



5 Tips for Using the Hanukkah Discovery Kit in Your Community

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At the Jewish Grandparents Network, we are thrilled to provide you with resources and ideas for engaging the grandparents in your community — whether their grandchildren live close by or at a distance.

We are pleased to offer you the Holiday Discovery Kit series, created by Jewish educator and author Jonathan Shmidt Chapman — six interactive guides designed to help grandparents bring the Jewish holidays to life through play with their grandchildren.

Here are tips and suggestions for using and adapting the activities in the [Hanukkah Discovery Kit](https://jewishgrandparentsnetwork.org/hanukkah-discovery-kit/) (https://jewishgrandparentsnetwork.org/hanukkah-discovery-kit/). You can use them as part of a live program or share them with your community to explore at home.

1. Incorporate play-based activities into your in-person multigenerational Hanukkah programming this year.

Whether you are offering a community candle-lighting event or creating a family Hanukkah experience during a daytime program for grandparents and grandchildren, you can adapt activities from the kit to make your program more interactive and joyful for your participants.

Here's an example:

Invite participants use their creativity and imagination as they work together to design their own hanukkiyah out of a variety of materials. On page 11 of the Discovery Kit, you'll find an activity to help facilitate a family group challenge to build a unique menorah. Set out a variety of materials (tin foil, building blocks, newspaper) and invite participants to create a creative hanukkiyah-shaped sculpture. You can also adapt the activity to lead a "Human Menorah Challenge" in which you give groups a variety of materials (e.g. plastic cups, flashlights, foil) and invite them to create a hanukkiyah using the materials and their bodies as a group sculpture. If you have permission, take photos and share them with the group! is a perfect way to encourage both kids and grownups to play as part of a service or program.

2. Print and share activities from the kit with grandparents to use throughout the eight days of the holiday at home, whether in person or virtually.

You can print the entire kit, or select certain pages to give out to grandparents with instructions for how to bring Hanukkah to life at home with their grandchildren. In this way, they will have a tool to be ambassadors of Jewish discovery and fun in their families.

Here's an example:

Grandparents can explore the story of Hanukkah and bring it to life with their grandchildren using our adaptation of the story on page 4, followed by a template to play the story by making a Box Puppet Theater (pages 5–8). Grandparents can also play a game of “Dance the Dreidel” at home with their grandchildren as part of any night of Hanukkah (page 12).

3. Send a dedicated e-blast or social media post sharing the kit with grandparents who don't live near their grandchildren.

Grandparents who live far from their children and grandchildren may miss them even more than usual during the holiday season. You can share the kit, or specific activities, as a way for grandparents to connect with their grandchildren from afar. In addition to making all the grandparents in your community feel seen, you will also be able to expand the impact of your programming by including a wider network of families.

Here's an example:

On page 14 of the kit, we provide a “Grandparent Challenge” to bring joy to each of the eight nights of Hanukkah. We include a short activity for each night (*example*: “On the first night of Hanukkah, have a dance party and come up with some dance moves to ONE favorite song”) that you can do over a video call with grandchildren who live far away.

4. Create a latke-making contest for grandparents and grandchildren.

You can use the “Root Latke Vegetable Fry” activity (page 11) as inspiration for a family cooking event. Ask each family to bring a few root vegetables of their choice, and create an event around frying a variety of latke combinations out of different root vegetables. You can also lead a latke-making class over Zoom for families to participate in from their own kitchens, which may be more convenient if you don’t have a location to cook onsite. Consider having lively Hanukkah music playing as families work together (participants would be on mute).

5. Create a grandparent-grandchild play station in your lobby throughout the holiday.

You can set up a play-based self-guided activity station in your lobby for grandparents and grandchildren to drop in and explore Hanukkah in a hands-on way. You can use the Menorah Maker Challenge or the Hanukkah Story Box Puppet Theater as self-guided activities that you have available throughout the eight days of Hanukkah to encourage family play and exploration.

Whether you adapt these activities for in-person programs or give them to grandparents as a tool to use at home, we encourage you to think about how you can inspire connection and creativity between grandparents and their grandchildren this Hanukkah.



Download all six Holiday Discovery Kits

(<https://jewishgrandparentsnetwork.org/holiday-discovery-kits/>).

Please share your ideas and creative adaptations with us as well, so we can learn from the ways you engage your community. Contact Avery Markel, JGN’s Director of Community Engagement: avery@jewishgrandparentsnetwork.org

Happy Hanukkah!