

Tzedek Resource Guide

INTRODUCTION

“What does the Lord require of you? To act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”
(Micah 6:8)

The Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Boston, an agency of **Combined Jewish Philanthropies**, supports local synagogues’ efforts to create substantive and sustained social justice programming. Dedicated to facilitating the work of area congregations, we have created this guide to help synagogues learn about the programming resources that JCRC and other social justice organizations have to offer. This guide is intended for those involved with social justice programming, including educators, clergy and lay leaders, as well as for students, activists, and other interested individuals.

Consistent with JCRC’s **PEAR (Partnership, Education, Action, and Reflection)** model of social justice initiatives, this guide contains descriptions of local community-based justice organizations, secular and Jewish educational resources, action opportunities, and reflection activities. We have collected materials that related to some of the most pressing justice issues in our area and have arranged them according to the following targeted areas:

General Social Justice, Homelessness, Hunger, Affordable Housing, and Community Economic Development.

In addition to references for educational materials, this guide includes descriptions of the organizations and resources cited, as well as information about JCRC’s involvement in these areas. The subject areas and referenced resources are a selection of the issues to confront and materials available. When using the online version, please click through the hyperlinks to view the websites of other justice organizations. The online version also has many curricula available for download at no charge.

To borrow materials from JCRC or for more information on placing orders, please contact us at tzedekresources@jcrboston.org or 617-457-8600. Contact us also to share your ideas, comments, and updates on the referenced information.

We also offer additional, up-to-date resources and highlights of area synagogues’ social justice work through our monthly **Tzedek Synagogue E-Newsletter**. You can subscribe online at <http://www.jcrboston.org>.



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GENERAL SOCIAL JUSTICE

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Jewish texts provide a clear mandate to work to achieve social justice. In the writings of the prophets we find a summons:

“Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream,”
(Amos 5:24)

Our faith does more than motivate us towards action: it provides us with a framework of texts and tradition that support and guide our efforts. At JCRC, we believe deeply in the value of working for justice through our involvement as a Jewish community. By doing so we are able to strengthen our connection to the greater community and to live according to our traditional values.

Although Jewish organizations are often known for involvement in social action, 80% of respondents to a national survey agreed, “Synagogues should sponsor more social justice programs and activities.” *(Amos: The National Jewish Partnership for Social Justice).*

JCRC offers area synagogues a direct connection to programs related to a variety of issues including hunger, homelessness, affordable housing, community economic development, political advocacy, literacy and the environment. In our work with local congregations, we use our **PEAR (Partnership, Education, Action, and Reflection)** model as a guide for creating a more effective social justice program.

Partnership with other community-based organizations and relationships with individuals from other communities can establish important community ties and make justice efforts more effective.

Education, both Jewish and issue-based, is essential to understanding the societal roots of injustice and affirming the Jewish values that inspire action and enhance our impact.

Action allows congregations to alleviate suffering, address needs and advocate for systemic change.

Reflection personalizes action experiences and strengthens individuals' and communities' resolve to affect change.

The following is a list of resources designed to support synagogue social justice programming. Refer to sections on homelessness, hunger, affordable housing, and community economic development for issue-specific resources. Contact us regarding additional resources to include or to share your comments on this guide by emailing tzedekresources@jrcrboston.org or calling 617-457-8600.

GENERAL SOCIAL JUSTICE **SECULAR EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES**

The following community activism curricula offer information about how to inspire and organize groups for action. There are many such materials and these are just a few. There are many such resources available from a variety of justice-based organizations; these are just a few. To borrow from our collection, or for more information on placing orders, contact JCRC at tzedekresources@jrcrboston.org or 617-457-8600.

YOUTH RESOURCES

Boston Youth Organizing Project is an organization of youth, led by youth and supported by adults. The organization's purpose is to increase youth power and create positive social change. To do this, they build relationships across differences, train and develop leaders, identify key issues of concern and take action for justice. Their goals are to improve the lives of young people, increase real political participation and build community. BYOP is partnered with Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (GBIO). For details on how to get involved, see the BYOP website at <http://www.byop.org/index.php>.

The Co/Motion Guide to Youth-Led Social Change is a step-by-step guide for youth interested in affecting social change. It teaches young people how to identify problems they wish to solve, research an issue, attract media attention, and raise funds. This publication is produced by the **Alliance for Justice** and can be attained by calling 202-822-6070 or emailing commotion@afj.org.

Community Connections Campaign: Do Something's How-To Guide and Summary of Research on Recruiting, Involving and Developing Young Leaders in Community Organizations is a book written for adults interested in attracting youth to their civic service organizations. It includes worksheets and self-assessment guides. This publication is produced by Pew Charitable Trusts and can be ordered by contacting **Do Something** at 212-523-1175 or mail@dosomething.org.

Schools Serving for Social Justice: Stories of Inspiration Strategies for Implementation is a resource with sections on how to change the community, learn through community service, develop youth leadership, and engage in partnership. This book is produced by the **Corporation for National Service** and can be ordered by calling 202-606-5000.

The 26% Solution: an Activism 2000 Project, teaches youth how to become voices in decision making that affects them. A national clearinghouse that

provides help and information to parents, mentors, teachers, principals, policy-makers and other adult allies who want to collaborate with youth to achieve positive community change, they can be contacted at <http://youthactivism.com/>.

WEBSITES

Activism Now can be found at <http://metalab.unc.edu/netchange>

Idealist, which lists job, volunteer, and internship postings as well as calendar events for many organizations at <http://www.idealists.org/>

BOOKS

Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Towards Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets. ACTA Publications: 1997.

Collaborative Leadership: How Citizens and Civic Leaders Make a Difference by David Chrislip and Carl Larson. San Francisco, Jossey-Bass Publishers: 1999.

Organizing for Social Change: A Manual for Activists in the 1990's, is a step- by- step guide for organizing communities to affect social change. While it is designed for activists, it could be used in a teen or adult classroom to guide a social justice initiative. It is produced by the *Midwest Academy* and can be ordered by calling 1-800-354-5348.

GENERAL SOCIAL JUSTICE **JEWISH EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES**

Jewish text and tradition are rich with lessons about community engaging in social justice work. The following are curricula, handouts, articles, books, and websites that relate Judaism to social justice. To borrow these materials from our collection, or for more information on placing orders, contact JCRC at tzedekresources@jcrcboston.org.

TEXT RESOURCES AND CURRICULA

JCRC has a variety of resources about Judaism and social justice, including resources on Maimonides' levels of tzedekah, a glossary of Jewish values, Jewish moral principles and Biblical and Rabbinic text excerpts. For copies of these resources, please contact JCRC at (617) 457-8600. **JCRC has several text studies and study questions** on topics related to ethics and social justice. Each topic contains an outline, introduction by the author, and glossary.

The Social Justice Text Study Guide includes a variety of short texts with study questions designed for teen or adult group settings:

“Balancing Uniqueness and Commonality in Interfaith Social Justice Work” explores how to use Jewish communal resources in general community service work.

“Criticism and Character Development” reflects on the role of judgment and criticism in social justice work.

“Dignity” discusses traditional Jewish attitudes toward dignity and its role in social justice work.

“Human As An Image of G-d” explains that God endows all humans with immutable worth and reflects on the type of society needed to honor the ultimate worth of each individual.

“Humility” describes ways to separate tangible successes from self-worth and the identity of others.

“Strangers” develops new ideas about how to ethically treat vulnerable members based on lessons embedded in the texts.

“Tension Between Loving the Jewish People and Loving All Humanity” provides theological support for social justice work.

“Tikkun Olam & Tzelem Elokim” (Repairing the World and In God’s Image) provides understanding of these concepts and how they apply to social justice work.

JCRC Social Justice Holiday Resources

“The Chanukah Study Guide” reflects on how the concept of light and the rededication of the Temple inform modern struggles for housing justice.

“The Pesach Study Guide” discusses how concepts such as oppression, the symbolism of matzah, and the telling of the exodus relate to social justice work.

“The Sukkot Study Guide” describes the construction of these temporary dwellings, the welcoming of our ancestors into the Sukkah, and the celebration of the harvest. Lessons of sukkot can be linked to understanding the problems of both hunger and homelessness.

Additional Resources

The Amos lesson plan uses this prophet’s teachings to facilitate a discussion on social justice. It was designed for middle school students and is useful when there is limited time. This lesson was created by Aaron Rittmaster and is available at <http://ajritz.com/jew/Prophets/amos.htm>.

The Dynamics of Tzedakah: From Dependence to Dignity is a curriculum for adults or advanced high school students. The first part contains an essay discussing how to give tzedakah without promoting dependency or injuring the pride of the recipient. The second part includes text excerpts addressing the question that arise when giving tzedakah. This curriculum is produced by the [Shalom Hartman Institute](#) and can be ordered by calling 212-772-9711.

Faith-Based Community Organizing: A Unique Social Justice Approach to Revitalizing Synagogue Life, a resource from *Jewish Fund for Justice* in 2003, was created to stimulate awareness and discussion within the American Jewish community. JFJ is committed to fighting the injustice of poverty on a grassroots level. The booklet can be ordered from <http://www.jfjustice.org/>.

Gathering the People Training and Education in Congregational Community Organizing offers a variety of perspectives, suggestions and lessons on community organizing in synagogues. The following is a selection of the resources most relevant to leadership training in congregations available on this site. The index page can be found at <http://www.gatherthepeople.org/Pages/GTPcontents.htm>.

Congregational Organizing

http://www.gatherthepeople.org/Downloads/RELATIONS_LDRDEV.pdf

On Leadership

http://www.gatherthepeople.org/Downloads/ON_LEADERSHIP.pdf

Congregational Organizing Guides

<http://www.gatherthepeople.org/Pages/GTPdocuments.html>

Jewish Civics: A Tikkun Olam/World Repair Manual provides an in-depth history of Jewish communal activism in the arena of public affairs, and introduces a very helpful Jewish values matrix as a tool to analyze this engagement. This text is designed for high school students in supplementary schools. It is produced by the Washington Institute on Jewish Leadership and Values and can be ordered by calling 301-770-5070 or at <http://panim.org>.

JSJN Passover Social Justice Resources *Jewish Social Justice Network's* Haggadah supplement contains teachings, poems, and writings that link Passover and modern perspectives on social justice. The pieces collected within this pamphlet are submission from various JSJN member groups and offer reading that can be easily integrated into a traditional seder or used to create an alternative seder. This booklet can be ordered by contacting info@jsjn.org or calling 212-213-2113 x23.

Jewish Text Analyses uses Jewish methods of textual examination to tackle justice related ethical questions. This resource was produced by **Just-Tzedekah**; the texts can be found under the heading: “*What Our Sages Say About...*” The *Just-Tzedekah* website can be found at <http://just-tzedakah.org>.

Judaism and Urban Poverty Curriculum; *An exploration of Urban Poverty in the Light of Jewish Tradition* was produced to raise awareness of life in poverty and encourage middle school students to personalize this understanding. It is designed for use in religious schools. Students discuss difficult choices, such as whether a family should use its remaining money for medicine or food. This curriculum engages students with Jewish scholars and texts, teaches them how to affect the system to eliminate the causes of poverty. The curriculum is divided into six lessons and a field trip. It is produced by the **Jewish Council on Urban Affairs** and can be ordered by calling 312-663-0960 x319.

Hillel’s Tzedek How-to Guide This document, produced by Hillel, provides a collection of articles, case studies, and suggestions on how to create innovative social justice programming. This piece is targeted specifically towards campus leaders, but the sections on advocacy and the Jewish content can be used in any adult setting. This guide is available as a PDF and can be downloaded off the Hillel website at <http://www.hillel.org/> under social justice resources.

