

Jewish Bedtime Happens... Because You Make it Happen!

by Nina Gelman-Gans



This packet presents a variety of options for running a successful Jewish bedtime program. Offerings include A-Z tips to run a Jewish bedtime workshop, including directions to create a unique bedtime pillowcase.

Topic: Jewish bedtime and saying the Shema.

Target Audience: Preschool through adults.

Time Frame: 1-3 hours.

Staff: Depends on the number of participants. When parents participate, one staff person *can* run the program. However, it is useful to have some extra staff hands to run interference on supplies, questions, and glitches.

Goals:

1. Have all participants learn the Shema and other Jewish bedtime prayers appropriate to their age level.
2. Encourage families to incorporate the Shema into their bedtime ritual.
3. Explore other options for making bedtime Jewish.
4. Decorate and take home a personalized Shema pillowcase.

Preparation & Procedure:

- **4 Weeks ahead:** Order pillowcases, supplies, and remind families about upcoming program. Request family photos from participants for transferring to pillowcases. (Supply note—We can usually ship templates and goodies within a few days of receiving your order. You can also call us for guidance on appropriate materials for your group.)
- **2 Weeks ahead:** Wash pillowcases! If you are pre-tracing Shema letters, get started now! Affix family photos to pillowcases using digital photo files and iron-on photo transfer sheets. For a product explanation and details view www.shopping.hp.com and search for "iron-on transfer".
- **1 Week ahead:** Send home reminder flyer or e-mail.

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PLUS:

Ten pages of *Jewish Family Times*™ handouts

- Dear Nina
- Bedtime Rituals
- Jewish Angels
- Shema Meditation
- Jewish Bedtime Prayers
- Resource Review
- Nature-Oriented Bedtime

Add "Jewish" to Your Bedtime Rituals



Our readers have generously shared their bedtime rituals. Many of their suggestions are sprinkled throughout this packet. Here are questions to explore current bedtime rituals in your lives, and to contemplate some new options.

Questions to Ponder:

1. How can saying a prayer at bedtime help us feel better?
2. The Shechinah has many healing powers. How would you like her help?
3. What makes you feel safe at night?
4. Consider the quote below. What are the "stones" that help you each day?

A clan and a family resemble a heap of stones. One stone taken out of it, and the whole thing topples.

—Genesis Rabba

Is your household fighting scary monsters? Try these lively solutions!

★ *We do the oogie boogie dance to get rid of the boogie man.*

—Dayle Fligel, Hartsdale, NY

★ *We use a spray bottle containing "monster spray" to clear the room of monsters.*

—Vicky Hartner, Phoenix, AZ

What are your bedtime rituals?

What rituals would you like to adopt?

At a teen workshop, participants shared the following tactics for easing into sweet dreams.

- ★ Leave the door open.
- ★ Think good thoughts.
- ★ Take a bath.
- ★ Talk to a friend.
- ★ Change the scene.
- ★ Use a night light.
- ★ Remember a happy moment.
- ★ Count sheep.
- ★ Play music.
- ★ Read.