

Raising a Child to Be a Mensch: Jewish Parenting

A selected bibliography of materials culled from various resources by Jewish Community Library Los Angeles Children's Librarian Amy Muscoplat. January 2010.

Abramowitz, Yosef I. and Silverman, Susan, eds., Jewish Family and Life: Traditions, Holidays, and Values for Today's Parents and Children. Golden Books, 1997.

A user-friendly parent's guide which discusses various aspects of Jewish life and culture in order to help parents make Judaism relevant in their lives. The section on values emphasizes Jewish values in deeds of loving-kindness and acts of justice, respecting the human body, earth and nature and relationships to money and sexuality. First person narratives illustrate the values that are described.

Abramowitz, Yosef I., Editor. Beyond Scandal: The Parents' Guide to Sex, Lies, and Leadership. Newton, MA: Jewish Family Life Books, 1998.

Taking a positive approach to examining the recent troubles of President Clinton, this book encourages parents and educators to teach their children and students moral lessons. Short essays from educators, rabbis and psychologists, along with practical tips on how to put today's headlines into a *Jewish values context*, are included.

Abrams, Rabbi Judith Z. and Abrams, Dr. Steven A., Jewish Parenting: Rabbinic Insights. Jason Aronson, 1994.

This book is "intended for Jewish parents who want to connect with their religious tradition and the wisdom and insights of the Sages..." Topics covered include the history of pediatrics and Rabbinic medicine, conception and pregnancy, infant nutrition, developmental stages of childhood, adolescence, and the death of a child.

Adahan, Miriam. Raising Children to Care: A Jewish Guide to Childrearing. Jerusalem: Feldheim Publishers, Ltd., 1988.

The goal of this text is to help train parents and their children to become loving, self-disciplined and responsible. Using sources from the Bible and Talmud, the author weaves Jewish ethical teachings into the text as a guide for ethical behavior in modern family life.

Artson, Bradley Shavit. It's a Mitzvah: Step-by-Step to Jewish Living. West Orange, NJ: Behrman House, Inc., 1995.

Jewish rituals and values come alive in this engaging guide to Jewish practice. Each of the eighteen chapters represents a mitzvah, explains its significance and then lists concrete ways of putting the mitzvah into practice. The accompanying leader's guide includes family activity pages.

Bell, Roselyn. The Hadassah Magazine Jewish Parenting Book. Free Press, 1989.

Articles reprinted from the Hadassah Magazine monthly "Parenting" column offering "authoritative guidance in defining and transmitting the core values of Jewish life in a family context."

Blitz, Shmuel. Bedtime Stories of Jewish Values. New York: Mesorah Publications, 1998.

This book has a number of short stories, each with a moral taken from Jewish virtues. There are several here that apply: honesty, loyalty, judging others and forgiveness.

Boteach, Shmuley. Parenting with Fire: Lighting Up the Family with Passion and Inspiration. New American Library, 2006.

Boteach, Shmuley. Shalom in the Home: Smart Advice for a Peaceful Life. Meredith Books, 2007.

Advice from the TLC host of the show "Shalom in the Home."

Boteach, Shmuley. Ten Conversations You Need to Have with Your Children. Regan Books, 2006.

Brezak, Dov. Chinuch in Turbulent Times: Practical Strategies for Parents and Educators. Brooklyn, NY: Artsroll, 2002.

This book covers various religious aspects of parenting and child rearing.

Donin, Hayim Halevy. To Raise a Jewish Child: A Guide for Parents. New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, 1966.

A classic text for dealing with Jewish parenting issues from a modern Orthodox perspective. Includes a chapter entitled *The Basic Values of Judaism: What Kind of People Do We Want Our Children to Be?*, with sections entitled *To Love and Revere God, To Love Our Neighbor, To Respect Human Dignity*, etc.

Dosick, Wayne. Golden Rules: The Ten Ethical Values Parents Need to Teach Their Children. New York: Harper San Francisco, 1995.

"Wayne Dosick provides parents with the ten golden rules that teach their children respect, honesty, fairness, responsibility, compassion, gratitude, friendship, peace, maturity, and faith."

Epstein, David & Suzanne Stutman. Torah with Love: A Guide for Strengthening Jewish Values Within the Family. New York: Prentice-Hall Press, 1986.

An exciting and practical guide to family Torah study with emphasis on using the Torah text for teaching Jewish values. It includes suggestions for discussions at the family table, teaching and drama techniques and insights into analyzing the Biblical text. Useful for both the beginner and experienced *parent teacher*. A *teaching*, not *preaching*, approach to parenting is presented.

Falk, Sandy; Judson, Daniel. The Jewish Pregnancy Book. Jewish Lights, 2004.