Relations with the Hungry, Tzedakah & Welfare Reform is a short compilation of texts and accompanying study questions. It was written by Avi Weinstein and is posted on the Jewish Virtual Library. The texts can be found at <http://www.us-israel.org/jsource/Judaism/tzedaka1.html>.

To Till and to Tend: A Guide to Jewish Environmental Study and Action is produced by the **Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life**, which aims to promote environmental education, scholarship, advocacy, and action. The guide can be found at <http://www.coejl.org/>.

“Torah and Justice- from Text to Social Activism” involves participants in considering how Jewish values influence their own beliefs about justice in American society. This text is produced by the **Washington Institute on Jewish Leadership and Values**, and can be ordered by calling (301) 770-5070 or found at <http://panim.org>.

The Tzedakah Fellowship Curriculum: Giving and Organizing for Positive Social Change teaches middle school students about the causes and effects of poverty, Jewish responses throughout history, and mandates of Jewish texts. The topics of the six lesson plans include community organizing and the structural roots of poverty. Study questions, work sheets and a teachers’ guide are also included. This

curriculum, designed for use in day schools, is produced by the *Jewish Fund for Justice* and can be ordered by calling 212-213-2113.

1995 National Observance of Children's Sabbaths: Resource Materials for Jewish Congregations aims to raise awareness about the plight of children in poverty. This packet includes prayers that congregations can add to their religious services, activities for youth groups, and ways that adults can advocate for affordable housing. There are separate lessons plans geared for K-3, 4-6, middle school, and high school students. These materials are produced by the *Children's Defense Fund* and can be ordered by calling 202-662-3652.

ARTICLES

Brother, Can You Spare a Dime; The Treatment of Beggars According to Jewish Tradition: A Case in Point is an engaging article by Arthur Kurzweil about giving to money to beggars, finding answers in Jewish texts. The article can be found at <http://ajritz.com/jew/dime.doc>.

Ushpizin: Invoking the Lives and Teachings of our Biblical Ancestors is an article posted on *SocialAction.com* about how the biblical figures we welcome into our sukkah during Sukkot relate to our quest for social justice. The article can be found at http://socialaction.com/10-2000/ushpizin_sara.phtml.

BOOKS

And You Shall Strengthen Them: A Rabbinic Letter on the Poor is an overview of Jewish legal sources related to poverty and economic justice. This document was written as a "pastoral letter" for the Conservative movement by Rabbi Elliott Dorff and can be ordered by contacting the United Synagogue Book Service 1-800-594-5617 or <http://uscj.org/mall/bookservice.htm>

Jewish Dimensions of Social Justice: Tough Moral Choices of Our Time by Albert Vorspan and David Saperstein. New York: UAHC Press, 1999.

Lirdof Tzedek: A Guide to Synagogue Social Action is a guide for incorporating more social action into synagogues. This guide was produced by the *Religious Action Center of by the Reform Judaism*. It is available online at <http://rac.org/pubs/manual.pdf>.

WEBSITES

For more social justice websites, please visit <http://www.jrcrboston.org>.

AVODAH is a young adult Jewish service organization based in New York City. The website has extensive resources for social justice education related to parshiot and Jewish holidays. <http://www.avodah.net>

Institute for Public Affairs, Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America, hosts a Public Policy Library and links to Jewish law sites from <http://www.ou.org/public/Publib>.

The Jewish Alliance for Law and Social Action (JALSA) is dedicated to being a strong, progressive, inter-generational voice, inspired by Jewish teachings and values, for social justice, civil rights, and civil liberties. They provide informational programming and working committees on these issues in Massachusetts. <http://www.jewishalliance.org/home.htm>

Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Boston seeks to “promote an American society that is democratic, pluralistic and just.” Our website has information about synagogue social justice, young adult and youth opportunities. <http://www.jrcrboston.org/>

The Jewish Social Justice Network is an organization of Jewish social justice groups based in different cities, including New York’s *Jews for Racial and Economic Justice*, Chicago’s *Jewish Urban Affairs Council*, and Los Angeles’ *Progressive Jewish Alliance*. <http://www.jsjn.org>

SocialAction.com is an online Jewish magazine “dedicated to pursuing justice, building community, and repairing the world.” The website offers resources including articles related to different social justice areas, Jewish holidays, and secular holiday. There are also themed d’vrei Torah for each weekly parsha, and other related education opportunities. <http://www.socialaction.com>

Tekiah: a Jewish Call to Action is an alliance of activists, community organizers, and lay leaders in Greater Boston, committed to mobilizing the Jewish community to work for a fundamental, systemic change in American society. Past actions involve campaigns for bilingual education and immigrant’s rights. For more information, contact Tekiah_Boston@hotmail.com or 617-983-5184.

The Ziv Tzedakah Fund has many articles and listing, including practical mitzvah opportunities, sources of inspiration, tzedakah ideas, books and curricula. <http://www.ziv.org>

GENERAL SOCIAL JUSTICE **ACTION OPPORTUNITIES**

The ways that congregations can get involved in social justice work range from participating in a discrete on-going service project to organizing an advocacy campaign changing state or federal legislation. Volunteer service and donations are invaluable to the operations of social service organizations. We also encourage synagogues to get involved in advocacy and organizing campaigns that are geared towards creating the system that will contribute to societal justice. Below is a list of direct service opportunities and information about advocacy that will help synagogues take meaningful, sustained action.

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

The following groups serve as clearinghouses and facilitate service opportunities for synagogue groups:

Boston Cares provides access to diverse, high quality volunteer opportunities and services for those who can offer short or irregular time-commitments but wish to make a positive impact on individuals and communities. To find group or individual opportunities, contact the staff at <http://www.bostoncares.org/contact>.

Cradles to Crayons works to enhance the lives of low-income children up to age 12 by collecting and distributing, free of charge, new and “gently used” children’s items such as strollers, car seats, clothing, books, toys and arts and crafts supplies. Cradles to Crayons works with organizations that hold drives throughout the year. They collect the donated items, inspect them to ensure that they are safe and in good working condition and then distribute them to children in need through organizations serving children and their families. To get involved with Cradles to Crayons, please contact them at 617-744-0110. Their website can be found at <http://www.cradlestocrayons.org/>.

The Greater Boston Jewish Coalition for Literacy (GBJCL) is a coalition of 60 Jewish organizations, synagogues, day schools and campus Hillels who have joined together to improve children’s literacy through tutoring, book drives and advocacy. The GBJCL was established based on the principle that reading is fundamental to advancement in our society. Included in the efforts of the GBJCL is the Jewish Youth Literacy Corps, which engages teens in literacy tutoring through their day schools, youth groups or synagogues. For information on GBJCL’s tutoring program, see the website at <http://www.jrcrboston.org/literacy/index.htm>.

Jewish Community Volunteer Program (JCVP) is a clearinghouse for action opportunities matching interests, skills and availability with a wide range of volunteer jobs in the Jewish and Greater Boston communities. In addition, JCVP functions as a volunteer center, providing consultation, training and resources to

individuals, groups, and agencies. A program of Combined Jewish Philanthropies, it can be found at <http://www.cjp.org> under “volunteering.”

Jewishservice.org is a network of organizations that enable youth and adults to engage in service domestically and around the world.

The Massachusetts Service Alliance is a non-profit state commission for service that aims to create stronger communities and more active citizens by facilitating volunteer opportunities in this state. They sponsor many different projects, and produce a citizen service guide, which lists organizations needing volunteers, as well as a lending library of resources related to social justice. <http://www.msalliance.org>.

Servenet.org also allows lay leaders to set up group profiles and search for volunteer opportunities by type of project and age of volunteers.

Volunteermatch.org allows users to search for opportunities by zip code, and highlights opportunities available for youth and groups.

Volunteersolutions.org unites potential volunteers with non-profits. A lay leader can establish the types of service his or her synagogue group is interested in participating in, and will receive email notification of when such opportunities become available. United Way of Massachusetts Bay provides this service, and can be contacted at 1-877-U-VOLUNTEER for more information about volunteer opportunities or visit <http://uwmb.org/volunteer.htm>

ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS

Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (GBIO) seeks to train and organize the communities of Greater Boston across all religious, racial, ethnic, class and neighborhood lines for the public good. Member organizations are drawn from geographic, ethnic, and faith communities, and currently advocate on Affordable Housing, Immigrant Rights, and the quality of nursing home facilities for inhabitants and employees. For information about involvement in GBIO, please contact the JCRC at 617-457-8600.

JCRC has a guide on **How to Advocate for Government Programs and Legislation**. For a more extensive description of how to lobby specifically from a faith perspective, and for information about the Massachusetts legislative process, see the advocacy guide produced by ***Faith Into Action Together (F.I.A.T.)***, a program of the ***Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless***. For a copy of the advocacy guide or to discuss becoming a part of JCRC’s synagogue legislative advocacy network, contact JCRC at 617-457-8600.

The **Jewish Alliance for Law and Social Action, (JALSA)** provides information and connects the Boston Jewish community on justice campaigns around the areas of civil rights and liberties. The *JALSA* website can be found at <http://www.jewishalliance.org/>.

To stay updated on current affairs, sign up for the JCRC Government Affairs' regular e-mail update, the **Jewish Community's State House Action Alert**. Send an e-mail to governmentaffairs@jrcrboston.org with the title "Sign up-State House Action Alert" and include your name and contact information in the body.

FAMILY HOMELESSNESS

[Secular Educational Resources](#)

[Jewish Educational Resources](#)

[Action Opportunities](#)

There were 1,800 homeless families living in transitional shelters or motels in Massachusetts in 2001. Meanwhile, there were 8,000 additional families that had not approached the system or did not qualify for transitional assistance. Texts such as the following remind us that Jewish tradition mandates caring for the homeless.

“God loves the stranger, giving him food and clothing. Love the stranger therefore; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.”

(Deuteronomy 10:17-19)

Much of the problem of family homelessness is hidden away from public view, such as the struggle of the following family:

Susan is a single mother with two children, ages 10 and 7. She is a victim of domestic violence who left her batterer and moved in with her parents a year ago. Her parents live in subsidized housing and the landlord told them he would evict them if Susan and her children did not move out. Susan went to the State Department of Transitional Assistance to apply for shelter. She and her children were sent to a hotel in Dartmouth 60 miles away from Boston. The hotel is not near public transportation and there are no kitchen facilities. Her children have not been able to get to school for 3 weeks. (U.S. Conference of Mayors, 2001)

JCRC offers area synagogues a direct connection to programs related to a variety of issues including hunger, homelessness, affordable housing, community economic development, political advocacy, literacy and the environment. In our work with local congregations, we use our **PEAR (Partnership, Education, Action, and Reflection)** model as a guide for creating a more effective social justice program.

Partnership with other community-based organizations and relationships with individuals from other communities can establish important community ties and make justice efforts more effective.

Education, both Jewish and issue-based, is essential to understanding the societal roots of injustice and affirming the Jewish values that inspire action and enhance our impact.

Action allows congregations to alleviate suffering, address needs and advocate for systemic change.

Reflection personalizes action experiences and strengthens individuals' and communities' resolve to affect change.

JCRC and the One Family Campaign join together to fight family homelessness!

JCRC has been involved in an innovative partnership program addressing family homelessness and related issues for the past three years. The ***One Family Campaign to End Family Homelessness*** is a multi-faith initiative aimed at engaging faith-based communities in working to end family homelessness in Massachusetts by 2005.

In concert with JCRC's ***PEAR*** model, OFC connects synagogues and community based organizations which partner with each other through education, relationship building, and various action. JCRC helps synagogues build action programs and works with synagogues to connect the program to Jewish texts, traditions, and values. Congregations involved in OFC under the stewardship of JCRC benefit from assistance in integrating components of the program into congregational life, social action agendas, Religious School programs JCRC provides ongoing support, consultation, and membership in a network of OFC synagogues.

