided upon a chore, choose an amount of money that will be donated to tzedekah each time you perform the chore.
- Are you ready to fill out your tzedekah card and then can begin work on your tzedekah box?



Directions

- Using a paint brush, cover one section of your can/box with modge podge
- Gently place pieces of tissue paper on top of the modge podge
- Paint additional modge podge on top of the tissue paper (Insures the finished box will have a smooth and shiny appearance.)
- Repeat the process, covering another small area with modge podge, then tissue paper, then modge podge. Continue until entire box has been covered.
- Remember to write your name on a piece of masking tape, and attach the tape to the bottom of the box/can.



Read the story

Use Enlarged Pictures to Enliven Storytelling

Hold up enlarged illustrations of several key sections/characters in the story. In preparing these pictures, try to crop them, so as to remove most of the distracting background details. (The clearer, less cluttered the pictures are, the better the children will be able to visualize and understand the story.)



Post Reading Questions

- What did Noah like to do at camp? (How many of you go to camp? What's your favorite thing to do at camp?)
- What did he dislike? (Raise your hand if you like to swim. Raise your hand if you're like Noah and don't really care for swimming.)
- Why did Noah want to overcome his fear and begin swimming in the pool?
- How was Noah's swimming able to help children who wanted to go to camp?
- Mrs. Rubin, the Camp Director, explains that every time a child swims a lap in the pool, money will be giving to tzedekah. What is tzedekah?

Jewish Values Discussion

- The word tzedekah comes from the word tzedek-It means justice or doing the right thing.
- If we meet someone who is poor and has very little food or clothes or toys-what's the right thing to do?
- When we help someone by giving them money or something which they really need (like food or clothes) we say that we're giving tzedekah or practicing the mitzvah of tzedekah.
- Have you ever given tzedekah? What did you give?
- Can you think of different types of people who might need tzedekah?
- By swimming in the swim-a-thon, Noah was able to raise tzedekah money. His parents and aunts and uncles gave him money for swimming in the pool. What did Noah do with the money? Did he keep it for himself? No, Noah gave the money he collected to the camp. The camp used Noah's money to help pay for children who wanted to come to camp but who lacked the money to do so. Noah's tzedekah money was used to make sure that children who wanted to go to camp could do so.

Transitioning to Follow Up Activities

- Today, you're going to have the chance to be like Noah-You're going to be able to use your body to earn money for tzedekah.
 - We have many different challenges for you to try. For example, you can try to pick up pennies from the bottom of the pool; you can see how many paper balls you can throw into a bag, and how many times you can tap a balloon before it falls to the ground .
 - For every activity which you do, we'll punch a hole in this special coin bracelet. We're going to pass out one bracelet to every child.
 - When you leave today, you'll count the number of holes that are in your bracelet and you'll receive money for each of the holes. What will you do with the money that we give you? Will you keep it for yourself? Just as Noah did, you'll donate the money which you earn to the "Send a Kid to Camp" Tzedekah Fund
- We have 3 different kinds of challenges for you to try:
Sports/Beanbags/and Pool challenges
- Pick a challenge with which to start. Walk over to the challenge area, and the PJ Volunteer at each area will help you complete your challenges. She'll punch holes in your coin based on the number of challenges which you try.

Follow Up activities and resources

(Challenge Forms found at the end of this Program)

Sports Challenges:

At this station, participants will perform jumps or jumping jacks, toss newspaper balls into a bag, throw straws (javelins) and play a version of balloon volleyball



Bean Bag Challenges

These challenges include: trying to catch a bean bag (Older children will attempt this challenge with their eyes closed); seeing how many times hands can be clapped before a bean bag is caught; creating new methods for transporting bean bags from one place to another; counting the number of paper cups which can be knocked down with the toss of a bean bag.

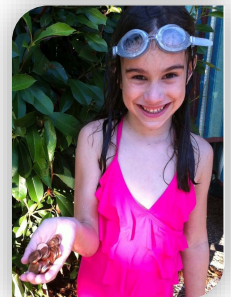


Swim Challenges

While in the pool children will see how many pennies (older children) and/or floating ping pong balls (younger children) they can collect; how many jumps they can do in one minute: and how far they can swim or walk in one minute.

Hole Punches

Before moving on to another challenge area, participants will receive a hole punch for each activity in which they participated



Final Tzedekah Station

When families have completed all challenge stations (and have finished swimming) and are ready to return home, they should retrieve their completed tzedekah boxes and tzedekah cards, and proceed to the final tzedekah station. At this station, each child will receive one penny for each hole that has been punched in his/her coin. Children will have the option of depositing their “hard-earned” money into their own tzedekah can or into a communal “Send a Kid to Camp” Tzedekah Container. After donating their tzedekah coins, children will receive a lollipop,



Program Adaptation:

The one penny /per hole tzedekah exchange rate should be used at programs at which families have *already paid an entrance fee in order to attend the event* (i.e. \$25-\$35 per family.) By paying the entrance fee, these families have already made a substantial contribution to the “Send A Kid to Camp” Fund. Rather than asking these families to donate additional money to tzedekah, the program organizers will supply the pennies which will be deposited into the tzedekah boxes. However, *if no admission fee has been charged*, each family/parent can individually decide how much money per hole should be donated to tzedekah. (Some families may opt to donate one penny per hole, but others may choose to give 10 pennies, or one dollar, or 5 dollars per hole). Please make certain that each child actively participates in the counting and exchange of coins or dollars per hole. Without engaging in the counting of hole punches and without physically depositing the coins into the tzedekah box, many children will remain confused as to how their actions and activities contributed to the giving of tzedekah.

