

CREATING WELCOMING JEWISH SPACES

A quick guide for Jewish groups wishing to create open & inclusive places for those who feel differently about the circumcision tradition.

1 SHOW AUDACIOUS HOSPITALITY

Make it your organization's official policy that circumcision status is never a barrier to inclusion. Whether it's Jewish education, summer camp, or synagogue involvement – all are welcome.



2 UPDATE YOUR WEBSITE

Consider having an explicit statement on your website that non-circumcising Jews are welcome. Many groups have statements of welcome for Jewish minorities. This could be a good place.



3 OFFER BRIT SHALOM

The "lifecycles" section on a synagogue or officiant website is a perfect place to say that brit shalom ceremonies are offered for families choosing not to circumcise.



4 YES TO BAR MITZVAH!

Is it your congregation's policy to allow intact boys to attend religious school and have a bar mitzvah? If so, don't forget to convey this welcome to those looking to get involved.



5 SHARE YOUR POLICY

Let your organization's leadership know your policies, as well as others having contact with prospective families. That way, when the issue comes up, they'll be sure to convey the welcome.



6 CONSIDER CURRICULUM

When teaching about brit milah in the Jewish classroom, keep in mind that some boys may not be circumcised. Think about inclusive ways of teaching that also mention brit shalom.



7 RESPECT BOUNDARIES

Discussion and debate are part of Jewish culture. It's fine to talk about circumcision, but never OK to body-shame or to pressure parents into circumcising.