Temple Beth Avodah in Newton is a prime example of a congregation that has benefited from its work with One Family Campaign. Through its involvement, the synagogue has strengthened its commitment to working as a community to create justice. Partnering with those in need as a community has helped many congregants realize how interwoven acts of loving-kindness can be with prayer and learning. Opening doors to the greater community has helped Temple Beth Avodah tear down walls that separated study, prayer and justice work within their congregation. Working with the One Family Campaign has helped them build strong relationships both inside and outside the congregation.

As of 2003, the following synagogues take part: Temple Aliyah of Needham, Temple Beth Avodah of Newton, Temple Beth David of Westwood, Temple Isaiah of Lexington, Congregation Or Atid of Wayland, Temple Shalom of Newton, Temple Israel of Boston, and Temple Beth Elohim of Acton.

To learn more about how your synagogue can be a part of the **One Family Campaign** and the commitment to end homelessness by 2005, contact the JCRC at 617-457-8600.

FAMILY HOMELESSNESS SECULAR EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

The following lesson plans, videos, and supplemental materials are designed to provide education about homelessness in a variety of settings. While these resources will give participants an understanding of the different social, political and economic factors that contribute to homelessness, synagogues should be sure to couple these secular materials with Jewish teachings about homelessness and/or general social justice. To borrow these materials from our library, or for more information on placing orders, contact the JCRC at tzedekresources@jrcrboston.org or 617-457-8600.

LESSON PLANS

The Massachusetts Family Economic Self Sufficiency (MassFESS) Curriculum includes experiential lessons and activities designed to educate about the causes and effects of poverty. These four lessons aim to build awareness and understanding of the Self-Sufficiency Standard, which is a measure of the true cost of living, working and paying taxes in Massachusetts. This curriculum is part of the *MassFESS* project, convened by the Women’s Educational and Industrial Union to increase the economic security for women and children in this state. These activities are appropriate for high school students and adults.

http://www.weiu.org/pdf_files/MassFESSCurriculum.pdf

The National Coalition for the Homeless produces educational readers called “America’s Homeless Children” focusing on the causes and effects of homelessness. There are three separate pamphlets geared for elementary, middle, and high school students. The website includes a list of educational resources for students and teachers. <http://www.nationalhomeless.org/fmn2001/education.html>

VIDEOS

These videos and their accompanying study guides can be used in classrooms as well as for youth or adult groups. These videos, which include portrayals of homelessness, give participants concrete images of those affected by this issue.

Give us Your Poor is a 90-minute documentary about homeless Americans. It presents the struggles of the homeless and challenges viewers’ assumptions. This video is a project of **McCormack Institute of Public Affairs** (<http://mccormack.umb.edu>) at UMASS Boston, and OneArts Inc.

Women of Strength is an 18-minute video about women and children on welfare. It aims to fight misconceptions and stereotypes about homelessness with facts and human faces. **Project Hope**, a shelter for homeless families in Dorchester with a focus on education and job training, produced this video. Included with the video is a 16-page viewers’ guide that facilitates discussion and reflection about welfare. These materials, which are most appropriate for teens and adults, can be ordered from *Project Hope* at 617-442-1880 for \$35.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS AND WEBSITES

Homelessness in Massachusetts

Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless is an organization of direct service groups that aims to address the root economic and social causes of homelessness. The website has brief fact sheets about homelessness in Massachusetts, useful in time-limited education. <http://mahomeless.org/learnmore/factors.html>

One Family Campaign is a Greater Boston multi-faith campaign that works with JCRC to provide congregations with age appropriate educational programs including speakers who have experienced homelessness, video documentaries, discussions and games. For materials or specific information on synagogue involvement, contact JCRC at 617-457-8673, or the One Family Campaign at 617- 630-4995. See Family Homelessness Action Opportunities section for more information about opportunities. <http://onefamilycampaign.org>

Homelessness in the United States

National Coalition for the Homeless educates and engages the public in advocacy and organizing. The website has 20 different fact sheets on aspects of homelessness as well as up-to-date national news, federal legislation alerts, and personal accounts of homelessness. Information about various action projects, educational materials for students in grades K-12, and a listing of helpful publications is also included. <http://nationalhomeless.org>

National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty has the mission to alleviate, ameliorate and end homelessness by serving as the legal arm of the nationwide movement to end homelessness. Its press releases can be used to supplement discussions for teenagers or adults. <http://nlchp.org>

FAMILY HOMELESSNESS **JEWISH EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES**

Jewish text and tradition provides a clear mandate to work towards the eradication of inequality and can be a key source of motivation for synagogue-based social justice programs. The following activities, lesson plans, and articles link Jewish teachings and homelessness. Refer to the General Social Justice section of this guide for more Jewish resources.

The following materials could work in classroom, youth-group, or adult meeting settings. To borrow the following materials from our collection, or for more information on placing orders, contact JCRC at tzedekresources@jrcrboston.org or 617-457-8600.

CLASSROOM LEARNING ACTIVITIES

The Dynamics of Tzedakah: From Dependence to Dignity is a curriculum for advanced high school students or adult study groups. This curriculum contains essays and texts that examine the struggle of giving tzedakah without promoting dependency or injuring the pride of the recipient. The curriculum is produced by the **Shalom Hartman Institute** and can be ordered by calling 212-772-9711. The *Shalom Hartman Institute* website can be found at <http://www.hartmaninstitute.com/>.

F.I.A.T.'s Faith-Based Reflection and Action Materials seek to give a face to homelessness. Study questions ask participants to consider the most likely ways to successfully eradicate homelessness. These materials were created specifically for non-denomination faith-based settings and are appropriate for synagogues. **F.I.A.T. (Faith Into Action Together)**, of the **Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless**, is a group that works to mobilize religious communities to end homelessness. For information, call 617-423-9162. The *F.I.A.T. (Faith Into Action Together)* website can be found at <http://www.mahomeless.org/programs/flat.html>.

The Homelessness Simulation Game, produced by the **Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism**, gives participants a chance to understand some causes of homelessness through role-plays. While it was designed for high school students, this lesson plan can be modified for younger students. The *Homelessness Simulation Game* can be found at <http://ajritz.com/jew/homesim.doc> (when asked for password, click cancel). The *Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism* website can be found at <http://www.rac.org/>.

The Housing and Community Sabbath Resource Guide is designed for youth learners. It includes Jewish sources, activities, background information, discussion questions and follow-up projects related to homelessness. This curriculum, produced by the **Fifth Avenue Committee** non-profit focused on community organizing and affordable housing, can be ordered at 718-857-2990. The website can be found at <http://www.fifthave.org/>.

The Involvement Theatre Program on Homelessness, produced by the **Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism** involves teachers acting as different characters affected by homelessness. This program facilitates learning about issues related to homelessness by asking participants to give the characters advice. It is most appropriate for teens and could be adapted for family learning. <http://ajritz.com/jew/theatre.doc>. The *Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism* website can be found at <http://www.rac.org/>.

Judaism and Urban Poverty Curriculum; An Exploration of Urban Poverty in the Light of Jewish Tradition aims to raise awareness about the

experience of living in poverty. In the activity, students discuss difficult choices and learn how to affect the system and eliminate the causes of poverty. Simultaneously, students discuss traditional Jewish responses to poverty from Maimonides and other sources. A recommended field trip exposes students to poverty in their area and provides a means for direct action. This curriculum is produced by the **Jewish Council on Urban Affairs** and can be ordered by calling 312-663-0960. The *Jewish Council on Urban Affairs* website can be found at <http://www.jcua.org/>.

The Tzedakah Fellowship Curriculum: Giving and Organizing for Positive Social Change. Readings address various aspects of poverty from historic, economic, and religious perspectives, and are accompanied by study questions and work sheets. There are six lesson plans geared towards middle school students and an accompanying teachers' guide. This curriculum, produced by the **Jewish Fund for Justice**, can be ordered by calling 212-213-2113. The *Jewish Fund for Justice* website can be found at <http://www.jfjustice.org/>.

ARTICLES

Reconciling Joy and Humility on Sukkot is a short article that encourages reflection on the connection between Sukkot and the fight against homelessness. http://socialaction.com/10-2000/sukkot_homelessness.phtml

FAMILY HOMELESSNESS **ACTION OPPORTUNITIES**

Congregations can take action against homelessness in a variety of ways from volunteering at a shelter to organizing a legislative advocacy campaign. Volunteer service and donations are invaluable to the functioning of organizations that serve homeless people. We also encourage synagogues to get involved in advocacy and organizing campaigns that are geared towards creating a system that will contribute to societal justice. Below is a list of action initiatives, volunteer clearinghouses, and advocacy campaigns that will facilitate synagogues' action against homelessness.

JCRC ACTION INITIATIVE

The **One Family Campaign** offers a variety of ways for congregations to get involved in hands-on action opportunities with local shelters, transitioning families, and service providers. Through the JCRC partnership with OFC, action opportunities can be tailored to meet the synagogue's particular need and program plan. Action projects in congregations currently involved include:

- **Collecting household items**, toys, and toiletries for shelters or newly stabilized families

- **Raising funds** for first and last months' rent
- **Establishing mentor and tutorial relationships** between congregants and people fighting homelessness
- **Fundraising** towards scholarship programs that support homeless women learning job skills
- **Making 'welcome baskets'** of essential supplies for families temporarily housed in hotels or motels

To read more about the work of JCRC, the **One Family Campaign** and local synagogues, see the **Secular Educational Resources** section of this guide. For information on how to get involved contact JCRC at 617-457-8673 or go to <http://onefamilycampaign.org>

VOLUNTEER CLEARINGHOUSES

The following organizations connect interested groups with non-profits that need volunteers and/or donations.

Jewish Community Volunteer Program (JCVP), a program of **Combined Jewish Philanthropies**, provides a central clearinghouse for action opportunities matching individual interests, skills and availability with a wide range of volunteer jobs in the Jewish and Greater Boston communities. In addition, JCVP functions as a volunteer center, providing consultation, training and resources to individuals, groups, and agencies. For more information, visit <http://www.cjp.org/>.

Jewishservice.org connects organizations that enable youth and adults to engage in service domestically and around the world. The website is located at <http://www.jewishservice.org/>.

The Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless, an alliance of several direct service organizations, accepts contributions and volunteers. For more information, contact 617-423-9162 or visit <http://www.mahomeless.org>.

Servenet.org also allows lay leaders to set up group profiles and search for volunteer opportunities by type of project and age of volunteers. The website is located at <http://www.servenet.org/>.

Shelter Inc. is a Cambridge based organization that aims to support homeless people in their quest to find homes and lists various shelters in Boston. To learn about volunteer opportunities for groups, call (617) 864-8140. The website is located at <http://www.shelterinc.org/>

Volunteermatch.org has searches for opportunities by zip code, and highlights opportunities available for youth and groups. The website is located at <http://www.volunteermatch.org/>.

Volunteersolutions.org unites potential volunteers with non-profits that need help. By setting up a user profile, a lay leader can establish the types of service his or her

synagogue group is interested in participating in, and will receive email notification of when such opportunities become available. United Way of Massachusetts Bay provides this service, and can be contacted for more information about volunteer opportunities. The website is located at <http://uwmb.org/volunteer.htm>.

ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS

The type of service described above is crucial in supporting homeless families and helping them get back on their feet. Citizens cannot act alone; they must be supported by government policy to ensure social justice. One important component of taking action to end homelessness is advocating for legislation that supports individuals at risk.

