

Matan

B'nai Mitzvah Inclusion Guide

Mission & Vision

Mission

Matan **empowers Jewish community leaders** and educators through **training, coaching** and **consultations** to provide purposeful, enriching, and inclusive opportunities for **people with disabilities and their families.**

Vision

Matan envisions a world in which **all Jewish communities** are stronger and more vibrant because people with and without disabilities share **meaningful, inclusive experiences throughout every life stage.**



Values

Collective Strength

We believe all are created in the image of God; neurodivergence is part of the human experience and we want everyone to honor that. **Communities are only as strong and vibrant as their ability to include people who are often marginalized.**

Communal Responsibility

It is **every Jewish person's birthright** to experience their Judaism in ways they find fulfilling and meaningful, and we believe **it is everyone's job to hold community members and leaders accountable** for creating inclusive environments for all.

Conscious Intentionality

Community leaders and educators should be **thoughtful about how people with disabilities and their families will take part** in the programs and services available. Jewish organizations should intentionally provide **meaningful and accessible opportunities** for all members.

Collaborative Partnership

We believe that **Matan's vision can only be accomplished by partnering with other organizations who are similarly dedicated to a fully inclusive Jewish community.** By collaborating with others, we expand our impact and provide the most up-to-date practices with those we serve.



Overview of Units

- Relationship-Building: The Key to Success
- Teaching Trope & Hebrew to Diverse Learners
- Tackling the D'var Torah
- The Main Event
- Mitzvah Projects
- Case Studies
- Navigating the Big Day
- Technology, Virtual Learning & Additional Resources

Unit 1: Relationship-Building: The Key to Success



BIG IDEAS

Each family has their own unique goals for their child's b'nai mitzvah.

The process for achieving those goals is different for each family.

Every child is an individual with their own set of learning styles, needs and strengths.





Facilitating a Conversation

- Facilitate a conversation before beginning instruction.
- Set goals with the parents and student together.
- Set the goals verbally or write them down.



Questions for Parent/Guardian

1. What do you want your child to get out of this experience?
2. What is your reason for having this *bar/bat mitzvah*?
3. What do you want your family to get out of this experience?
4. How much of the service do you want your child to lead?
5. How many prayers do you want them to learn?
6. How many *aliyot* do you want them to read from the *Torah*?
7. Do you want them to give a *d'var Torah*?
8. Do you want your child to learn *trope*? Is it okay if they use a recording?
9. Do you want them to create a *mitzvah* project?
10. How independent do you want your child to be during the process?
11. Are there other members of your child's team that should be included in the planning (OT, speech therapist, psychologist, etc.)?
12. Do you have an image/vision for the day?

Questions for the Student


1. What do you want to get out of the experience?
2. What is your reason for having this *bar/bat mitzvah*?
3. How much are you, the student, capable and comfortable with leading?
4. What prayers do you already know?
5. Are you able to read Hebrew?
6. Are you interested in a *mitzvah* project?
7. Do you have an image/vision for the day?





Family Considerations

- What is the best way to communicate with the family?
- Who in the family is going to help the student stay accountable for practicing?
- Are the student's parents divorced or separated?
- Be aware of the family's financial considerations.




You and the student's parents are meeting to discuss how often the student needs to study, and how he can stay accountable. The student has poor executive functioning skills and will not be able to manage the schedule on his own. You suggest that the parents remind the student each day, but the parents stay late at work and will not be available to help in this way.

What ideas can you contribute to set the student up for success?

Family Case Study #1






Your student has a language-based learning disability. She attends a school where she receives language and social/emotional support. The *bat mitzvah* process is very overwhelming to her and feels like an extra burden on top of her academic pressures. The parents feel strongly that she should have a traditional *bat mitzvah*.

Family Case Study #2

How can you help this family be successful?





Your student has a disability and is not very aware of their own limitations. They have seen members of their community read from the *Torah* and lead prayers at their *b'nai mitzvah*, and this is their understanding of what a *b'nai mitzvah* is. The parents believe the student should have an adapted service, requiring them to learn fewer *aliyot* and prayers.

Family Case Study #3

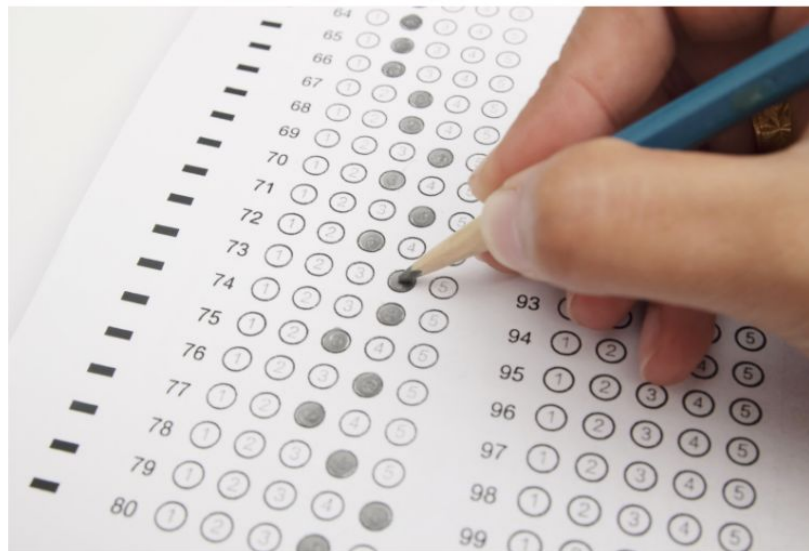
How can we ensure success for this family?