Resources for parents, teachers, families

Follow Up Email to Families

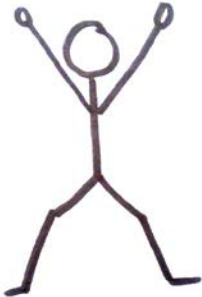

Following the program, try to e-mail each family, thanking them for coming, and letting them know how much money, in total, was raised and donated to tzedekah as a result of the program. Families might also like to receive a list (complete with addresses and phone numbers) of additional places to which they may want to donate their tzedekah once their child's box has been filled. Encourage families to drop you a note, letting you know where they have sent their tzedekah. (You may want to post a running list on your website.) Some families may be interested in learning more about the value of tzedekah. Try sending families one or more of the following links:



- Kveller.com: [Establishing Daily, Weekly and Monthly Shabbat Routines](#)
- Shalom Sesame: [Helping Those in Need](#)
- PJ Library Blog: [Making Tzedakah a Shabbat Tradition](#)
- Jewish Boston.com: [How to Teach Kids the Values Behind Tzedakah](#)

Sports Challenges

Before You Begin- Pick up a grocery/sports bag. Bag should contain: one sand timer (timers may need to be shared with other families. Or you may choose to participate in untimed events), one balloon, one brown lunch bag containing straws/javelins, ribbon, 5 newspaper balls, one pencil or pen or marker

Take the Following Challenges:



Challenge	Number Accomplished
<p data-bbox="164 730 407 762">Exercise-a-thon</p>  <p data-bbox="456 806 768 1094">How many jumping jacks, or sit-ups, or push-ups (You choose the exercise- Mats are available for sit-ups and push ups) can you do in one minute?</p> <p data-bbox="164 1171 756 1276">Younger Children: Jump-A-Thon: How many jumps can you do in one minute?</p>	
<p data-bbox="164 1394 505 1425">Newspaper Basketball</p>  <p data-bbox="483 1467 773 1755">Spread ribbon out as a starting line- How many newspaper balls can you toss into your bag in one minute? (Once all of the balls have been</p> <p data-bbox="164 1761 708 1866">tossed into the bag, take them out and continue tossing until a full minute has elapsed)</p> <p data-bbox="164 1902 310 1934">Challenge</p>	



<p>Javelin Toss -Older Children</p>  <p>Remove straws/javelins from bag and place on ground. Spread ribbon out as a starting line.</p> <p>Standing on ribbon, see how many javelins/straws you can toss into the lunch bag in one minute</p> <p>Pick Up Straws (Younger Children)- Remove straws from bag and spread on ground. For a greater challenge, spread straws about so that they cover a wide area. How many straws can you collect in one minute?</p>	
<p>Balloon Toss-</p> <p>Older Children-How many times in a row can you tap the balloon back and forth to a partner without letting the balloon touch the ground? For a more difficult challenge- Hook your arms with your partners. Use your free hand to tap the ball over your head from one partner to the other.</p>  <p>Balloon Tap (Younger Children) How many times in a row can you tap the balloon in the air without letting the balloon touch the ground?</p>	

Upon Completion of the Challenges- Record your numbers.
 Repack your bag, return it to the table. Be sure to receive a hole punch for each activity in which you participated.

Bean Bag Challenges

Before You begin- Pick up a brown bag, containing 2-3 beanbags, ribbon or tape for start and finish lines, stack of cups

The Challenge	Number Completed
<p><u>Toss and Catch</u>- How many times in a row can you throw your beanbag in the air and catch it?</p> <p><u>Older Children</u>- How many times can you toss and catch the beanbag with your eyes closed?</p> 	
<p><u>Toss and Clap</u>- Throw your beanbag in the air. How many times can you clap your hands together before catching your beanbag?</p>  <p><u>Older children.</u> Try clapping and then catching the beanbag <i>with one hand only</i>. How many claps can you complete before catching the beanbag with your hand?</p>	

The Challenge	Number Completed
 <p><u>No Hands-</u> Transport your beanbag from a start to a finish line <i>without using your hands</i>, You'll receive one point each time you manage to transport your beanbag in a new way. (Record the number of different ways in which you were able to carry your beanbag.)</p>	
 <p><u>Pyramid Toss-</u> Arrange cups in a pyramid shape. What is the largest number of cups that you can knock down with one beanbag throw?</p>	

Upon Completion of the Challenges- Record your numbers.
Repack your bag, return it to the table. Be sure to receive a hole punch for each activity in which you participated.

Feedback form: Family Program- JCC Day Camps New Haven

One thing that I learned from today's program is:

Please circle the appropriate answer:

Did this program meet/not meet/exceed your expectations?

Please explain: _____

What was the best part of the program? Please circle all appropriate answers.

- Getting to know other families
- Learning about Tzedakah
- Story time with my child
- Making a tzedakah box with my child
- Swimming
- Participation in the Sports, Beanbag, and Swim-a-thon Activities
- Other, please explain:
-

What was the least satisfying part? Please circle all appropriate answers.

- Getting to know other families
- Learning about Tzedakah
- Story time with my child
- Making a tzedakah box with my child
- Swimming
- Participating in the Sports, Beanbag, and Swim-a-thon
- Other, please explain:

Are there any other impressions or feelings about this Family Education program that you would like to share with us?

Thank you for coming and thank you for your feedback!

Tzedekah Cards

(Cut out each card so that it can be modge podged onto the tzedekah box or folded in half and then made to stand up)

Every time _____ (name)

_____ (chore)

_____ (monetary amount)
will be donated to Tzedekah.

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