Unlike service opportunities that aim to meet the needs of the current homeless population, advocacy is directed at changing the system that creates and allows for homelessness. Volunteer service means helping out in a shelter for people who can't afford homes, advocacy means persuading the legislature to raise the minimum wage, or build more affordable housing units, so that the need for shelters is eradicated.

The following is a list of leading homelessness advocacy organizations that are fighting for their agendas to be addressed by the Massachusetts Legislature. Contact them directly to see how you can get involved. For organizations involved in advocacy for affordable housing, please see the Affordable Housing Action opportunities section of this guide.

Advocacy Organizations

JCRC has a guide on **How to Advocate for Government Programs and Legislation**. For a more extensive description of how to lobby specifically from a faith perspective, and for information about the Massachusetts legislative process, see the advocacy guide produced by ***Faith Into Action Together (F.I.A.T.)***, a program of the ***Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless***. For a copy of the advocacy guide or to discuss becoming a part of JCRC's synagogue legislative advocacy network, contact JCRC at 617-457-8600.

To stay updated on current affairs, sign up for the JCRC Government Affairs' regular e-mail update, the ***Jewish Community's State House Action Alert***. Send an e-mail to governmentaffairs@jrcrboston.org with the title "Sign up-State House Action Alert" and include your name and contact information in the body.

The Massachusetts Family Economic Self Sufficiency Project advocates for the state-wide adoption of the self-sufficiency standard to more accurately measure the cost of living in the Commonwealth. For current information about their campaign, see the MassFESS website or contact JCRC. To read more about the educational materials produced by the MassFESS Project, see the secular educational resources section of this guide. <http://weiu.org/index.php?page=9>

The One Family Campaign's advocacy agenda is aimed at ending family homelessness in Massachusetts by 2005. The plan is connected to leading advocacy organizations, such as Homes for Families. Sign up for action alerts, to be a part of postcard and letter campaigns, and visits to that State House. Take things a step bigger and invite a legislator to the congregation to make the community's voice heard! For materials about this agenda and information about how to get involved, contact the JCRC at 617-457-8600 or go to <http://onefamilycampaign.org>.

The Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless grew from the realization that emergency services alone could not solve the problem of homelessness. Today the Coalition addresses the broader economic and social factors that lead to homelessness. They continue to work to create affordable housing, adequate income, and accessible services for all homeless families and individuals. The Coalition was the first statewide advocacy organization for homeless people in the Nation. <http://mahomeless.org/>.

HUNGER

[Secular Educational Resources](#)

[Jewish Educational Resources](#)

[Action Opportunities](#)

There were 23.3 million Americans seeking emergency food assistance in 2001, and countless others whose needs were not met by these programs. Jewish law and tradition views everyone having responsibility to help the hungry and impoverished. On Passover, we experience a climatic recognition of our responsibility for the hungry when we open our doors and say:

“Let all who are hungry come and eat”
(Passover Haggadah)

Although we often hear the statistics of hunger, it is easy to forget the impact that hunger has on individuals, especially children. Besides the physical problems that hunger produces, children who grow up hungry do not have the same chances of success as adults.

Hungry children have a harder time learning in school, shorter attention spans, and suffer more absences due to illness. *(Center on Hunger and Poverty)*

JCRC offers area synagogues a direct connection to programs related to a variety of issues including hunger, homelessness, affordable housing, community economic development, political advocacy, literacy and the environment. In our work with local congregations, we use our **PEAR (Partnership, Education, Action, and Reflection)** model as a guide for creating a more effective social justice program.

Partnership with other community-based organizations and relationships with individuals from other communities can establish important community ties and make justice efforts more effective.

Education, both Jewish and issue-based, is essential to understanding the societal roots of injustice and affirming the Jewish values that inspire action and enhance our impact.

Action allows congregations to alleviate suffering, address needs and advocate for systemic change.

Reflection personalizes action experiences and strengthens individuals' and communities' resolve to affect change.

The following text provides an extensive description of ways that congregations can address the problem of hunger. Hunger is but one symptom of the larger issues of poverty. Be sure to check the General Social Justice and Family Homelessness sections for other helpful material. For more information on these resources and opportunities, contact tzedekresources@jrcrboston.org or 617-457-8600.

HUNGER

SECULAR EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

Below are curricula and supplemental materials for teaching community members of all ages about the causes and consequences of hunger. While a fact-based understanding of this problem is a key to inspiring action, synagogues should be sure to couple these secular materials with Jewish resources about hunger, poverty, and/or general social justice. To obtain materials, or for information on placing orders, contact us at tzedekresources@jrcrboston.org or 617-457-8600.

CURRICULA

Activities Handbook, Hunger Banquet Planning Kit, a publication of **Oxfam America**, is one of the most popular 'Fast for a World Harvest' activities, engaging participants in a dramatization of the unequal distribution of the world's resources and wealth. It is available at <http://www.oxfamamerica.org/publications/art1104.html>.

Food for Thought: A Hunger Curriculum for Learning and Community Service raises awareness about historic and current political, economic, and social causes of hunger. Students learn about the importance of nutrition and why some people are unable to provide themselves with adequate nutrition. There are four separate curricula for grades K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12, each of which includes several lessons and a community service project. This program would be most effective in a full time classroom but could be adopted for religious schools and after-school programs. This curriculum is produced by *Project Bread*, and available at <http://www.projectbread.org/foodthought.html>.

Kids Can Make a Difference, an educational program for middle and high school age students, focuses on providing background on world hunger and inspiring children to make a difference. There are 25 lesson plans, a teacher's guide and a newsletter, as well as a website with additional supplemental materials. This curriculum is produced by **World Hunger Year**, and can be ordered online at <http://www.kidscanmakeadifference.org/index.htm>.

Know Hunger: Challenging Youth to be Leaders in the Fight Against Hunger teaches middle and high school students about the causes and effects of hunger in America. Students learn about the role that charities have in the fight against hunger and what youth can do to help solve the problem. This curriculum is divided into six units including readings, discussion questions, and activities that can be completed in class. The *Know Hunger* website also includes supplemental resources for students and educators. A 600 page PDF file of this curriculum is available online at <http://www.knowhunger.org>.

RESOURCES AND SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

The following resources can serve as the basis of discussion in a group of adults or mature teens, while a teacher of younger students can also use this material to form a lesson plan. A group leader can alert participants to these resources as ways to learn more about hunger.

America's Second Harvest is a domestic hunger relief organization that collects donations from food producers and manufacturers to be distributed to a national network of food banks. The website has seven informational sheets about different populations that suffer from hunger, and a 12-page executive summary of the Hunger in America 2001 study. <http://www.secondharvest.org>

The Community Food Security Coalition is a group that builds safety nets for those with food insecurity by helping them to work for self-sufficiency. This group focuses on supporting local, family based farming, and promoting the availability of nutritional, fresh produce. <http://www.foodsecurity.org>

Hunger in America is a 12-page summary of empirical information on hunger in eastern Massachusetts, and would be useful in raising participants' awareness of hunger in their communities. It is produced by the Greater Boston Food Bank, a food donation clearing house and volunteer network, and can be accessed online at http://www.gbfb.org/ma_hunger_facts.htm.

Project Bread is a hunger-relief organization that aims to stop hunger, in part by raising awareness of the problem. Their projects include the Walk for Hunger and the Massachusetts Child Hunger Initiative. The site has many fact sheets and white pages about local hunger that are adaptable for students of most ages at <http://www.projectbread.org>.

Together We Can; A What, Why and How Handbook for Working to End Hunger in Your Community is a 35-page handbook produced by the US Department of Agriculture. It has suggestions and step-by-step guides for ways that groups and individuals can combat hunger. <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsec/FILES/wecan.pdf>

RESEARCH ORGANIZATIONS

There are several devoted to gaining knowledge and disseminating information about hunger. These centers publish articles and fact sheets related to the political, social and economic issues surrounding hunger.

The Center on Hunger and Poverty website can be found at <http://www.centeronhunger.org>.

The Food Research and Action Center website can be found at <http://www.frac.org>.

HUNGER **JEWISH EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES**

Jewish text and tradition provides a clear mandate to work towards the eradication of hunger and can be a key source of motivation for synagogue-based social justice programs. The following activities, lesson plans, and articles link Jewish teachings and homelessness. Check the General Social Justice section of this guide for more Jewish resources. To borrow these materials, or for more information on placing orders, contact tzedekresources@jcrboston.org.

ORGANIZATIONS

Mazon, the Jewish Response to Hunger, has extensive *educational materials* available on its website. The “Hunger No More” and “Decisions 2002” curricula focus on the problem of hunger and what Jewish texts say about our mandate to fight it. While these curricula discuss 2002 legislative issues, they have a shelf life of several years. The six lesson plans were designed for adults and youth in synagogue education programs, and can be used independently of each other if necessary. Handouts, an extensive leaders’ guide, and activities for children and youth are included. Adaptable for all ages, the core curriculum is for teens and adults. These materials can be found at <http://www.mazon.org/pages/hungernomore2.html>.

Project Bread assembled the resource booklet *Faith in Action* as a reference tool for communities of all faiths to use in their work to fight hunger. It includes ideas for activities, curricula to raise awareness and facilitate action against hunger. For more information, contact Project Bread’s Community Organizer at 617-239-2539, or order the booklet directly at <http://www.projectbread.org/mchi/faithorder.html>.

CURRICULA

The Children's Hunger Sabbath Resource Booklet was published by **Project Bread** to mobilize religious congregations to contribute to the fight against child hunger in Massachusetts. The booklet describes specific time-sensitive advocacy opportunities as well as information on how religious communities can fight hunger in general. It also includes different activities and lesson plans appropriate for all ages. To order the booklet, call 617-723-5000 or e-mail MCHIinfo@projectbread.org. *Project Bread* is <http://www.projectbread.org/>.

Judaism and Urban Poverty Curriculum; An Exploration of Urban Poverty in the Light of Jewish Tradition aims to raise awareness about the experience of living in poverty. In the activity, students discuss difficult choices and learn how to affect the system and eliminate the causes of poverty. Simultaneously, students discuss traditional Jewish responses to poverty from Maimonides and other sources. A recommended field trip exposes students to poverty in their area and provides a means for direct action. This curriculum is produced by the **Jewish Council on Urban Affairs** and can be ordered by calling 312-663-0960. The *Jewish Council on Urban Affairs* website can be found at <http://www.jcua.org/>. An outline of the curriculum can be found on the website under "our work"/ advocacy.

The Tzedakah Fellowship Curriculum: Giving and Organizing for Positive Social Change teaches middle school students about the causes and effects of poverty, Jewish responses throughout history, and mandates of Jewish texts. The topics of the six lesson plans include community organizing and the structural roots of poverty. Study questions, work sheets and a teachers' guide are also included. This curriculum is produced by the **Jewish Fund for Justice** and can be ordered by calling 212- 213-2113 or by e-mailing jfjustice@jfjustice.org. The *Jewish Fund for Justice* website can be found at <http://www.jfjustice.org/>.

What Do Jewish Sources Say about Caring for Poor and Hungry People? This sheet of Jewish text excerpts on hunger would be a useful learning tool for a short lesson. Alternatively, a group leader could select a few of these quotations as a springboard into discussion. This resource is produced by **Mazon** and can be ordered by calling 310-442-0020. *Mazon's* website can be found at <http://www.mazon.org/>.

TEXTS

The Dynamics of Tzedakah: From Dependence to Dignity is a curriculum for adults or advanced high school students. Discusses how to give tzedakah without promoting dependency or injuring the pride of the recipient, and addresses the questions that arise when giving tzedakah. Produced by the *Shalom Hartman Institute*, it can be ordered by calling 212-772-9711.

