

# