



The Aftermath and Recovery: Disaster Relief Philanthropy Resources for Jewish Teen Foundations

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

Jewish Text on Disaster and Crisis

Emergency versus Ongoing Needs

Commentary by M. Isserles to B. Ketubot 67b

In an emergency, the responsibility to sustain the poor rests on the individual. Over time, the responsibility shifts to rest on the community.

Discussion:

- Why do you think this commentator differentiates between ‘emergency’ and non-emergency needs?
- Do you agree with this thinking?

(Excerpt from Jewish Community Youth Foundation at the Jewish Family and Children's Services of Greater Mercer County Text Bank, August 2007)

Reactive Giving

Midrash Tehillim 52:24

“What is might? When you see people about to fall and rescue them.”

Giving after a Disaster

Orchot Chayim of the Rosh, Day 4, Number 68

“And if there is a disaster on your home give whatever you can, a little for the living, a little for the deceased, a little for the poor, a little for the rich.”

(Excerpt from <http://www.on1foot.org/text/orchot-chayim-rosh-day-4-number-68>, Translation by Rabbi Rachael Bregman. Edited for gender neutrality)



Disaster Relief Grantmaking Tips

1. Fund organizations and programs that work to make disaster-prone communities more resilient to future disasters.
2. Remember that while recovery isn't exciting it still must be funded; the long-term health of families and communities depend upon it.
3. Be willing to fund research or advocacy activities that result in policy change at the local, state, or national level. Research, like recovery, may not be exciting, but it remains an area for great potential impact. How can we learn and change behavior without it?
4. Remember that evacuation [is often critical during and immediately following a disaster], but returning people to their own lives, on their own terms, is just as important. Getting people home is critical to the functional health of the entire community.
5. Build Back Better means funding schools, parks, libraries, community centers, mixed-use housing communities, and everything in between.
6. Support issues that receive little attention and even less funding. For instance, mental health issues are critical to the recovery of any crisis. Consider even "off the grid" programs, such as those that are faith based, in addition to those that have a long reputation of serving communities outside of bureaucratic structure.

Source: "Hurricane Isaac: A Reminder of 12 Principles for Smart Giving" by Lori J. Bertman, Center for Disaster Philanthropy

The Center for Disaster Philanthropy:

[Basic Tips for Disaster Giving](#)

Specific Tips for Jewish Teen Foundations

Depending on where your teens are in the grantmaking process, they may want to...

1. Stick with their current mission statement, and consider if/how relief efforts may fall within their focus areas. The level of need in some issue areas may be even more significant now in communities trying to recover from the storm, ie. employment, health, mental health, homelessness, access to food and education.

2. Re-evaluate their mission to address disaster relief. In the coming weeks and months, more information about disaster relief efforts will become available. Your teens may want to reorient their grantmaking in order to support these efforts.

3. Set aside a portion of their grantmaking pool for relief, 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 organizations involved in disaster relief to fill out a grant proposal for a teen foundation; you may want to direct teens to organizations' websites in order to learn about their work.



4. **Fundraise for and then allocate additional money (outside of the expected grantmaking pool for the year), to disaster relief, 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 to hurricane relief through your teen foundation, providing an educational opportunity for your teens.

5. **Provide opportunities for volunteering and/or fundraising for relief outside of the teen foundation's 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.

Disaster Relief Curriculums:

Disaster Relief: Power, Generosity & Leadership

This lesson offers an experiential exercise to facilitate teens' understanding of what it means to experience a crisis and lose everything. The lesson will help them understand the needs that arise in the aftermath of a disaster.

Author: Learning to Give

Link: www.learningtogive.org/lessons/unit243/lesson1.html

Humanitarian Aid: Altruistic Jewish Value or Enlightened Jewish Self Interest?

These materials on humanitarian aid explore the Jewish obligation to help others. The texts take a closer look at the Jewish value *mipnei darchei shalom*, "to preserve peace" and examining the specific Jewish religious obligation to provide aid to non-Jew. The texts are very useable for teens with varied levels of Jewish knowledge.

Author: Mordechai Harris, On 1 Foot

Link: www.on1foot.org/content/humanitarian-aid-closer-look-mipnei-darchei-shalom

One Year Later: Partnering with Post- Earthquake Haiti - *Ki Tissa*

A collection of Jewish texts and discussion questions pertaining to crisis response and disaster relief. Many of the text also connect to general socioeconomic inequality, which are severely affected by natural disasters.

Author: On 1 Foot

Link: www.on1foot.org/sourcesheet/1-year-later-partnering-haiti-light-ki-tissa-31911

Hurricane Katrina: Community Responsibility and Tikkun Olam

This curriculum, created after Hurricane Katrina, focuses on empowering youth to repair the world. Although referencing Hurricane Katrina, this resource can be adjusted to fit with any specific disaster relief effort.

Author: Jewish Women's Association and Gail Chalew

Link: <https://jwa.org/teach/golearn/jan07/youth>