Jewish Attitudes Toward the Hungry from With and Without Their Community is a 29-page essay written by Avi Weinstein discussing “Jewish ethical responses to hunger and their practical applications.” Specifically, it deals with the question of Jewish responsibility for the non-Jewish poor. For a copy, please contact JCRC at tzedekresources@jrcrboston.org or 617-457-8600.

A Jewish Response to Hunger is an 8-page guided description of Jewish texts about hunger and social justice. It can be used in settings when there is not enough time to conduct a full lesson plan. Part of a collection written by Richard Schwartz on “Judaism, Vegetarianism and Animal Rights.” It is available at schwartz.enviroweb.org/response-hunger.html.

HUNGER **ACTION OPPORTUNITIES**

The ways that congregations can take action against hunger range from making one-time donations to a local food pantry to organizing a legislative advocacy campaign. While volunteer service and donations are invaluable to the operations of organizations that serve hungry people, we urge synagogues to take one more step. We encourage synagogues to think beyond direct-service activity and get involved in advocacy and organizing campaigns that have the potential to affect permanent change. Below is a list of direct service opportunities and advocacy campaigns that will facilitate synagogues’ action around hunger.

DIRECT SERVICE

Family Table is a program of *Jewish Family and Children’s Services* that assists hungry families in the community. Many area synagogues already participate in this program by collecting food or goods and making deliveries. For more information, contact Family Table Coordinator, at 617-566-0333 or mnesson@jfcbsoston.org.

The Greater Boston Food Bank relies on volunteers for its food collection and distribution to operate smoothly. Volunteer opportunities are available six days a week, with flexible hours, mornings, afternoons, and evenings. Call 617-427-5200 for more information. *The Greater Boston Food Bank* website can be found at <http://www.gbfb.org/>.

Jewish Community Volunteer Program (JCVP) provides a central clearinghouse for action opportunities matching interests, skills and availability with a wide range of volunteer jobs in the Jewish and Greater Boston communities. In addition, JCVP functions as a volunteer center, providing consultation, training and

resources to individuals, groups, and agencies. JCVP is a program of *Combined Jewish Philanthropies* and can be found online at <http://www.cjp.org> under “act now/volunteer.”

Project Bread can act as a referral service for opportunities throughout the area, and often needs volunteers for its own programs. They also provide information on organizing a team for in the Walk for Hunger that is held each May. Contact the volunteer coordinator at 617-723-5000 for more information. *Project Bread's* website can be found at <http://www.projectbread.org/>.

Together We Can: A What, Why and How Handbook for Working to End Hunger in Your Community is a 35- page handbook produced by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. It has suggestions and step-by-step guides for ways that groups and individuals can combat hunger.
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsec/FILES/wecan.pdf>

Websites

Jewishservice.org connects organizations that enable youth and adults to engage in service domestically and around the world.

Servenet.org also allows lay leaders to set up group profiles and search for volunteer opportunities by type of project and age of volunteers.

Volunteermatch.org allows users to search for opportunities by zip code, and highlights opportunities available for youth and groups.

Volunteersolutions.org unites potential volunteers with non-profits that need help. Lay leaders can establish the types of service his or her synagogue group is interested in participating in, and will receive email notification when such opportunities become available. United Way of Massachusetts Bay provides this, and can be contacted at 1-877-U-VOLUNTEER or <http://www.uwmb.org/volunteer.htm> .

ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS

Unlike the service opportunities described above that address the needs of the current hungry population, advocacy is directed at changing the system that contributes to their plight. For example, rather than collecting food for those who cannot afford enough, being an advocate includes persuading the legislature to maintain food stamp programs and raise the minimum wage so that low-income people can earn enough to afford all of their basic needs. Methods of advocating include informing fellow congregants about issues of concern, organizing a synagogue program for local legislators, and contacting state senators and representatives.

JCRC has a guide on **How to Advocate for Government Programs and Legislation**. For a more extensive description of how to lobby specifically from a faith perspective, and for information about the Massachusetts legislative process, see the advocacy guide produced by **Faith Into Action Together (F.I.A.T.)**, a program of the **Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless**. For a copy of the advocacy guide or to discuss becoming a part of JCRC's synagogue legislative advocacy network, contact JCRC at 617-457-8600.

To stay updated on current affairs, sign up for the JCRC Government Affairs' regular e-mail update, the **Jewish Community's State House Action Alert**. Send an e-mail to governmentaffairs@jrcrboston.org with the title "Sign up-State House Action Alert" and include your name and contact information in the body.

The Manna Project is a campaign to pressure the food industry to donate a percentage of its proceeds toward fighting hunger. A joint project of **Jvibe.com** and **Socialaction.com**, it is in its beginning stages and synagogues can become actively involved. Information on the campaign can be found at <http://www.socialaction.com/manna>.

Project Bread's Massachusetts Child Hunger Initiative seeks to ensure that all children have access to the food they need to learn and thrive. For information on this campaign, see the **Child Hunger Initiative** section of *Project Bread's* website at <http://www.projectbread.org/MCHI/youcanhelp.htm>. *Project Bread's* website can be found at <http://www.projectbread.org/>.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

[Secular Educational Resources](#)

[Jewish Educational Resources](#)

[Action Opportunities](#)

The *US Conference of Mayors* considers the lack of affordable housing to be a primary cause of homelessness and one that crosses socio-economic levels. Skyrocketing rents can force middle-class people to move far from their jobs and extended family and pay well over 30 percent of their income on housing.

Jewish texts speak to the importance of appropriate housing. When Balam observed the Israelites as they traveled through the desert, he was impressed that they had developed appropriate housing that allowed them privacy. He did not comment that the tents were beautiful, but instead that they were ‘good’ because they met the needs of the community.

“How good are your tents Jacob, your dwelling places, Israel!”
(Numbers, 24:5)

If Balam observed the housing situation in Boston, he would be foolish to expound on its ‘goodness’. The housing problem impacts the quality of life of our entire community. Although there are efforts being made to create more affordable housing, low-wage and even moderate-wage workers are forced to move far out of the city or to move into substandard housing in order to make ends meet.

Housing continues to be the largest expense of most households. In these tight and difficult times – with increasing tuition, health care and transportation costs – housing costs are straining the budgets of almost all income groups. *(Boston Indicator’s Report, 2002)*

JCRC offers area synagogues a direct connection to programs related to a variety of issues including hunger, homelessness, affordable housing, community economic development, political advocacy, literacy and the environment. In our work with local congregations, we use our **PEAR (Partnership, Education, Action, and Reflection)** model as a guide for creating a more effective social justice program.

Partnership with other community-based organizations and relationships with individuals from other communities can establish important community ties and make justice efforts more effective.

Education, both Jewish and issue-based, is essential to understanding the

societal roots of injustice and affirming the Jewish values that inspire action and enhance our impact.

Action allows congregations to alleviate suffering, address needs and advocate for systemic change.

Reflection personalizes action experiences and strengthens individuals' and communities' resolve to affect change.

The following text provides extensive descriptions of ways that congregations can address the issue of affordable housing. Check the General Social Justice section for other helpful material. For more information on these opportunities and resources, contact JCRC at tzedekresources@jrcrboston.org or 617-457-8600.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING **SECULAR EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES**

Many of the following resources include information about affordable housing. Others are examples of the work that is being done in this field and would help people learn more about affordable housing issues. The following resources can serve as the basis of discussion in a group of adults or mature teens, while a teacher of younger students could also use this material to form a lesson plan. To borrow resources from our collection, please contact the JCRC at tzedekresources@jrcrboston.org or 617-457-8600.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN MASSACHUSETTS

Citizens' Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA) serves as an umbrella organization for all the parties involved with affordable housing and community development throughout Massachusetts. The CHAPA website can be found at <http://www.chapa.org>.

The City of Boston's Department of Neighborhood Development provides information about the city's plans for affordable housing and neighborhood development. This information is available at http://www.cityofboston.gov/dnd/1_Hsg.asp.

End of the Line: A Wake-Up Call for Affordable Housing is a 9-minute video on the severe affordable housing crisis in Fall River, MA. For more information, contact **Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless** at 617-737-3508. The

Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless website can be found at <http://www.mahomeless.org/>.

The Massachusetts Affordable Housing Alliance is a non-profit that aims to increase public and private sector investment in affordable housing. They organize grassroots campaigns, conduct research and provide education for first time home-buyers. The ***The Massachusetts Affordable Housing Alliance*** website can be found at <http://www.mahome.org/>.

Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporation, a privately owned consortium of banks pool capital and share risk in providing supplemental financing to small businesses that otherwise would not have access to growth capital. Many community development corporations in Massachusetts focus on building affordable housing. For more information on these organizations, see the community economic development section of this website, or go to <http://www.macdc.org>.

The Massachusetts Housing Partnership Fund (MHP) is a state agency that works to support the development of low-income housing and assist tenants and landlords. The ***Massachusetts Housing Partnership Fund (MHP)*** website can be found at <http://www.mhpfund.com>.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN THE U.S.

Just Neighbors: Helping Communities of Faith Serve Families in Need is a set of nine 1 hour workshops addressing topics such as the affordable housing crisis and the changing nature of low-wage employment. These materials are produced by the ***National Interfaith Hospitality Network*** and can be ordered by going to <http://www.nihn.org> or calling 908-273-1100.

The National Housing Institute is a research organization focused on housing and community issues. Findings are collected in Shelterforce, a journal that serves as forum for community organizers, activists and advocates. Articles are very specific, and the site allows users to search by topic. <http://www.nhi.org>

The National Low Income Housing Coalition educates, organizes and advocates for the end of the affordable housing shortage. Its website has educational materials that focus on low-income housing issues. <http://www.nlihc.org>

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has extensive articles, press releases and fact sheets relating to the topic of affordable housing. There are also materials specifically geared toward faith-based organizations. <http://www.hud.gov>

AFFORDABLE HOUSING **JEWISH EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES**

Below are some specific lesson plans and articles linking Jewish texts and affordable housing. Be sure to also check the Jewish resources for General Social Justice, many of which lend themselves to the study of affordable housing issues, as do educational materials for homelessness and community economic development. To borrow the following materials from our collection, or for more information on placing orders, contact JCRC at tzedekresources@jcrcboston.org.

LESSON PLANS

The Housing and Community Sabbath Resource Guide is designed for youth learners. It includes Jewish sources, activities, background information, discussion questions and follow-up projects related to homelessness. This curriculum is a product of the ***Fifth Avenue Committee***, a non-profit focused on community organizing and affordable housing. For a copy please contact the *Fifth Avenue Committee* at 718-857-2990.

JCRC Sukkot Study Guide is a guided text study about sukkot that highlights the links between the holiday and to issues around affordable housing. For a copy, please contact JCRC at tzedekresources@jcrcboston.org or 617-457-8600.

Nehemiah the Leader is a 5-page interfaith text study on the prophet Nehemiah produced by the Greater Boston Interfaith organization. It focuses on how the biblical story relates to concepts of power relationships, leadership, self-interest and action. This discussion guide assumes a basic understanding of affordable housing and community partnership issues, and best for a group of mature teens or adults. For a copy, please contact JCRC at tzedekresources@jcrcboston.org or 617-457-8600.

ARTICLES

From Sukkah to Ma'akeh; the Halachah of Housing is an article published in *Tikkun* Magazine that discusses biblical texts related to Sukkot and their implications for modern affordable housing problems. The article can be found on the Tikkun Magazine website, at <http://www.tikkun.org/>.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING **ACTION OPPORTUNITIES**

Working to promote affordable housing is a powerful way to decrease the gap between the rich and poor in our society and to eliminate the circumstances that perpetuate family homelessness. The following includes a list of advocacy organizations that lobby the government to address this issue. For more information about the following opportunities, contact JCRC at tzedekresources@jrcrboston.org or 617-457-8600.

ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS

An important component of taking action to provide affordable housing is legislative advocacy. Methods of advocating include informing fellow congregants about issues of concern, organizing a synagogue program for local legislators, and contacting state senators and representatives

The following are the leading affordable housing advocacy organizations that are fighting for their agendas to be addressed by the Massachusetts Legislature. Contact them directly to see how you can get involved.

Citizens' Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA) serves as an umbrella organization for all the parties involved with affordable housing and community development throughout Massachusetts. Its site focuses on information about legislation and advocacy efforts. The *Citizens' Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA)* website can be found at <http://www.chapa.org>

Faith Into Action Together (F.I.A.T.) provides an extensive description of how to lobby from a faith perspective, as well as information about the legislative process in Massachusetts. The **Faith Into Action Together (F.I.A.T.)** website can be found at <http://www.mahomeless.org/programs/flat.html>.

JCRC has a guide on **How to Advocate for Government Programs and Legislation**. For a more extensive description of how to lobby specifically from a faith perspective, and for information about the Massachusetts legislative process, see the advocacy guide produced by **Faith Into Action Together (F.I.A.T.)**, a program of the **Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless**. For a copy of the advocacy guide or to discuss becoming a part of JCRC's synagogue legislative advocacy network, contact JCRC at 617-457-8600.

To stay updated on current affairs, sign up for the JCRC Government Affairs' regular e-mail update, the **Jewish Community's State House Action Alert**. Send

an e-mail to governmentaffairs@jrcrboston.org with the title “Sign up-State House Action Alert” and include your name and contact information in the body.

The Massachusetts Affordable Housing Alliance is an example of a non-profit that aims to increase public and private sector investment in affordable housing. In addition to advocacy, their activities include organizing grassroots campaigns and conducting research. *The Massachusetts Affordable Housing Alliance* website can be found at <http://www.mahahome.org>.

The One Family Campaign’s Advocacy Agenda focuses on increasing the amount of housing available for families earning 30% or less of the median income. The *One Family Campaign* website can be found at <http://www.onefamilycampaign.org>.

Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (GBIO) seeks to train and organize the communities of Greater Boston across all religious, racial, ethnic, class and neighborhood lines for the public good. Member organizations are drawn from geographic, ethnic, and faith communities, and currently advocate on Affordable Housing, Immigrant Rights, and the quality of nursing home facilities for inhabitants and employees. For information about involvement in GBIO, please contact the JCRC at 617-457-8600.

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

[Secular Educational Resources](#)

[Jewish Educational Resources](#)

[Action Opportunities](#)

Community Economic Development (CED) refers to systematic investing in neighborhoods with limited access to capital for necessities such as housing and small businesses. By providing fiscally responsible loans to economically distressed areas, CED programs break the cycle of inter-generational poverty. **Community Economic Development** is an ideal example of what our sages teach as the highest level of tzedakah:

“ There are eight levels of tzedakah, one above the other. The greatest level, than which nothing is higher, is to strengthen the hand of the poor by means of gift or loan or by going into partnership with him, so that he can become self-sufficient.”

(Maimonides, Mishneh Torah, Gifts to the Poor 10:7)

Although this kind of giving may seem inaccessible to individuals without detailed knowledge of a community's financial situation, individuals can invest in Community Economic Development through CED funds. For more information about how to join a CED campaign, contact the JCRC at 617-457-8600.

A local example of such a fund is *The Greater Boston Jewish Fund for Community Economic Development*. This fund provides a simple, safe and direct way to put loan funds to work revitalizing urban areas.

JCRC offers area synagogues a direct connection to programs related to a variety of issues including hunger, homelessness, affordable housing, community economic development, political advocacy, literacy and the environment. In our work with local congregations, we use our **PEAR (Partnership, Education, Action, and Reflection)** model as a guide for creating a more effective social justice program.

Partnership with other community-based organizations and relationships with individuals from other communities can establish important community ties and make justice efforts more effective.

Education, both Jewish and issue-based, is essential to understanding the societal roots of injustice and affirming the Jewish values that inspire action and enhance our impact.

Action allows congregations to alleviate suffering, address needs and advocate for systemic change.

Reflection personalizes action experiences and strengthens individuals' and communities' resolve to affect change.

To borrow the following materials from our library please contact JCRC at tzedekresources@jrcrboston.org or 617-457-8600.

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT **SECULAR EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES**

The following websites provide ways to learn more about CED activity in the Greater Boston area and in the United States. While most of these sites are designed for people with prior knowledge of CED, an interested user could learn much from the information produced by these organizations. For those new to the practice of CED, be sure to read the **brochure on the JCRC website** for key definitions and explanations. The website can be found at: <http://www.jrcrboston.org/ced.htm>

Boston Community Capital, (BCC), is a local example of a community development financial intermediary. This CDFI's mission is to "create and preserve healthy communities where low-income people work and live." BCC is partnering with JCRC to facilitate Jewish participation and will acknowledge investments from Jewish individuals, foundations and institutions as being part of the Greater Boston Jewish Fund for Community Economic Development. The website can be found at <http://www.bostoncommunitycapital.org>.

Coalition of Community Development Financial Institutions is a national network of CDFIs. CDFIs are private sector financial intermediaries with a primary mission of community development. The website can be found at: <http://www.cdfi.org>

The Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC) channels grants, investments, and loans to CDCs around the country. By marshalling private sector resources and extending financial and technical help to CDCs, LISC enables residents to set their own priorities and shape the process of community renewal. The Boston LISC office and Boston Community Capital were the investment vehicles for CJP's CED initiative. The website can be found at <http://www.liscnet.org/>.

The Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations (CDCs) is an organization of non-profits that support the work of CDCs. CDCs are organizations that aim to empower poor and working class people by supporting affordable housing, commercial development, job training, and community organizing. The website can be found at: <http://www.macdc.org>

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT **JEWISH EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES**

Most of the following resources are designed for groups of congregants with little prior understanding of CED, and are therefore useful for preliminary discussions. Be sure to also check the General Social Justice section for additional Jewish resources. To borrow the following materials, or for more information on placing orders, contact JCRC at tzedekresources@jrcrboston.org.

ORGANIZATIONS

The Shefa Fund is a foundation that organizes Jewish resources to provide education on the relationship between Jewish values and financial transactions, facilitate grants toward organizations committed to American Jewish renewal through social action, and increase visible American Jewish institutional investment in low-income community development. *The Shefa Fund's website* has information and resources related to these goals. This organization also publishes the following printed resources, which can be ordered by calling 215-483-4004 or going to <http://www.shefafund.org>

Shefa Fund Resources

Building Community, Creating Justice: A Guide for Organizing Tzedakah Collectives by Betsy Tessler and Jeffrey Dekro. This manual guides synagogue and individuals through the process of tzedakah collectives.

The Highest Degree of Tzedakah: A Guide to Jewish Institutional Investing in Low Income Community Development Projects by Jeffrey Dekro. This booklet has definitions and explanations about community economic development that would be extremely useful to beginners. Designed for Jewish organizations, it includes steps a synagogue can take to become involved.

Jews, Money and Social Responsibility by Lawrence Bush and Jeffrey Dekro. This candid and engaging book discusses Jewish thought regarding money, consumption, investment and tzedakah. While it is 200 pages long, it is laid out in magazine/text book format and broken up by pullout quotes and illustrations. With reflection questions at the end of every chapter, this book could easily serve as the basis for a discussion among teens or adults.

CURRICULA AND STUDY GUIDES

CHIP: The Chai Investment Program; A Congregation Guide to Socially Responsible Investing is a 27-page booklet of user-friendly information about community investment and how synagogues can get involved. This book is available online, or can be ordered by contacting the **Commission on Social Action of Reform Judaism** at 212- 650-4160 or uahc.org/csa/chip.pdf.

JCRC has a text-based discussion about the importance of partnership social justice efforts. These study guides are geared toward teens or adults already engaged in social justice projects. For a copy, please contact JCRC at tzedekresources@jrcrboston.org or 617-457-8600.

Mitzvot for the Contemporary Market Place: A Jewish Guide to Socially Responsible Investment and Community Reinvestment is a 14-page manual produced by the **Jewish Council on Urban Affairs**. It describes ways that mitzvot relate to financial matters, and provides explanations of socially responsible investment, community disinvestments and community reinvestment. There is also a step-by-step planning guide for socially responsible investing that would be useful to individuals, households and businesses, as well as to synagogues. The website can be found at: <http://www.jcua.org>

With All Your Possessions, Jewish Ethics and Economic Life, by Dr. Meir Tamari. This book describes how Jewish religious and moral tenets have shaped a unique economic framework in which Jews have conducted their business for thousands of years. With sections on Jewish law, economics, money and taxation, this book focuses on explaining Jewish attitudes toward finance. Sample pages of this book are available on Amazon.com.

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT **ACTION OPPORTUNITIES**

Many of the publications in the **Jewish Educational Resources section** of this guide describe in detail ways that synagogues and their membership can initiate and become involved in existing CED efforts. Particularly user-friendly sources are “The Highest Degree of Tzedakah: A Guide to Jewish Institutional Investing in Low Income Community Development Projects,” and “CHIP: The Chai Investment Program; A Congregation Guide to Socially Responsible Investing.”

An extensive description of the different ways that Jews can become involved in CED lending is provided through the resources in this section. To learn more, read our brochure online at <http://www.jcrcboston.org/ced.htm>.

The following are ways that your synagogue can become involved in community economic development:

- **Arrange for a member of JCRC’s CED committee to speak** about investing in low- income community development to your synagogue, organization or group of interested individuals.
- **Sign up for a tour** of neighborhoods being revitalized through CED funds.
- **Approve a policy to invest** a portion of an organization’s endowment funds in the Greater Boston Jewish Fund for Community Economic Development.

For information about how to join a CED campaign, contact the JCRC at (617) 457-8600.

REFLECTION MATERIALS

[On Text Studies](#)

[On Action](#)

[How To Reflect](#)

The final component of JCRC's **PEAR (Partnership, Education, Action, and Reflection) model**, *reflection* is a crucial element of sustained and successful social justice initiatives because it personalizes action experiences and strengthens individuals' resolve to make change. Learning that a mitzvah is not just a good deed, but also a commandment for the entire Jewish community helps individuals link their own acts of justice to thousands of years of sacred tradition.

“Great is the study of Torah because study leads to action.”

Talmud (Bavli, Bava Kama 17a)

Reflection is a key component of social justice learning and action by enabling participants to process, think critically about, and learn from the action they have completed. Through writing, speaking, listening, and reading, participants can add depth and meaning to any learning or action experience.

“When I was tutoring at a shelter, I thought about all the things that make it easier for me to succeed in school—enough food, tons of books, and parents helping me with homework—it must be tough for kids to go in and out of different shelters. No matter how smart they are, it’s hard to do well with so many distractions. I want to keep teaching kids how to read, but we need to help them get more books for their schools and help their families find places to live.” *(Student from area synagogue)*

Many materials have been produced to help group leaders facilitate reflection in secular or interfaith settings. Since reflection is an open-ended process, it is easy for leaders to integrate Judaism into such discussions and activities. Below are resources to facilitate reflection on text and reflection on action. To borrow materials from our library, or for more information on placing orders, contact JCRC at tzedekresources@jrcrboston.org or 617-457-8600.

REFLECTING ON TEXT STUDIES

Based on the understanding that ‘*study leads to action*’, many groups use sacred texts to discuss specific religious imperatives and their relevance to modern life. The following discussion questions can be used as part of such a text study.

