Branching Out: Expanding Your Reach Beyond the Library Walls

Librarians Jessica Fink, Sonia Kozlovsky, and Stacey Weinberg
Who We Are

Jessica Fink, Executive Director

Stacey Weinberg, Judaic Curriculum Specialist

Sonia Kozlovsky, Community Librarian
Who We Are

The Jewish Library of Baltimore is a new program of The Associated: Jewish Federation of Baltimore, superseding the former library of the Center for Jewish Education. The CJE Library was established in 1977 as an outgrowth of the Aaron H. Leibtag Resource Center for the Board of Jewish Education. The CJE Library and Resource Center received accreditation with the Association of Jewish Libraries as a community library in 2019. On July 1st 2022, the CJE was split into three separate agencies/programs of The Associated and with this transformation, the new Jewish Library of Baltimore became an independent entity. The Jewish Library of Baltimore is a dynamic hub for engagement and learning for children and adults, connecting the Baltimore community to a diverse collection of Jewish resources and programs.
Our Mission

The Jewish Library of Baltimore is a dynamic community hub for engagement and learning for children and adults. The Jewish Library of Baltimore connects the Baltimore community to a diverse collection of Jewish resources and programs.
Spreading the Word

Cultivating Community Partnerships
Which Organizations?

- Associated agencies
- Public libraries
- School libraries
- Synagogue libraries
- Nearby children’s activities
- Jewish organizations
  - JCC
  - Local funeral home
  - Leagues / groups
Book Club Partners
Outreach

• “In-kind” community partnerships
• Popular activities generate popular programs
• Flyers posted around the building and community
• Phone calls to directors / stakeholders
Recent Author Talks

Come to This Court and Cry

Author Talk with Linda Kinstler

Tuesday, March 21
7:00 – 8:30 PM
Jewish Library of Baltimore
5708 Park Heights Ave., 2nd Floor of the JCC

Join us for a special Author Talk with Linda Kinstler, who will discuss her latest book, Come to This Court and Cry: How the Holocaust Ends. An opportunity for conversation and Q&A will follow. This event is free to attend.

The Jewish Library of Baltimore
An agency of The Associated

Passover, Guest

The Passover Guest: Story Time with Author & Illustrator

Sunday, March 19
2:00 - 3:30 PM
Jewish Library of Baltimore
5708 Park Heights Ave., 2nd Floor of the JCC

In conjunction with The Association of Jewish Libraries Capital Area Chapter, we invite you to bring your children and join us as author Susan Kusel and illustrator Sean Rubin share and discuss their award-winning picture book, The Passover Guest.

This event is free to attend. Light snacks will be provided.

We welcome persons of all ages. For accessibility or accommodations, please contact eventmanagement@theassociated.org.

Susan Kusel & Sean Rubin
Reaching Out

• Directed emails
• Monthly newsletters
• Local calendars
• Individualized phone calls
• Regular publications (yours or others’)
• Word-of-mouth
• Business cards
...and Even More Ideas

- Book clubs
- Traveling collections
- Sets for check out
- Book talks
- Displays
  - Windows
  - Bulletin boards
  - Display cases
Staying in the Know

• Local newspapers
• Organizational mailing lists
• Professional journals
• Social media groups
• Listservs

2023 Summer Reading in the Press:


https://associated.org/jewishlibrary/summerreading/

https://jimoreliving.com/2023/05/24/make-the-most-of-your-summer-with-the-associated/
Summer Reading

Summer reading is a program to encourage children from the community to read the high-quality Jewish-themed books from our library.

Annual Participation Numbers:

- 2018 - 247 children
- 2019 - 629 children
- 2020 - 47 children (impacted by COVID)
- 2021 – 228 children

"Shalom Jessica! We are all back home and my girls wanted to know how can they receive their prize for completing the summer reading program? We used the ebooks and it was awesome! Thanks."
Getting Social

Facebook post 883 Views

Facebook post 191 Views

Instagram post re.: Banned Books Week reached 855 people
Mitzvah Mutts

• Reluctant or shy readers join us on the first Tuesday evening of every month to read to friendly, nonjudgmental dogs from Pets on Wheels

• 143 participants in first six months of FY23
Adult Programming

- Professional conferences
- Guest speaking
- Continuing education courses
- Book clubs
- Author visits
- Reading promotion
- Community collaboration
- Book lists
Focus Groups

In conjunction with the Associated, our Library will conduct a Focus Group to help us develop Adult Programming for JLB.