Prayers and blessings for each stage of pregnancy; prenatal testing (what every Jewish person should know;); ethical issues and pregnancy-Jewish perspectives; breastfeeding in Jewish tradition; Aleph-Bet yoga for each stage of the pregnancy.

Finkelstein, Baruch; Finkelstein, Michal. B'Sha'ah Tovah: The Jewish Woman's Clinical and Halachic Guide to Pregnancy and Childbirth. Feldheim, 1993.

Diamant, Anita with Kushner, Karen, How to Be a Jewish Parent: a Practical Handbook for Family Life. Schocken Books, 2000.

"How to Be a Jewish Parent is a unique guide to Jewish family life. Both a parenting manual and a guide to Jewish customs and beliefs, this book combines contemporary developmental understanding of how children learn and grow, respect for traditional Jewish wisdom, faith in the vitality of the diverse constellations that comprise today's Jewish families, and a belief that you are the real expert about your own children."(xv)

Diamant, Anita. The New Jewish Baby Book. Summit Books, 1988.

Names, ceremonies, and customs: A guide for today's families.

Feuerman, Chaya; Feuerman, Simcha. Direction: Finding Your Way in Relationships, Parenting & Personal Growth. New York: L'Chaim Publications 2005.

This book tries to tackle the dilemmas of how to bring up children with the moral and structure our traditions has to offer, while at the same time making accommodations to their emotional needs.

Fuchs-Kreimer, Nancy. Parenting as A Spiritual Journey: Deepening Ordinary and Extraordinary Events into Sacred Occasions. Jewish Lights Publishing, 1996.

Book about how to foster spiritual growth in oneself as a parent.

Gordis, Daniel. Becoming a Jewish Parent: How to Explore Spirituality and Tradition with your Children. Three Rivers, 1999.

"An invaluable guide for parents who are interested in introducing Judaism into their homes so that their children can grow up loving, understanding, and cherishing their heritage."

Grishaver, Joel Lurie. 10 Things Which Tend to Turn Kids into Menschen. Los Angeles, CA: Torah Aura Productions, 1995.

A short pamphlet which includes a practical how-to model to help one live a life guided by Jewish values as expressed by the *midot tovot* (good qualities) of the *Musar* (Ethics) Movement. A list of the *midot tovot* is provided.

Horowitz, Yakov. Living & Parenting: A Down-to-Earth Guide. Artscoll, 2008.

Jungreis-Wolf, Slovie. Raising a Child with Soul: How Time-Tested Jewish Wisdom Can Shape Your Child's Character.

The daughter of Rebbetzin Esther Jungreis covers things from discipline to sibling rivalry, using pragmatic ideas from Torah teachings.

Kaplan, Dovid. Polishing Diamonds: Bringing out the Sparkle in Our Children. Hamodia Publishing, 2005.

Hands on guide to chinuch, based on Torah sources and understanding of human nature.

Kamin, Ben. Raising a Thoughtful Teenager: A Book of Answer and Values for Parents. New York: Penguin Books, 1996.

“In this warm and reassuring guide Rabbi Ben Kamin (the father of two teens himself) provides parents with careful, evenhanded, and practical information on talking with teenagers.”

Kurshan, Neil. Raising Your Child to be a Mensch. New York: Atheneum, 1987.

How to raise children to practice *decency, generosity, kindness and integrity* in an age of the *success ethic*. As a parent, the author shares his perspective about the priorities in Jewish family life.

Lipshitz, Gail Josephson. Practical Parenting: A Jewish Perspective. Hoboken, NJ: KTAV Publishing House, Inc., 1997.

“Taking a fresh approach to parenting, this book presents thoughtful insights and sound practical advice for parents of all faiths in today's world. Each of the 34 chapters explores a specific parenting issue.”

Mogel, Wendy, The Blessing of a Skinned Knee: Using Jewish Teachings to Raise Self-Reliant Children. Scribner, 2001.

“Dr. Mogel helps parents learn how to turn their children's worst traits into their greatest attributes. Starting with stories of everyday parenting problems and examining them through the lens of the Torah, the Talmud, and important Jewish teachings, *The Blessing of a Skinned Knee* shows parents how to teach children to honor their parents and to respect others, escape the danger of overvaluing children's need for self-expression so that their kids don't become “little attorneys,” accept that their children are both ordinary and unique, and treasure the power and holiness of the present moment.”

Orlowek, Noach. Raising Roses Among The Thorns: Bringing Up Spiritually Healthy Children in Today's Society. Nanuet, NY: Feldheim, 2002.

Orlowek covers various aspects involved in raising children, as well as relationship building between parents and children, moral education, etc.

Orlowek, Noach. My child, my disciple : a practical, Torah-based guide to effective discipline in the home. New York : Feldheim, 1993.