- **What principles or texts** in particular were you drawn to and why?

- **What are the personal, interpersonal, and societal challenges and mandates** presented in these principles and texts?
- **What is God challenging you to do** on a personal, interpersonal, and societal level as a result of reflecting on these sacred texts?
- **What are obstacles** for putting these principles into daily practice?
- **How can you overcome** these personal and societal obstacles?

The questions have been adapted from materials produced by *Faith Into Action Together*, an interfaith group that fights homelessness through education. Faith Into Action Together's website is at <http://www.mahomeless.org/programs/fiat.html>.

REFLECTION ON ACTION

Planning for time to reflect is crucial in creating a meaningful action experience for participants. Reflection on action can include discussion questions, such as:

- **How are you different** now from when you began this work?
- **What did you discover** about other people, both in your group and in the group with which you met?
- **Did anything unexpected happen** during the project? How did you respond?
- **Activities that can be used to reflect include:** making a collage, writing a poem, and performing a skit.

HOW and WHY TO REFLECT

The following list has sources with many more means of reflection. Articles discussing the theories behind different types of reflection are also included. To borrow these materials from our library, or for more information on placing orders, contact JCRC at tzedekresources@jrcrboston.org or 617-457-8600.

Facilitating Reflection: A Manual for Leaders and Educators has step-by-step instructions for how to facilitate reflection, including sections on communication and group dynamics. It also includes a reflection guide with discussion questions and activity suggestions. This manual was written and compiled by Julie Reed and Christopher Koliba of the John Dewey Project on Progressive Education at the University of Vermont, and is available online at http://uvm.edu/~dewey/reflection_manual.

Reflection as an Activist Practice discusses important components of reflection and includes a bibliography of reflection materials. Prepared by Rabbi David Rosen, it's particularly useful in a training session for group leaders. Available at <http://www.jrf.org/to/nygathering-2002-reflection.html>.

Reflection Activities for Everyone organizes reflection opportunities by type to appeal to participants' preferred thought approach: linguistic, logical/mathematical, bodily/kinesthetic, spatial, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal. From [A Practitioner's Guide to Reflection in Service-Learning: Student Voices & Reflections](#), by Janet Eyler, Dwight E Giles, Jr. and Angela Schmiede. (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University, 1996). For a copy, please contact JCRC at tzedekresources@jrcrboston.org or 617-457-8600.

Reflection, Evaluation and Celebration offers ideas for generating reflection and connects the activity to the evaluation process. It is a chapter from [A Practical Guide for Developing Agency/School Partnerships for Service-Learning](#), a source produced by the **Points of Light Foundation**. For a copy, please contact JCRC at tzedekresources@jrcrboston.org or 617-457-8600.

Reflection Methods lists different types of reflection activities and tips for journal writing. Suggestions include making a "graffiti wall," participating in visualization, and acting out skits. Obtained courtesy of the **Massachusetts Service Alliance**. For a copy, please contact JCRC at tzedekresources@jrcrboston.org or 617-457-8600.

The Reflection Question Check List provides questions for group to consider after an action experience related to the services they have provided and the process of volunteering. This sheet is produced by Youth as Resources, an Indiana-based organization that aims at empowering youth to change communities. The check list and other resources can be found at <http://yar.org>.

Reflection and Service-Learning discusses the role of reflective thinking and the Four C's (Continuous, Connected, Challenging, and Contextualized) of reflection. This text is a chapter from [A Practitioner's Guide to Reflection In Service-Learning](#) by Janet Eyler, Dwight E Giles, Jr., and Angela Schmiede. (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University, 1996). For a copy of this article, please contact the JCRC at tzedekresources@jrcrboston.org or at 617-457-8600.

Service Reflection Toolkit is an 8-page guide for leaders and participants to engage in reflection after action projects. It includes a list of the benefits of reflection, the different components of reflection, different opportunities organized by activity length, and information about journaling. Produced by the **Northwest Service Academy**, it can be ordered by calling 503-736-9814. Their website can be found at <http://www.northwestserviceacademy.org/>.

Storyboard/Video Record is a sheet with information about uses of a storyboard reflection model, and suggestions for how to construct one. This sheet was obtained courtesy of the **Massachusetts Service Alliance**. Please contact them for a

copy. For a copy, please contact JCRC at tzedekresources@jrcrboston.org or 617-457-8600.

Three Levels of Reflection discusses the mirror, microscope, binoculars model of reflection. Produced by the Volunteer Action Center of Florida International University, it is available at <http://fiu.edu/~time4chg/Library/reflect.html> .

JCRC's Tzedek programs

*“The whole world was built on loving Kindness”
(Psalms 89:3)*

Within the Jewish Community Relations Council, there is an overarching emphasis on justice work. Our programs work to affect social change through diverse models including service, grassroots organizing, education, and political action. For more information on these programs, visit the listed websites or contact program staff by calling the JCRC at 617-457-8600.

[Boston Programs](#)

Campus Social Justice
Coalition on Environment and Jewish Life
Community Economic Development
Government Affairs
Greater Boston Interfaith Organization
Greater Boston Jewish Coalition for Literacy
Jewish InterAction (Young Adults)
One Family Campaign to End Family Homelessness
Synagogue Social Justice Organizing
Tzedek E-Newsletter
Tzedek Institute for Synagogues
Tzedek Leaders Group
Tzedek Resource Guide
Youth Social Justice

[International Programs](#)

Civil Society in Israel
Dnepropetrovsk Kehila Project
Ethiopian Jewry Committee
Women's Empowerment

BOSTON

Campus Social Justice

www.jcrcboston.org/campus.htm

JCRC works in partnership with Hillels on local college campuses to link students to opportunities for involvement in social justice. The Campus Social Justice Coordinator works most closely with the Hillel Foundation at Brandeis University and the Hillel Foundation at Tufts University. These two Hillels are part of a national Tzedek Hillel initiative in which they focus a significant amount of resources on Tzedek programming. The Coordinator also works on regional Tzedek programs and with other local Hillels on an as-needed basis. To find out more about the JCRC's campus programs and how you can get involved through the JCRC or through your campus Hillel, contact JCRC.

Coalition on Environment and Jewish Life

www.jcrcboston.org/COEJL/index.html

COEJL is a volunteer-run grassroots organization that is dedicated to being a positive force for social and environmental change. Through advocacy, education and outreach, we promote the Jewish imperative to steward the Earth. In acting on this imperative, we embrace all denominations and partner with diverse communities to mobilize for change.

Community Economic Development

<http://www.jrcrboston.org/ced.htm>

Community Economic Development (CED) provides fiscally responsible low-interest loans in economically distressed communities to help break the cycle of inter-generational poverty. The increasing chasm between rich and poor is determined in large part by access to capital. Without capital, it's almost impossible to open a small business, buy a house, or get a college degree and the cycle of poverty and dependency continues. Over the past 30 years, the CED movement has helped build hundreds of thousands of units of affordable housing, assisted thousands of people to start their own businesses, and brought billions of capital dollars to formerly blighted neighborhoods. JCRC works to encourage investment through the Greater Boston Jewish Fund for Community Economic Development.

Government Affairs

<http://www.jrcrboston.org/governmentaffairs.html>

JCRC brings together broad coalitions of Jewish agencies, organizations and individuals to advocate for compassionate public policies and adequate funding to assist those most in need and improve the quality of life for all. JCRC coordinates lobbying days at the State House, organizes legislative receptions, trains lay volunteers in effective lobbying, and organizes letter writing, e-mail and telephone campaigns to demonstrate public support for key issues of concern to the Jewish community.

Greater Boston Interfaith Organization

<http://www.jrcrboston.org/gbio.htm>

The Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (GBIO) is an organization of 90+ demographically diverse faith and civic-based institutions, including synagogues, churches, labor unions, and community groups that work together to address local justice issues. GBIO provides the opportunity to take action on broadly-held issues of concern to its members, such as education, housing and immigrant issues, by developing relationships among diverse individuals and institutions throughout the Greater Boston area. A member organization, JCRC supports GBIO campaigns and recruits and trains other Jewish institutions to participate in this interfaith, metropolitan-wide effort.

Greater Boston Jewish Coalition for Literacy

www.jrcrboston.org/literacy/index.htm

Through the Coalition, teams of volunteers from synagogues, Jewish day schools and other Jewish organizations tutor young children in urban elementary schools, after-school programs. The Coalition also supports book drives to collect literature for young children as well as advocacy for public education. Tutors work one-on-one with individual students each week, developing close personal ties to the children and their schools. As a member of a literacy team, volunteers share their experiences and receive guidance from monthly training and support

sessions. In 2002, the Coalition mobilized over 650 volunteers to help young children learn to read.

Holocaust Programming

www.jrcrboston.org/holocaust.htm

As the voice of the organized Jewish Community, JCRC works to protect the interests of Holocaust survivors and educate in memory of the victims. Through partnership with Friends of the New England Holocaust Memorial, JCRC coordinates Boston's annual Holocaust Commemoration Service for Yom HaShoah as well as providing all programming for the Holocaust Memorial. JCRC trains volunteers and coordinates interactive programs at the Memorial for student and affinity groups. In addition, JCRC facilitates long-term relationship building between young people and Holocaust survivors as part of the Yom HaShoah Youth Fellowship program. JCRC strives for all Holocaust programs to reinforce the lessons of the Holocaust as motivation for modern justice efforts.

Jewish InterAction: Programming for Young Adults

www.jinteraction.org

Jewish InterAction brings together Jewish young adults to participate in community service, inter-group dialogue, Jewish learning and personal enrichment activities in a welcoming atmosphere. Co-sponsored by JCRC, the Jewish Community Centers of Greater Boston, and Hebrew College, JI offers people in their 20s and early 30s an opportunity to connect to the Jewish community and put their faith into action.

One Family Campaign to End Family Homelessness

www.onefamilycampaign.org

The One Family Campaign is a coalition of organizations throughout Massachusetts committed to ending family homelessness, "one family at a time" through direct aid to families, public information campaigns and changing the system. JCRC coordinates Jewish congregational involvement in the campaign. With JCRC support, synagogues take action in numerous ways, including congregation-wide education on issues of family homelessness, fundraising and support for a homeless family that is making strides towards self-sufficiency, partnerships with local shelters, and public policy initiatives addressing homelessness.

Synagogue Social Justice Organizing

<http://www.jrcrboston.org/synagogue.htm>

JCRC offers consultation to lay people and professionals on the integration of social justice into synagogue life on the issue areas most important to the congregation. Consultation includes leadership development and mentoring, organizing methods and techniques, Jewish text support and materials, and capacity building and partnership assistance. This consultation can be in the form of Social Justice Strategic Planning (SJSP), a series of intensive training and consulting sessions with a specially selected leadership team from the congregation.

Tzedek E-Newsletter

<http://www.jrcrboston.org/TzedekNewsletter/index.html>

This monthly electronic newsletter for the Boston Jewish community provides up to date information about local social justice causes and events of interest, opportunities to make

change, and training and networking opportunities for lay leaders and professionals committed to strengthening synagogue-based social justice work.

Tzedek Institute for Synagogues

www.jrcrboston.org/TzedekInstitute

The JCRC Tzedek Institute for Synagogues is a large daylong conference providing training, workshops and inspiration for approximately 200 lay and professional synagogue leaders to share best practices and refine the skills used in successful synagogue-based social justice work. The institute is held each fall.

Tzedek Resource Guide

www.jrcrboston.org/TzedekResources

In order to provide access to the breadth of existing Jewish social justice resources available to the Boston Jewish community, JCRC's online Tzedek Resource Guide was launched. This web-based guide organizes the plethora of Jewish Justice materials that have been produced, and provides access to educational curricula, websites, and a variety of social justice organizations. The guide assists synagogue leaders, educators, clergy and activists.

