

CHANUKAH

SUGGESTED PROGRAMS:

1. “Not Your Average Chanukah Party” – Bonfire – Latkes – Light:
In our time of the energy crisis we try to find alternative ways for light.
2. Chanukah Casino/Gelt Night including a Tzedakah Auction where all the money raised goes to a local organization.
(University of Virginia – Hillel’s Program Exchange)
3. From the Maccabees to the Israel Defense Force (IDF): Israel Advocacy
4. EIGHT DAYS, EIGHT WAYS → CASE It!



Beginning on the 25th of Kislev, Chanukah gives us an occasion to say, “*Nes gadol hayah sham* – A great miracle happened there.” Lighting an additional candle each night of Chanukah, we remember the miracle of the little flask of oil that lasted eight entire days. Somehow, the resource that was only supposed to burn for one day actually supplied energy for eight days. Though this miracle happened over 2000 years ago, it has relevance for contemporary issues of energy resources and conservation. In the face of dwindling resources and soaring energy prices, a constant challenge of modern life lies in finding a way to make products safer for the environment and more energy efficient. With the miracle of the Chanukah candles in the back of our minds, we can stop and think about our energy sources. Is it possible to create modern-day miracles by conserving our natural resources so that they, too, will last longer than we could predict?

Dedicate Ourselves

The word Chanukah means “dedication,” referring to the rededication of the Temple after the Jews defeated the Greeks in 165 BCE. Start off Chanukah by rededicating yourself to the conservation of natural resources. Encourage students at your Hillel and on your campus to develop good conservation habits. Emphasize the importance of conserving our resources, particularly with regard to light and energy, but also in other areas in the environment. At your Hillel’s first Chanukah celebration:

- Provide suggestions for actions that are easy yet make a difference:
Eight Days, Eight Ways (see CASE section on next page).
- Change the regular light bulbs to a compact fluorescent light bulbs at your house and at Hillel.
- Check if a local hardware store will sell fluorescent light bulbs to you at cost; have a campus campaign to encourage people to change the bulbs in their lamps.
- Have a candle-making workshop so students can create their own replacements for light bulbs (but always remind them about residence hall regulations for burning candles!).
- If possible, try to do your program by candlelight to emphasize the importance of conserving energy.

Issue: Energy Conservation

CASE It: Eight Days, Eight Ways

Celebrate Chanukah – save some energy. At your Hillel Chanukah party or while tabling on the quad, encourage people to change their ways regarding energy conservation.

Community partners:

- Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life (COEJL) (www.coejl.org)
- Sierra Student Coalition (www.ssc.org)
- School of Natural Resources
- Office of the President

Advocate/Awareness:

Here are some actions you can do to create awareness about energy:

- 1) Use compact fluorescent light bulbs, which use much less energy than conventional bulbs while providing high quality light.
- 2) Use cooler water temperature to wash clothes.
- 3) Remember to turn off lights when leaving a room.
- 4) Check for drafts around your window in your dorm room or in your apartment, then call the necessary people to fix it – you will save energy!
- 5) Buy rechargeable batteries whenever possible.
- 6) Look for the ENERGY STAR label on products (see www.energystar.gov).
- 7) Turn on the ENERGY STAR power saver feature on your computer.
- 8) Disconnect unnecessary or unused equipment.

Service:

- Invite local Jewish children to the activity to join in the candle-making and festivities.
- Collect money to donate energy-efficient light bulbs to your Hillel and local organizations.
- Crafts at an after-school program (see activity under Educate- *Try This*).

Educate:

- Did you know?
 - ◆ The Chanukah candles are for publicizing the miracle of Chanukah, rather than for practical use. *Think about how you can be the shamash (the candle that is separated and helps light the other candles during the nights of Chanukah) and publicize the importance of energy conservation.*
- Quotable quotes:
 - ◆ God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the

darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, a first day.
-Genesis 1:3-5

→ *What does light mean to us, and why is energy important to us?*

- ◆ A light for one is a light for a hundred. –*B. Talmud, Sabbath, 122a*
→ *One person can have a large impact on a community. What are you doing to “enlighten” others about the issues that matter to you?*
- ◆ When Adam [the first human] noticed that the days were getting shorter, he said: "Is the world becoming darker because of my sins? Will it soon return to its unformed state, and this is the mortality that the heavens have levied upon me?" For eight days he prayed and fasted. When the period of Tevet [the month after Kislev] arrived and he saw that the days were now growing longer, he realized: "This is the way of the world." Adam then made eight days of celebration. –*B. Talmud, Avoda Zora, 8a*
→ *Are we powerless when we are in the dark about issues?*

- Try This:

- ◆ Latkes are potato pancakes fried in oil. At your Chanukah party this year, put a new twist on this traditional snack item by using leftover potatoes to construct potato lamps. Complete instructions and a list of supplies can be found on www.skillsandcraft.co.za/pote.htm. Turn this activity into a service project by inviting local children to take part in your science experiment!

Resources:

COEJL: www.coejl.org

Department of Energy: www.doe.gov

Center for Environmental Citizenship: www.envirocitizen.org

Student Environment Action Coalition: www.seac.org