



RUDERMAN SYNAGOGUE INCLUSION PROJECT



INCLUSIVE SYNAGOGUES: GETTING STARTED

Each congregation approaches inclusion efforts differently and there are many successful paths that can lead to a welcoming, fully involved congregation. Many synagogues start by offering a range of activities designed to build awareness and interest. Others establish a working group with ties to the Board of Directors to work on mission and vision statements, and then move to creating activities.

If your congregation would like more information or resources on how to develop your inclusion goals and plans, RSIP can help. To learn more about what we offer, including consultations and potential grant funding, contact Molly Silver at MollyS@cjp.org or at 617-457-8862. For online resources, visit cjp.org/rsip.

Communication Guidelines

Regardless of how you start, make sure to communicate your efforts consistently. You will reach more people while also sending the message that inclusion is a typical, ongoing part of your community activities.

We recommend that you:

- Publicize each activity prominently on congregation websites, bulletins and flyers
- Report each activity in your newsletter. If there are no writers among your volunteers, provide a template so that reports are created through a 'fill in the blanks' formula
- Print a list of available accommodations (large print siddurim, head sets, ASL interpretation) on your website and bulletins
- Write a monthly column about inclusion for your newsletter. Answer common questions about disability in a FAQ style and use material from other inclusion websites and blogs that allow material to be reprinted
- Invite others to suggest ideas and activities and to periodically join you in your work

Ideas for Inclusion Activities

- Host a disability awareness workshop or special Shabbat service or Kiddush
- Use signs and your website to indicate the accessibility of your synagogue building
- Ask potential new members about their accessibility needs in your new member informational forms



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- Learn about Jewish Disability Awareness & Inclusion Month (JDAIM), host an event and help publicize what other congregations are doing
- Complete the Synagogue Inventory (available at cjp.org/rsip)
- Ask members with disabilities and their families about their experiences and encourage them to be a part of this work