



SADIE AND THE BIG MOUNTAIN

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When her preschool plans a Shavuot hike, Sadie is afraid she won't be able to make it to the top of the "mountain" and tries to think of ways to avoid the walk. When the day arrives, it's much different (and better!) than Sadie presumed.

Shavuot is celebrated on the 6th day of the Hebrew month of *Sivan*, which occurs in late May or early June. This holiday is the culmination of a seven-week period which begins on Passover and concludes on *Shavuot*: on Passover the Israelites were freed from Egyptian slavery; on *Shavuot* the people were given the gift of the Torah, signifying their readiness to become a nation.

MOSES AND THE ISRAELITES

Moses led a 40-year journey that took the Israelites from Egyptian slavery to freedom in the Promised Land. While your little ones might not understand the concept of "leader," share with them that parents, teachers, and rabbis—all mentioned in this book—are people whose job it is to help children learn and grow, and to protect them and explain things when they are uncertain or frightened.

Consider sharing with your little ones a time when you were a child and, like Sadie, were anxious. How did you handle your feelings? Who did you talk to and who helped you?

USING THIS BOOK AT HOME

Using the book's illustrations, help your children compare Sadie's school to their own school or playgroup. What about

this setting indicates that it's Jewish? What activities look attractive to your child? What parts of the book show that it's a happy place to be?

Sharing this book can lead to a family discussion about the adults your child should feel comfortable approaching. Young children need to know that they can go to a teacher, rabbi, police officer or medical professional for help. Even in closely-knit families, children need to be reminded that they can always confide in their parents.

Sadie and the Big Mountain offers an opportunity for children to think about moving toward a goal. As you climb an appropriate-sized hill, talk about what it feels like to start, be in the middle of, and end a journey. Is it exciting to begin? What happens if you get tired? Is it ever scary? How do you feel when you reach your goal? PJ

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