Objectives:

• Understand current Library usage
• Favorite Library programs and areas of improvements
• Identify resources that can't be accessed outside of the Library
• Pinpoint gaps in programming
"It was our privilege to come in and hear all that you have to offer, we are still in awe. You were prepared, engaging and so accommodating. We look forward to working with you and collaborating on future endeavors."

Ina, Dina, and Miri

- BT/Lower School’s Israeli/Hebrew Department during a Professional Development Day for their Teachers.
Community Members and Clergy

“When I am looking for source materials for my classes, I know that I can always turn to the CJE library. In addition to its terrific collection, the CJE library team have always been so eager to help. The Baltimore community is very lucky to have this invaluable resource in our community”

-Rabbi Mintz
Bringing In

Forming Relationships and Welcoming Visitors
Children & Family Programming

- Volunteering
- Summer Reading
- Mitzvah Mutts
- Class visits to JLB
- Book clubs
- Author visits
- Specialized activities
In addition to individual volunteers and interns, groups often come in to learn about the library and then assist us with various tasks.

Things to think about:
• Are there public service groups in your area?
• Are there organizations that pair volunteers with facilities?
Volunteers

- We reach out
- They reach out
- Multi-week, single volunteer
- Single visit, multi-person group
- Service hours
- “Library experience”
- Donation of time
- Learning about the library’s resources
Volunteers

- Displays
- Book repair
- Processing
- Shelf reading
- Event preparation
Summer Reading Program

Our Summer Reading Program is a fun and engaging way for kids to maintain their reading skills while exploring Jewish themes. The program features age-appropriate books that reflect a range of topics and encourages participants to read at their own pace and level. Participants earn prizes upon completing their reading.
School Visits

- We contact local administrators
- Informational
- Research-oriented
- Resources provided
- We plan in tandem with educators
- Multi-visit single-topic projects
Congregational School Programs

- Administrators often contact us
- Usually a single visit
- Enhancing curricular focus
- We plan the program based on educator input
- Multi-topic projects
- Informative
- They spread the word!
Continuing Professional Development

- Collaboration with JES & Other Organizations
- ECE Conference
- AJL Course
- Educator Consultations
- Presentations
- Collection Curation
- Membership in Professional Organizations
Out and About

Going into the Community and Sharing Resources
"Morah Sonia and Tzippy (the puppet) join us each week for storytime and movement. Morah Sonia brings books that are thematic and connect to what we are learning in the ECC. It enhances our overall experience in an engaging and thought-provoking way. The children keep asking if it is a "Morah Sonia" day!"

~ Tzippy Levin from OCA
Traveling Librarian – Tzipor Sipur

Morah Sonia visits schools and congregations in the area to share a love of reading and Judaism with the students.

Students have the opportunity to hear and borrow books from the Jewish Library of Baltimore.

Tzipor Sipur is a highlight of the week!

Using a Braille siddur and picture books, Ohr Chadash students learn about Jews with many different abilities.
Goals

• Outreach to Jewish schools that do not have libraries and/or librarians.
• Bring a library program which includes story time, age-appropriate movement and song, library skills.
• Outreach to teachers with resources and programming info. for JLB
Preparation

• Identify the schools which may fit the criteria.
• Find out the best contact person, usually the director.
• Make email contact.
• Follow up by phone.
• Arrange a meeting.
• Describe the benefits to the school.
Schedule

• Block of time in one school – Morning, Classes back-to-back, most with 5 minutes built in between.

• Dependent on whether the classes are held in each classroom or one space.

• 10 min for 2’s, 15 –20 for 3’s, 4’s
Familiarity and Content

• Mascot – puppet is the signature of the program.
• Name of the program Tzipor Sipur – Tzippy (emu) as mascot.
• Friends who join - Froggy and Fishes along with their special songs.
• Choose books related to Jewish holidays and Jewish values.
• Some just for fun
Book Choices

- Choose books with cadence, repetition, Jewish themes and values, opportunities for participation
- Vary content depending on the interests and maturity of the children.
- Show pictures
Extending the Lesson

- Use the opportunity to teach some library skills—fiction, non-fiction, author, title, etc.
- Have a story discussion.
- Immersion in the story looking at pictures after the story is read.
- Allow time for looking at books.
Measures of success

- Requests to hear the book again.
- Engagement in the story
- Verbal and visual excitement that Tzippy will return
Stop By and Check Us Out

5708 Park Heights Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21215
Jewish Community Center, 2nd floor

Visit us online at associated.org/jewishlibrary
QUESTIONS?