

Compiled by Ruth Nemzoff, EdD. ruthnemzoff.com

Ideas for increasing grandparent involvement:

- One model you could use is to create a grandparents' council. You would send to both parents and grandparents a notice of all the possible volunteer activities that could assist you. Sprinkle through that list, activities such as talking about the Lunar New Year or other cultural events — show families that you are actively looking to engage with multiple cultures!
- You could also, as trust is built, ask grandparents to volunteer whatever skills they have. For example, a carpenter might come in and help the kids build a sukkah, or a potter might help create *mezuzot*, etc. This is a way to make Judaism accessible and bring grandparents into the community!
- For *Grandparents' Day (or *Generations' Day) itself, one could talk about the Jewish calendar, asking grandparents to share a holiday from their tradition that is similar. For example, we could connect Rosh Hashanah with Eid or the Lunar New Year. You could also do an exercise where grandparents share their holiday memories, discussing similarities and differences. This exercise does not differentiate between Jewish families and ones of other backgrounds — no matter what, there will be similarities and differences between the generations.
- You could show your wares by taking some Jewish passages and having the grandparents and grandchildren discuss them. Stories work well here, as opposed to legalistic passages. Pirkei Avot also works well, as it has meaning without needing context. Alternatively, offer themed sessions around ideas like food, ethics, etc — this allows grandparents to bring in their own wisdom, regardless of it is religious in nature.
- Your wonderful Judaic Studies teachers can, I'm sure, come up with many more ideas! When trying to create inclusive programming, ideas they could meditate over include:
 - Everyone brings something valuable to the table
 - We are as curious about others as they are about us
 - Everyone can find common ground somewhere
 - Focus on the relationships between people, not their identities.
- You could also host grandparent-only learning sessions, either on Grandparents' Day (have them and the kids teach each other afterward!) or throughout the school year.

**Some schools have introduced other terms such as Generations' Day and allowed significant elders in a child's life to assume the role of a grandparent when none are present or available.*