Learning Preferences & Strengths

- You are an individual!
- You learn in your own way.
- You have your own interests.
- You have your own unique way of operating in the world around you.

Let's dig deeper!



YOUR LEARNING PROFILE



Auditory Learners (if you answered mostly b's)

Characteristics

- Learn best by actively listening
- Often ingest information through audio or video clips or by discussing a topic
- Listening Intently
- Sometimes appear disrupted or uninterested in class
- Think in words, like wordplay and puns and love telling stories
- Memorize things easily, from dates and spelling words to trivia - one reason they know all the words to their favorite songs

Strategies

- Make a recording for the student to listen to
- Discuss the d'var torah together rather than reading/writing about it.

Resource:
<https://tutoringwithatwist.ca/vark-learning-styles/>

Visual Learners (if you answered mostly a's)

Characteristics

- Learn best through what they see
- Think in images and pictures
- Learn best using graphical ways to represent what they are studying

Strategies

- Use of color (highlighters, underlying, assorted color pens)
- Flashcards with visuals on them
- Symbols instead of words (i.e. positive = +)
- Draw and re-draw notes (i.e. diagrams, charts, concept maps)

Resource:
<https://tutoringwithatwist.ca/vark-learning-styles/>

Kinesthetic Learners (if you answered mostly c's)

Characteristics

- Learn best when physically active, or through learning activities that involve active participation
- Can be fidgety and not enjoy sitting still for extended periods of time
- Sometimes comes across as disruptive or uninterested

Strategies

- Relate the material to something you do outside of class
- Create!
- Pace, exercise, tap while studying

Resource:
<https://tutoringwithatwist.ca/vark-learning-styles/>

LEARNING STYLES CHEAT SHEET

Visual Learner

Learn by seeing and looking

Often close their eyes to visualize or remember something.

Like to see what they are doing.

Benefit from illustrations and presentations that use color.

Auditory Learner

Sit where they can hear but needn't pay attention to what is happening in front.

Hum or talk to themselves or others when bored.

Acquire knowledge by reading aloud.

Remember by verbalizing lessons to themselves.

Kinesthetic Learner

Need to be active and take frequent breaks.

Speak with their hands and with gestures.

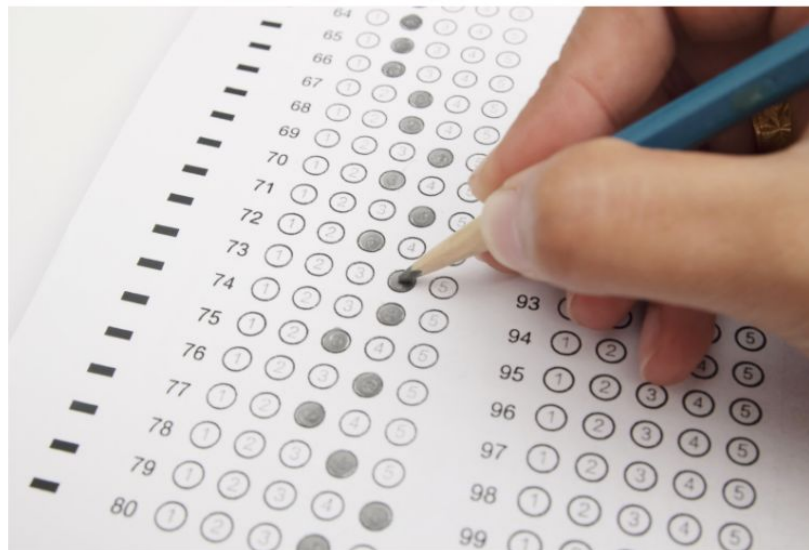
Remember what was done but having difficulty recalling what was said or seen.

Rely on what they can directly experience or perform.

Identify Your Student's Learning Preferences & Strengths

- Your student is an individual!
- Your student learns in their own way.
- Your student has their own interests.
- Your student has their own unique way of operating in the world around them.

Let's dig deeper!





TAKEAWAYS

Once you have this information about your students, how will it be most useful to you?



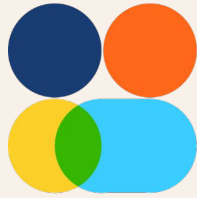
CREATE YOUR OWN GOALS

Using the information you have about your student, how are you going to best teach them?

Write down 3-4 strategies you are going to implement in the process.

Once you have more information, think about how that will inform your teaching.





Matan

**Reshaping Jewish
Communities Through
Disability Inclusion**