



Ages and Stages

Submitted by Fran Weaver

Subject Area: Family Education

Target Age Group(s): Adults and Youths Together

Abstract

Parents and students work in parallel groups to decide just when different activities/responsibilities should happen chronologically in a person's life. This exercise integrates the text of Pirket Avot, and helps to infuse Jewish learning into family life. It fosters a realization that Jewish values and family values are interwoven, they do not stand on their own. This lesson has been used multiple times with multiple family education groups, i.e. adults and kids learning together in preparation for B'Nai Mitzvot.



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Materials Needed

- ❑ A copy of Pirket Avot Chapter 5/25 in English and Hebrew if available duplicated to cover population in class (optional).
- ❑ 2 copies each of privilege and responsibility cards - one set for the parent group, one set for the young people's group. (In multigenerational Family Education settings, the parents and students are each teachers and students to each other.)
- ❑ Markers and pens for people to use
- ❑ Post it/ sticky notes for labeling each card with an age

Procedure

1. Split up the parents and the students. Give one set of privilege/responsibility cards to each group.
2. Instruct the groups to go through the cards one by one and try to come up with a consensus for what age they think a person is ready to take on the responsibility/privilege on the card. (To do justice to this activity the groups need 20-30 minutes for their discussions to ensue.)
3. Each group needs a scribe to write the age on a post it note and stick it to the card.



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4. At the end of the time allotted, bring the groups together. Compare what each group decided on as the proper age for each card.
5. Debrief the activity.

Questions to consider

- How did each group make their decisions? Was it easy to come to a consensus within each group? Why or why not?
- Is there a difference as to whether your student is older or younger in the family?
- Why did we do this activity? How does this activity relate to our Jewish Family Life?
- Do you think this activity would be the same in another city, or country? What about the process, the conversation that ensued within your group? Do you think the process that happened resembled our sages of Talmud at all? Why or why not?



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Comments and Feedback

One of the results of this lesson is that parents and students get to compare how they feel about these things in a group setting that is non-confrontational and non-judgmental. Issues arise that parents can discuss with each other, their children, or in groups at a later date. Parents are learning and children are learning - *together*. They are placing high values on Jewish education and are mentoring their children, enriching themselves and their families.

Appendix to Ages and Stages

Privileges and Responsibility Cards:

Suggestions include: (These may change depending on the time, location, and population you are addressing.)

- Go to Kindergarten
- Walking to School on your Own
- Driving
- Take a City Bus
- Go to the Mall on Your Own



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- Go up to Eldora to Ski
- Go to College
- Get Married
- Open your own Checking Account
- Receive a Weekly Allowance
- Get your own Blockbuster Card
- Get your own Library Card
- Walk, Bike, or take the bus to school
- Call a friend by yourself to talk
- Do your own laundry
- Respond to e-mail and instant messenger
- Make your own school lunch
- Cross the street by yourself
- Ride your bike to school



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Other References/Bibliography:

- (Jewish Text) Pirket Avot: Chapter 5/25

An interview with Rachel Kessler, author of *The Soul of Education* And chairperson of the Board of Passageways Institute, Boulder, CO,

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