

## Yom Kippur

### Making promises:

#### Talking about promises with children

Talking about promises is a simple way to introduce young children to the challenging themes of Yom Kippur. We can all relate to promises – promises that we made to others and promises that others have made to us.

“Mom, Billy promised he would give me his ball if I cleared his dishes.”

“Please, God, help my grandma get better. I promise I’ll listen to my parents if she gets well.”

“If you let me stay on the computer longer this time, I promise – promise – promise I’ll never ask to do it again.”

When promises are left unfulfilled, we feel badly.

When we do not live up to our promises to God, God forgives us. At Yom Kippur, we say “I’m sorry,” and we make plans to try harder. What can we do better this year? What do we need to work on this year?

“I can work at getting along with my sister better this year.”

“I can make sure to help someone who is struggling.”

“I can ask the new boy down the street if he wants to play with us.”

This is the path to forgiveness from God.

Seeking forgiveness from our friends and family is often more difficult than asking forgiveness from God. Our promises are not always easy to carry out. No one is a first-time listener every single time! We are not always good at sharing. Sometimes, we do not play nicely with our brothers and sisters.

Yom Kippur is the time of year to say “I’m sorry” to our friends and family, too. We can ask their forgiveness for anything we said or did that hurt them. We can also tell them how important they are to us and how much we care about them.



Not only do we ask for forgiveness on Yom Kippur, it is also our duty to forgive others. Sometimes, this is even more difficult than asking someone to forgive you. Forgive your brother for breaking your favorite doll. Forgive your friend for saying mean things about you. Forgive yourself for not behaving the way Mom and Dad asked you to at the family reunion.

Making and keeping promises is an important theme during the holiday of Yom Kippur. It is one of the first steps in the process of learning to empathize with others, of accepting responsibility for our actions, and always working to improve our lives. Spend some time talking about promises with your children – what it means to keep a promise, what it means to break a promise, and what it means to say, “I’m sorry.”

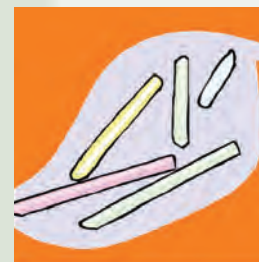
#### Yom Kippur playlist

The Learning Shuk has prepared a Yom Kippur playlist for your learning pleasure. You will find several great, online resources that will help your children explore the various themes of this Day of Repentance. [bit.ly/13ZcJWT](http://bit.ly/13ZcJWT)

### Activities for children to learn about keeping promises

#### Keeping promises star

A simple craft can be used as a keepsake for kids to remember promises they wish to keep. Give each child five Popsicle sticks. Provide children with crayons and have them color each stick. Have children write promises they would like to keep on



the end of each stick like, “I promise to make good grades in school.” Have children glue the middle of the sticks together on top of each other to form a star shape. Let the star dry. Tell children to share their promises with the other children.

#### Make a promises book

Kids can refer to their own book to help them keep their promises. Provide each child with several pieces of construction paper and crayons. Have children brainstorm to think of promises they would like to keep. They must write a promise on each page and draw a corresponding picture. Staple the pages together and have them write, “[Child’s name]’s Book of Promises” on the front cover. Once a promise is fulfilled, they can check it off in their book.



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