Tzedek Leaders Group

<http://www.jrcrboston.org/synagogue.htm>

JCRC provides intensive leadership training for a select group of lay leaders who are committed to making social justice and systemic change a central part of their synagogues. This group meets regularly to share best practices and receive training on leadership and organizing theory from experts in the field, on incorporating Jewish content into social justice work and on creating action plans for their congregations.

Youth Social Justice

www.jrcrboston.org/youth.htm

JCRC youth programs engage a significant number of teens thru youth serving institutions (including those who are largely unaffiliated with Jewish communal institutions) in sustained, high quality, meaningful, Jewishly informed social justice work/action. JCRC enhances the ongoing social action work of various Jewish youth organizations by facilitating partnerships with community organizations and by providing training for youth leaders in effective social justice work. The JCRC youth outreach is conducted in cooperation with Boston's Commission on Jewish Continuity.

INTERNATIONAL

UKRAINE:

Dnepropetrovsk Kehila Project

<http://www.jrcrboston.org/Dnep.htm>

Aware of our responsibilities abroad, the goals of the Kehila Project are to educate the Boston Jewish community about the revival of Jewish social, cultural and religious life in Dnepropetrovsk, Boston's sister city. Through this effort, JCRC works to involve schools and

community groups in a variety of projects during the year. The Kehila Project provides opportunities for groups and individuals to contribute to the historic renewal of Jewish life in our partner city and the surrounding Jewish communities. This work provides many opportunities for the Boston Jewish community to play a role in the historic revitalization of Jewish life in Ukraine.

ISRAEL:

To learn more about JCRC's Israel Programs, contact Sheryl Adler, Director of Israel and Other International Concerns, at (617) 457-8644.

JCRC's Israel Action Center

Through the Action Center, JCRC connects the Boston community to issues in Israel. JCRC provides a weekly Israel Update, supports local programs and educational efforts and provides consultation to synagogues and college campuses to support efforts to engage in Israel related justice work.

Civil Society in Israel

The purpose of this initiative is to prepare for the work of building a more civil society in Israel once there is peace. The inevitability of peace is woven into the fabric of this project. Consequently a group of nearly 40 lay volunteers in Boston and in Haifa are in a dialogue process focused on the impediments to civil society. Some of these divisions include Arab/Jewish, religious/secular, and socioeconomic issues.

Women's Empowerment

JCRC's Boston-Haifa project for women's empowerment coordinates a cross-cultural dialogue to advance causes and issues of concern to women in Boston and Haifa. Through exchanges between women in both communities, the participants learn about organizing and advocacy skills as well as gain an understanding of the differences and similarities between the Israeli and American systems.

Haifa-Boston Exchange on Sustainable Communities

Through this exchange, residents and community activists from Hadar in Haifa and the neighborhoods of Roxbury and Dorchester in Boston explored issues of environment and public health, especially in urban areas. Through visits, Boston and Haifa participants develop relationships with each other and groups share the successes and challenges they both face in tackling urban environmental issues in a holistic, sustainable manner.

ETHIOPIA:

Ethiopian Jewry Committee

<http://www.jrcrboston.org/ethiopia.htm>

JCRC has been an outspoken advocate on behalf of Ethiopian Jews for over two decades since their arrival in Israel in the 1980s. Today, JCRC's efforts focus on expanding educational opportunities for Ethiopian immigrant youth to further their integration into Israeli society and secure a better life for Ethiopian families.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

“And everyone who excelled in ability and everyone whose spirit moved him came.”

(Exodus, 35:21)

When the Israelites built the tabernacle in the desert, God instructed Moses to ask that each person contribute to the effort. The people responded to this request with enthusiasm and dedication, each bringing unique skills and materials.

Like the tabernacle, the Tzedek Resource Guide is the result of contributions from throughout the community. The resources included in this guide reflect a diversity of opinions and attitudes; the guide brings together justice efforts across geographic, denominational and political differences. This document exhibits and celebrates the rich diversity of ideas and methods employed in the quest for justice. We would like to thank those who created the many resources referenced in the guide for their willingness to dedicate both skill and passion to the mission of social change.

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Combined Jewish Philanthropies

For their generous support of innovative projects and their continued dedication to the pursuit of justice.

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- [Ushpizin: Invoking the Lives and Teachings of our Biblical Ancestors](#)

Publications

- [And You Shall Strengthen Them: A Rabbinic Letter on the Poor](#)
- [Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Towards Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets](#)

- Collaborative Leadership: How Citizens and Civic Leaders Make a Difference
- Faith-Based Community Organizing: A Unique Social Justice Approach to Revitalizing Synagogue Life
- [Hillel's Tzedek How-to Guide for campus leaders](#)
- Jewish Dimensions of Social Justice: Tough Moral Choices of Our Time
- [JSJN Passover Social Justice Resources Haggadah supplement](#)
- [Lirdof Tzedek: A Guide to Synagogue Social Action](#)
- Organizing for Social Change: A Manual for Activists in the 1990's

Classroom Learning Activities

- [Amos the Prophet: lesson plan](#)
- [The Dynamics of Tzedakah: From Dependence to Dignity](#)
- [Gathering the People Training and Education in Congregational Community Organizing](#)
- [Jewish Civics: A Tikkun Olam/World Repair Manual](#)
- JCRC Social Justice text studies
- [Judaism and Urban Poverty Curriculum](#)
- [Just Tzedakah text analyses](#)
- [Relations with the Hungry, Tzedakah & Welfare Reform](#)
- [To Till and to Tend: A Guide to Jewish Environmental Study and Action](#)
- ["Torah and Justice- from Text to Social Activism](#)
- [The Tzedakah Fellowship Curriculum](#)
- [1995 National Observance of Children's Sabbaths](#)

Websites

- [Activism Now](#)
- [AVODAH](#)
- [Idealist](#)
- [Institute for Public Affairs, Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America](#)
- [Jewish Alliance for Law and Social Action](#)
- [Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Boston](#)

- [The Jewish Social Justice Network](#)
- [SocialAction.com](#)
- [Tekiah](#)
- [The Ziv Tzedakah Fund](#)

Youth

- [Boston Youth Organizing Project](#)
- [The Co/Motion Guide to Youth-Led Social Change](#)
- [Community Connections Campaign](#)
- [Schools Serving for Social Justice](#)
- [The 26% Solution: an Activism 2000 Project](#)

FAMILY HOMELESSNESS

Action Opportunities

- [JCRC Action Initiative: One Family Campaign's Advocacy Agenda](#)
- [Jewish Community Volunteer Program](#)
- [Jewish Service](#)
- [The Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless](#)
- [The Massachusetts Family Economic Self Sufficiency Project](#)
- [ServeNet](#)
- [Shelter, Inc.](#)
- [State House Update](#)
- [Volunteer Match](#)
- [Volunteer Solutions of United Way of Mass. Bay](#)

Articles

- [Reconciling Joy and Humility on Sukkot](#)

Classroom Learning Activities

- [The Dynamics of Tzedakah](#)
- [F.I.A.T.'s Faith-Based Reflection and Action Materials](#)
- [The Homelessness Simulation Game](#)
- [The Housing and Community Sabbath Resource Guide](#)
- [The Involvement Theatre Program on Homelessness](#)
- [The Judaism and Urban Poverty Curriculum](#)

- The Massachusetts Family Economic Self Sufficiency Curriculum
- The Tzedakah Fellowship Curriculum

Supplemental Materials and Websites

- [The Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless](#)
- [The National Coalition for the Homeless](#)
- National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty
- The One Family Campaign

Videos

- [Give us Your Poor](#)
- Women of Strength

HUNGER

Action Opportunities – Direct Service

- Family Table
- The Greater Boston Food Bank
- Jewish Community Volunteer Program
- [Jewishservice.org](#)
- Project Bread
- [Serenet.org](#)
- [Volunteermatch.org](#)
- [Volunteersolutions.org](#) of United Way

Advocacy Campaigns

- The Manna Project
- Project Bread's Massachusetts Child Hunger Initiative

Classroom Learning Activities

- The Children's Hunger Sabbath Resource Booklet

- [The Dynamics of Tzedakah: From Dependence to Dignity](#)
- [Food for Thought: A Hunger Curriculum for Learning and Community Service](#)
- [Hunger Banquet Planning Kit](#)
- [Jewish Attitudes Toward the Hungry from With and Without Their Community](#)
- [Judaism and Urban Poverty Curriculum](#)
- [Kids Can Make a Difference](#)
- [Know Hunger: Challenge Youth to be Leaders in the Fight Against Hunger](#)
- [Mazon, the Jewish Response to Hunger](#)
- [Project Bread's Faith In Action](#)
- [Together We Can; A What, Why and How Handbook for Working to End Hunger in Your Community](#)
- [Tzedakah Fellowship Curriculum](#)
- [What do Jewish sources say about caring for Poor and Hungry People?](#)

Resources and Supplemental Materials

- [America's Second Harvest](#)
- [The Center on Hunger and Poverty](#)
- [The Community Food Security Coalition](#)
- [The Food Research and Action Center](#)
- [Hunger in America](#)
- [A Jewish Response to Hunger](#)
- [Oxfam America](#)
- [Project Bread](#)

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Action Opportunities

- [Citizens' Housing and Planning Association \(CHAPA\)](#)
- [Faith Into Action Together](#)
- [Greater Boston Interfaith Organization](#)

- [Massachusetts Affordable Housing Alliance](#)
- [One Family Campaign's Advocacy Agenda](#)

Articles

- [From Sukkah to Ma'akeh; the Halacha of Housing](#)

Classroom Learning Activities

- [JCRC Study Guide for the Holiday of Sukkot](#)
- [Housing and Community Sabbath Resource Guide](#)
- [Nehemiah the Leader](#)
- [Just Neighbors](#)

Resource Organizations

- [City of Boston, Department of Housing](#)
- [Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations](#)
- [Massachusetts Housing Partnership Fund](#)
- [The National Low Income Housing Coalition](#)
- [National Housing Institute](#)
- [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development \(HUD\)](#)

Video

- [End of the Line, A Wake Up Call for Affordable Housing](#)

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Curricula

- [CHIP: The Chai Investment Program; a Congregational Guide to Socially Responsible Investing](#)
- [JCRC text guide on Partnerships in Judaism](#)
- [Mitzvot for the Contemporary Market Place: a Jewish Guide to Socially Responsible Investment and Community Reinvestment](#)

- [With all Your Possessions, Jewish Ethics and Economic Life](#)

Resource Organizations

- [Boston Community Capital](#)
- [Coalition of Community Development Financial Institutions \(CDFIs\)](#)
- [Local Initiative Support Corporation](#)
- [Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations](#)
- [The Shefa Fund Publications:](#)
 - o [Building Community, Creating Justice: A Guide for Organizing Tzedakah Collectives](#)
 - o [The Highest Degree of Tzedakah: A Guide to Jewish Institutional Investing in Low Income Community Development Projects](#)
 - o [Jews, Money and Social Responsibility](#)

REFLECTION

How and Why to Reflect

- [Facilitating Reflection: A Manual for Leaders and Educators](#)
- [Reflection as an Activist Practice](#)
- [Reflection Activities for Everyone](#)
- [Reflection, Evaluation and Celebration](#)
- [Reflection Methods](#)
- [The Reflection Question Check List](#)
- [Reflection and Service-Learning](#)
- [Service Reflection Toolkit](#)
- [Storyboard/Video Record](#)
- [Three Levels of Reflection](#)