This book has a foreword by Simcha Wasserman, and was edited by Sarah Shapiro. It covers the discipline of children from a religious Jewish aspect, as well as information on child rearing from a Jewish perspective.

Orlowek, Noach. My disciple, my child : a practical, Torah-based guide to effective discipline in the classroom. New York : Feldheim, 1993.

This book has a foreword by Simcha Wasserman, and is in the same tradition as the above book. This includes information on Jewish religious education of children, classroom management, and good relationships between teachers and students.

Payne, Lauren Murphy. We Can Get Along: A Child's Book of Choices. Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing, Inc., 1997.

Focusing on how children have the power to make choices, this book guides young people in their relationships with friends. It stresses kindness, respect, tolerance and responsibility.

Pelcowitz, Raphaell; Pelcowitz, David. Balanced Parenting. Shaar Press, 2005.

A father and a son-a rabbi and a psychologist-examine love and limits in raising children.

Radcliffe, Sarah Chana. The Delicate Balance: Love and Authority in Torah Parenting. Targum/Feldheim 2009.

Offers parents practical and positive tools for parenting "The Torah Way."

Reuben, Steven Carr. Raising Jewish Children in a Contemporary World: The Modern Parent's Guide to Creating a Jewish Home. Rocklin, CA: Prima Publishing, 1992.

Written by a Reconstructionist rabbi, this is a guide for modern families who wish to raise their children with a positive Jewish self-image. It includes a chapter, *How to Raise Ethical Jewish Children*, which stresses these three basic Jewish ideas: 1. What Judaism really means by *holy*, 2. Charity versus *tzedakah* (righteousness) and 3. Love your neighbor as yourself.

Rosemarin, Rachel. Raisins and Almonds: Practical Advice for Sensitive Parenting. Feldheim, 2008.

Advice from a noted educator and parenting group leader, culled from her years of guiding mothers through the parenting process.

Rosenberg, Shelley Kapnek. Raising a Mensch: How to Bring Up Ethical Children in Today's World. Philadelphia, PA : The Jewish Publication Society, 2003.

A useful book for parents, imparting knowledge of middot and mitzvot in practical situations and through traditional tales.

Reuben, Rabbi Steven Carr, Raising Jewish Children in a Contemporary World: The Modern

Parent's Guide to Creating a Jewish Home. Prima, 1992.

How do nonobservant Jews raise their children to be and feel Jewish in today's assimilated environment? This question is one of growing importance to Jewish parents, many of whom feel culturally Jewish but not particularly religious. Rabbi Reuben gives guidelines in a seminal work designed to help parents caught in this confusing vortex.

Shapiro, Sarah. Growing with My Children: A Jewish Mother's Diary. C.I.S. 1990.

The life of a religious woman, mothering young children.

Twerski, Rabbi Abraham, and Dr. Ursula Schwartz, Positive Parenting. Mesorah, 1996.

Book on developing your child's potential from a Jewish perspective.

Young, Moshe. Apples from the Tree: Transitioning Torah Values to Our Children.

Lakewood, NJ: Israel Bookshop, 2002.

"These essays are a selection of articles which appeared originally in the Chinuch column of the Hamodia". They include articles on parenting, child rearing, chinuch, family, and different Jewish holidays, all from the perspective of how to transmit these things to Jewish children.

Wolbe, Rabbi Shlomo, Planting and Building: Raising a Jewish Child. Feldheim, 2000.

Culled from Rav Wolbe's lectures on educating children, this book emphasizes the importance of parents assuming full responsibility for the raising of each of their children, as well as the delicate balance needed between planting in a child the seeds of Torah values and behavior that will grow along with him, and externally guiding the child along the proper path.

Wolpe, David J., Teaching Your Children About G-d: A Modern Jewish Approach.

Harper Perennial, 1993.

Teaching Your Children About God is a book that reaches out to those who yearn to offer their children something more than mere material, who know that a good life and a good person derive as much from the growth of the spirit as from the world's more tangible gifts.

WEBSITES

<http://homeshuling.wordpress.com>

A Jewish parenting blog.

<http://modernjewishmom.com>

Parenting with a twist of tradition.

[http://www.ajula.edu/Media/pdf/WwLIFE\[unit7\].pdf](http://www.ajula.edu/Media/pdf/WwLIFE[unit7].pdf)

Jewish parenting chapter in Walking With Life, an American Jewish University online publication.

<http://creativejewishmom.com>

Experience the joy of creativity.

<http://imabima.blogspot.com>

Real-life Jewish parenting and living.

<http://www.parentstorah.com>

Spiritual lessons from parenthood

Also check out the Jewish mom subgroups on places like www.peachheadfamilies.com or la.citymommy.com!