



Jewish Learning Venture™

Proudly offering



ALL ARE WELCOME

Becoming A Congregation Of Open Doors

Each of us can make our synagogue a more welcoming place to newcomers, visitors, and people with disabilities.

- If you see a child having a difficult behavior moment, *offer the parent a friendly smile*, a sympathetic nod, or an offer to help.
- Offer to help someone who may be having trouble accessing the entrance to your congregation. *Be proactive* in holding doors, making room in your pew, offering an arm, or carrying something.
- Not all disabilities are “visible.” If you see a person exhibiting atypical behavior, understand that it might be a sign of a disability. *Embrace the person* as being created *Btzelem Elohim*--in the Divine image.
- If you see someone who is disheveled or out of sorts, consider that he or she may be experiencing issues related to mental illness, substance abuse, or a behavior disorder. *Act with hesed, loving-kindness*.
- Some people with attention and sensory issues may find it hard to sit through services. Young children may also need to move around. *Practice acceptance and understanding* of their need to move or get up and down during services.
- For everyone new to a synagogue, *a warm welcome is appreciated*. Be sure to seek out people who are sitting by themselves at services or following services and offer “Shabbat Shalom” or simply “Nice to meet you.”
- Remember that a warm smile, nod, or *small kindness can make all the difference for any of us*.

*"For my house shall be a house of prayer for all people."
(Isaiah 56:5)*

For more information and resources on disability inclusion, please visit:
<http://bit.ly/synagogueinclusion>

Presented in collaboration with the Jewish Special Needs Consortium which includes:

