



Addressing Tragedy Resources for Jewish Teen Philanthropy

Jewish teen philanthropists are in a unique position to have a direct impact in the aftermath of a tragedy. Teens may choose to direct their funding towards recovery efforts and/or consider incorporating crisis relief into their long-term mission and funding strategy. This document provides tips for effective grantmaking after a tragedy or crisis and links to educational materials.

Jewish Text: What is our obligation in a crisis?

Responding to a Tragedy

"Do not stand idly by the blood of your neighbor" - Leviticus 19:16

"Whoever saves one soul, it is as if he had saved a full world." - Sanhedrin 4:5

Discussion:

- What do you take away from each excerpt? What do you think they mean?
- How do you define someone as your neighbor?
- What are some actions, big and small, we can take to create a larger impact?

Emergency versus Ongoing Needs

"You are not obligated to complete a task, but nevertheless you are not free to leave it." - Pirkei Avot 2:20

"One day as Honi was walking along he saw a man planting a carob tree. Honi asked him, "How many years until it will bear fruit?" The man answered: "Not for seventy years." Honi asked him, "Do you really believe you'll live another seventy years?" The man answered: "I found this world provided with carob trees, and as my ancestors planted them for me, so I too plant them for my descendants." – Talmud Balvi Taanit 23a

"What is might? When you see people about to fall and rescue them."- Midrash Tehillim 52:24

Discussion:

- What do you take away from each excerpt? What do you think they mean?
- In thinking about the recent events how can we help right now? How can we help in the long-term?
- Even though we cannot see the final outcome, why is it important to contribute to the process?

Taking Care of Your Community

When the community is in trouble do not say, "I will go home and eat and drink and all will be well with me."...Rather, involve yourself in the community's distress as was demonstrated by Moses . . . In this way Moses said, "Since Israel is in trouble, I will share their burden." Anyone who shares a community's



distress will be rewarded and will witness the community's consolation." - Talmud Bavli Massekhet Ta'anit 11a

"The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in the land of Egypt." – Leviticus 19:34

"We owe a responsibility not only to those who are in Israel but also to those generations that are no more, to those millions who have died within our lifetime, to Jews all over the world, and to generations of Jews to come." – Golda Meir

Discussion:

- What do you take away from each excerpt? What do you think they mean?
- What is our responsibility to our wider community?
- What is our responsibility to the Jewish community?
- How can we use our experiences as Jews to combat injustices that we see in the world?

What are some different ways we can address a tragedy in our teen foundation?

Stick with the current mission statement, and consider if/how giving toward this tragedy may fall within the focus areas.

Re-evaluate the mission to specifically address crisis prevention and intervention.

Set aside a portion of the grantmaking pool, and continue with the process (and mission statement) they had begun with the rest of the grantmaking pool.

Please note: Be sensitive to the fact that now may not be the appropriate time to ask for proposals directly from those affected. Do research about coordinated efforts from organizations within the community.

Fundraise for and then allocate additional money (outside of the expected grantmaking pool for the year), using the skills learned in their teen foundation about responsible grantmaking. This could be an opportunity to channel money that your community is already prepared to donate towards the tragedy through your teen foundation, providing an educational opportunity for your teens.

Provide opportunities for volunteering, fundraising and social advocacy outside of the teen foundation's grantmaking process.

Continue with your teen foundation as planned, and encourage your teens to join any larger institutional initiatives or other local organizations in these efforts. Consider sending your teen foundation as a delegation, so that they can share the experience and then process together afterwards. If teens are able, add an extra session and organize a trip, letter-writing campaign, or volunteer project.

What should we be funding?

1. Fund organizations and programs that work to fight anti-Semitism, support religious freedom, uphold safety and support for communities provide council and medicinal need for those affected.



2. Remember, over time events will fade in our memory, but there will be a long-term impact; consider funding opportunities for the long-term health needs of the families and the long-term needs of the community.
3. Be willing to fund research or advocacy activities that result in policy change at the local, state, or national level. Funding research is often overlooked because it isn't always as exciting as funding immediate need. However, this is an area with great potential for ongoing impact. With it, we can learn and change behaviors based on credible evidence of need.

Tragedy and Crisis Intervention and Prevention Links:

[4 Ways to Talk to Teen after the Pittsburgh Shooting](#) from the Union of Reform Judaism

[Pittsburgh Shooting Reminds Us Why We Must Talk About Hate](#) from Teaching Tolerance

[Responding to Pittsburgh: How can we help students make sense of the Tree of Life synagogue shooting and a week of violence in the United States?](#) from Facing History

[Empowering Young People in the Aftermath of Hate](#) from the Anti-Defamation League

[Serving as an Educator at a Time of Loss, Pain and Grief](#) - eJewishPhilanthropy, Shuki Taylor

[Talking to Children about Events in Pittsburgh and Anti-Semitism](#), a resource by Robin H. Gurwitch, Ph.D. Professor Duke University Medical Center Center for Child and Family Health, Elana Newman, Ph.D. R. M. McFarlin Professor of Psychology, University of Tulsa Research Director, Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma Co-Director, Tulsa Institute of Trauma, Adversity, and Injustice, University of Tulsa, Gregory Leskin, Ph.D. Director, Military and Veteran Families UCLA National Center for Child Traumatic Stress