

HIAS B-Mitzvah Project Suggestions



Welcome the stranger.
Protect the refugee.

Mazal tov on your upcoming celebration! We are so glad that you would like to include HIAS in this special milestone in your life. There are several ways that you might consider shaping a mitzvah project that will allow you to become part of the movement of American Jews who are bringing awareness to the global refugee crisis and acting powerfully in support of the U.S. refugee resettlement program and on behalf of refugees around the world. Here are some suggestions for possible projects:

➤ ADVOCACY

Middle schoolers are some of the best advocates! HIAS is spearheading a major advocacy effort to mobilize the American Jewish community in support of refugees. This is the most powerful action the American Jewish community can take right now to ensure that our government takes a leadership role in responding to the growing crisis. Our advocacy opportunities are always changing, so please check out the [Take Action](#) page on our website or contact Russ Agdern, Grassroots Organizing and Advocacy Manager at russ.agdern@hias.org

Consider organizing an advocacy effort amongst your peers and their parents, your family, and your family friends to support the current petition. Organize a “petition drive” and try to gather as many signatures as possible. Set up an information table at a “high traffic” location (e.g., the school cafeteria or a local sporting event) and have tablets available for people to sign the petition online. Please note that minors and non-US citizens **can** sign HIAS petitions.

You could also organize an advocacy party for your classmates at school, at religious school, or for a small group of friends at your home to write letters and/or make phone calls to your Members of Congress using the links and information on our [Take Action](#) page.

Check out the [HIAS Resource Page](#) for various materials that will provide background information as you do your advocacy work. You may even want to print out some of the resources to have on hand.

➤ EDUCATION

Host a salon-style program at your synagogue for your fellow B’nai Mitzvah students or the students in other grades to educate them about the crisis and mobilize them to take action to support refugees. You can also consider doing the same at school or with your peers. Contact Rabbi Megan Doherty, Senior Educator, Community Engagement at megan.doherty@hias.org for a consultation on how to organize an education program

➤ TZEDAKAH

You might consider asking friends and family to donate money to HIAS to support refugees across the globe in honor of your celebration. You can set up an individual fundraising page on the HIAS website with personalized text, educating your guests about the refugee crisis and talking about why you care about this issue. If you are interested in setting up a donation page, please contact the Development Department at Development@HIAS.org.



NOTE: If you would like hard copies of the HIAS brochure to use as you do an advocacy, education, or tzedakah project, contact Andrea Gagne, Program Manager, Community Engagement, at Andrea.Gagne@HIAS.org.



Thank you again for thinking of HIAS during this special time in your and your family's life. We wish you all the best as you prepare for this major milestone, and we look forward to partnering with you to ensure the safety of some of the world's most vulnerable people.