

RAISING THE BAR 2010

Raising the Bar: Re-Imagine the B’nai Mitzvah Celebration

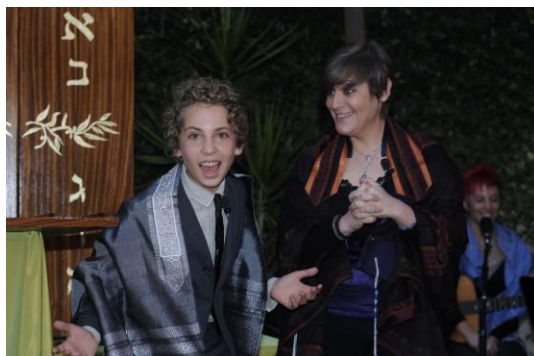
Based on four years of pilot programs with families in New York City, Los Angeles, Jerusalem and London, Storahtelling is proud to present Raising the Bar – serving the B’nai Mitzvah experience with an innovative, personalized program that re-imagines the process and product of the B’nai Mitzvah milestone. Storahtelling works with both unaffiliated and affiliated families, within and beyond traditional settings.

In 2010-2011 Raising the Bar offers three programs focusing on B’nai Mitzvah Education:

- Private Family Cohorts – New York, Los Angeles
- Synagogue Education Track – New York, San Francisco
- Train the B’nai Mitzvah Trainers Program – New York, Los Angeles, Israel

“The Storahtelling Bat Mitzvah was so unexpected and wonderful! I was expecting the usual and this was anything but. How nice it was to actually understand Torah and to not be bored to tears during the service! What an accomplishment it was that you connected us so naturally with our history. It felt so real, and tender, and creative, and deep, and moving.”

(Raising the Bar attendee, May 2007)



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- **Private Family Cohorts - NY, LA**

In October 2010 Storahtelling's Raising the Bar will launch two private families cohorts - in Tribeca, NYC and Silverlake, LA. The cohorts include families with B'nai Mitzvah celebrations in the next 2-3 years. This program provides a comprehensive structure for families that are not affiliated with a synagogue, providing each family with a unique and engaging B'nai Mitzvah process and celebration. Each family meets regularly with qualified Storahtelling personal trainers over a 12-18 month period, working together to craft the public B'nai Mitzvah celebration. Using Storahtelling's Maven Method™, a creative curriculum that fuses Judaic study and performance technique, the B'nai Mitzvah teens, their families and communities experience deeper engagement with the preparation, celebration and outcome of this central rite of passage.



Families work in small cohorts comprised of 8-12 families in selected urban areas. In addition to each family working independently with a personal trainer, the teens will meet regularly to engage in Jewish learning and shared coming of age experience, and the parents will meet monthly to explore their own process of Judaic learning and

coming of age as parents of teen age children.

Raising the Bar Private Families Cohorts include:

- Individual work with each family over a 12-18 months period prior to the B'nai Mitzvah event.
- Creative integration of family members into the B'nai Mitzvah event.
- Community cohorts (8-10 families in same area and age range meeting regularly to engage in joined preparation for the B'nai Mitzvah events).
- Focus on both Judaic and universal values
- Personal/Community Projects following the B'nai Mitzvah event (6-12 months).
- Storahtelling's facilitation of the B'nai Mitzvah Ritual Event (optional).

- **Synagogue Education Track – New York, San Francisco**

In October 2010 Raising the Bar will expand and be presented as additional curriculum for 5-6th graders and their families in several key congregations in the US. The Maven Method™ will be adapted to Congregational School settings and empower the students and their families to include some of Storahtelling’s unique methodology in their process of preparation for their B’nai Mitzvah ritual. Congregations currently include: Congregation B’nai Jesurun, Ha’bonim in New York City, Temple Rodeph Shalom in Marin County and Temple Ner Shalom in Sonoma County, San Francisco.

- **Train the B’nai Mitzvah Trainers Program – New York, Los Angeles, Israel**

To meet the growing demand for Storahtelling’s Raising the Bar program, we are planning to launch a training program for B’nai Mitzvah trainers, to instruct them on how best to integrate the Maven Method™ into their work with individual families, cohorts and communities. Currently, no training programs for B’nai Mitzvah tutors exist locally or nationally. Storahtelling is looking to expand this program in partnership with leading educational organizations. Pilot training programs will be held during August-September 2010 in Denver and New York City. A pilot project in Israel is due to launch in the fall of 2010.



Raising the Bar: Methodology

Raising the Bar enables B’nai Mitzvah students to develop and deliver a “maven” program during their Bar/Bat Mitzvah Torah Service, re-framing the learning process from memorization to interpretation and investigation of the relevance of Torah and Jewish values to their contemporary reality.

Storahtelling's Maven Method™, a creative curriculum that fuses Judaic study and performance technique

The program is designed to invite B'nai Mitzvah students and their families to make personal meaning of the narratives and rituals of this family celebration.

Storahtelling works with teens and families of all backgrounds and Judaic literacy levels to ensure that both prep/study process and the celebration of the event reflect the values, needs and priorities of each family, as families perform and share this most significant religious and cultural milestone.

Raising the Bar: Timeline

(12-18 months)

Step 1 – Introduction to high-level process and themes – Months 1 & 2

Step 2 – Exploration of Torah text and context – Months 3 & 4

Step 3 – Crafting personal perspective and 'big idea' – Months 5 & 6

Step 4 – Develop Translation and personal project – Months 7 & 8

Step 5 – focus on liturgy and ritual – Months 9 & 10

Step 6 – Rehearse and Review – Months 11 & 12

Step 7 – Celebrate!

Step 8 - Reflect – Post B'nai Mitzvah event, focus on personal/Community project (Months 13-18)

Raising the Bar: Highlights of Program

1. New Cohort Model

In order to enable RTB B'nai Mitzvah students and their families to engage with and learn from others participating in a similar process we plan to begin working in small local cohorts — teams of three to five families. Students and families will learn with personal trainers as well as with their

respective cohorts. This system will also be helpful towards reducing overall tuition costs per each family.

2. New Media

One of the key challenges facing modern education is the integration of social and digital media into classical methods of learning. RTB is working with experts and develop creative tools for enhanced learning and interaction between students, families and their communities - before and after the B'nai Mitzvah event.

3. Personal/Community Project

An integral part of the RTB process, each student will embark on a personal project, geared at social awareness, activism, and philanthropy. Linked directly to the specific Torah text each student will work on, and suited to individual interests and abilities, this project will be shared with cohort members and will be activated following the B'nai Mitzvah celebration.



Raising the Bar: Contact

For more information on Raising the Bar, contact our main office:

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