

### Session 3: Where and when is hesed needed?

#### **The focus:**

Stories of hesed abound in the community – in this session, children hear from a hesed hero who focuses especially on needs in the community and some solutions/activities as a result. Learners consider the implications of this person's story to their own actions on behalf of hesed.

#### **Teacher preparation:**

In advance of this session, find a dynamic adult or teen from the synagogue, educational program or community who can share a hesed story or two that would interest your age group (a parent from among the children is a possibility). Make sure that this guest knows:

- The definition of hesed being used in this module
- That they are being asked to specifically focus on needs in the community (those living alone who need a social connection, families that don't have enough money for food and who need groceries delivered, etc.).
- That they should provide examples how people (ideally, even children) have stepped up with an act of hesed.
- The time constraints of the session and some of the ways you have been working with Zoom.

#### FOR LAUNCHING AT-HOME LEARNING:

- Open on your computer (available on the *La-bri'ut* website)
  - Lower Elementary Box Instructions Video
  - Upper Elementary Challenge Video

#### **The session:**

##### **1) GREETINGS/CHECK-IN (3 min)**

Teacher's choice, though it would be helpful to ask children to share a hesed that they saw or did since the last session.

##### **2) REFLECTION/COMMUNITY-BUILDING (7 min)**

OPTION: Play a quick game of "Hesed - Imagine If..." with the group. Offer two scenarios such as these:

- Imagine if your parent got an important phone call at home just as they were getting ready to cook dinner. What might be a hesed you could do for them?
- Imagine if during the pandemic you were supposed to go to the Bat Mitzvah of a good family friend, but the ceremony gets changed from being in-person at the synagogue to live streaming. Your friend really wanted you to be there and now is leading a service from home. What might be a hesed you do for them?
- Imagine if you and your family are on a long drive and the car gets a flat tire. What might be a hesed you do for the adults in the car? [And no, you are not going to change the tire!]

And then offer this one:

- Imagine if you had spent 12 hours on a plane traveling to Israel. You are excited to finally have landed, but you are exhausted and a bit nervous about being in a country you have never seen before. What is a hesed someone might do for you? Okay, this is a set-up for having a little dance party while watching this video. It's the arrival of a Birthright Israel group after a very long flight and Israelis welcome them with song and dance! <https://tinyurl.com/y6d5nh97> (note that the dancing ends at around 2:40, but if children don't seem to enjoy the video, you could stop after 60 seconds, once they see the reaction of the travelers).

### 3) NEW CONTENT (15 min)

a) SETTING UP FOR THE GUEST – Today your children have the honor of hosting a guest, much like Abraham and Sarah did. Spend a little time having them consider how they can show both kindness and hesed toward this person when they are with the group. If children have some specific ideas, like making sure they introduce themselves to the guest, set up that opportunity in a way that the guest's time is preserved enough for their own sharing.

b) THE GUEST - Decide how best to structure this part of the session. After the guest speaks, help children reflect on what they heard. Consider using this structure, or another one that works for you.

“From what I heard ....”

“... I like \_\_\_\_\_”

or “... I appreciate \_\_\_\_\_”

“ ... I wonder \_\_\_\_\_”

or, “I have questions about \_\_\_\_\_”

“ ... I would like to \_\_\_\_\_”

Ask children what they learned from the guest that could be helpful to their own thinking about hesed? [Not just project ideas, but questions such as how important is it to the guest to do acts of hesed?]

c) QUESTIONS FOR THOUGHT

- i) What other kinds of needs do learners think are in their community?
- ii) What kinds of hesed activities did the conversation spark for them?
- iii) How might they do kindness for others?
- iv) How might they go above and beyond and use their personal energy for hesed?
- v) What kinds of hesed might they be able to take on?

### 4) LAUNCHING AT-HOME LEARNING (5 min, ideally in breakout rooms)

a) **Lower elementary** (those with the activity box) – This week, learners consider different ways hesed is needed in the world and how we (and our families!) can help fulfill those needs. In the box/kit this week, learners find a container, decorations and “hesed forms.” After decorating the hesed container, they look for ways to discover and do actions of hesed. Whenever they or

a family member sees hesed, they fill out a form, fold it and put it in the container. At the end of the week, the family can sit and review/read the forms. Learners post photos and an explanation on Flipgrid of where and when they and their family were able to use the forms.

- b) **Upper elementary** (those with the video challenge) – Share the video that introduces the third at-home challenge or ask learners to watch on their own at home. Then, using screen-share, introduce learners to Hesed Challenge Card #3.

Make sure the learners see and understand the challenge of the week: Choose one of three particular areas of need inspired by how we, humans, can partner with God as suggested in the *G'vurot* prayer (part of the *Amidah*)

- Support those who have fallen (not literally, but are going through a hard time)
- Heal the sick
- Help free those who do not have freedom

Teachers will want to confirm that the learners understand the 3 areas of need, and ask whether each child has one in mind to explore.

Then, learners watch the three videos on Challenge Card #3 that relate to their chosen opportunity to act as God's partner. Afterwards they think about the needs that were explained in the videos and some of the suggested solutions. Learners begin creating a seed packet that represents what solutions can be planted in the world. All their work this week needs to be saved for next week – there is a second step coming! Instructions, video links, and a seed packet example are on the Challenge Card.

#### FAMILY SCHMOOZE:

This week, children heard from someone who shared hesed work in the community, with a special focus on some of the needs, as well as solutions to address them.

Yes, it can be difficult for young children to get their hands into hesed work, but it is not impossible. Depending on your family's time and energy, you might be on the lookout for appropriate projects – through your synagogue, education program or community (e.g., Federation, which often has a volunteer network that extends to families with young children).

Sometimes hesed work is organized and communal, but it often is individual and one-on-one. Rabbi Danya Ruttenberg (you met her in last week's Family Schmooze) shares this wonderful story of her own family, and the power of lunchbox notes to inspire a true act of hesed by her young son. Check it out here: "How to Raise an Upstanding Child," with Rabbi Danya Ruttenberg: <https://tinyurl.com/y338skc6>.

**FOLLOW-UP DURING THE WEEK**

- Immediately after the session send upper elementary children and parents a link to the challenge video so they may watch it again AND send lower elementary parents a link to the box instructions video to share with their child.
- Send a check-in note to parents; include the Family Schmooze page (link is on the *La-bri'ut* website).
- Remind students to share their work on Flipgrid.
- Respond to children's postings.