



ONCE UPON A SHABBOS

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A bear keeps taking the honey needed for the Shabbos kugel (noodle pudding), until Grandma learns he is lost and invites the bear to come to dinner.

A fundamental Jewish value is that of hospitality. The classic role models for *hachnasat orchim* are Abraham and Sarah, our Biblical ancestors. When guests arrived at their tent, the couple warmly welcomed the visitors and made them feel comfortable. Though the “guest” in *Once Upon A Shabbos* is a burly, thunderous bear, the story provides the basis for a cheerful exploration with your children about hospitality and the benefits it brings to all involved. The behavior of the bear also presents a great opening to explore the fact that people may seem gruff, but that this can be a way of dealing with loneliness or uncertainty.

Together with your children, be watchful for those in your community who would benefit from being welcomed into your home. This might be a senior in your community, a child new to the neighborhood, or an acquaintance who has recently experienced disappointment or loss. Discuss with your children the fact that all people need others in order to live well and thrive, and that we can all help by being welcoming.

MA'AKHIL RE'EVIM

Another central Jewish value is that of feeding the hungry, *ma'akhil re'evim*. Even those who are poor are instructed to give to others; there is almost always someone in greater need.

The organized Jewish community often links opportunities to feed the hungry with specific Jewish holidays, for example, food drive at *Yom Kippur*. Call your local synagogue or Jewish Federation to get information necessary to become involved.

FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION

L'dor v'dor (literally, “from generation to generation”) refers to relationships between the generations. While the phrase includes the responsibility of elders to educate youth in the ways of Judaism, it also implies the special loving bonds that exist between elders and the young. The characters in this book are a worthy example of intergenerational connectedness.

Once Upon A Shabbos provides an opportunity for children to consider how to express gratitude to their grandparents and other elders. Your children might make a picture or dictate words for a card. All grandparents, faraway or nearby, enjoy getting mail from youngsters, and a phone call from a grandchild can make their day an exceptional one.

THE YIDDISH LANGUAGE

In this book, the grandmother and grandfather are referred to by the Yiddish terms *Bubbe* and *Zayde*. Yiddish is a Germanic language with Hebrew influence, written with the Hebrew alphabet. It became the basis of secular Jewish culture in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Today the language is experiencing resurgence, being taught at a growing number of college campuses.

Different ethnic, religious and linguistic groups refer to grandparents by a wide assortment of names. Have your children ask friends, relatives, teachers, etc. what they call their grandparents. Create a list, and see how many different names you can include in it. Pj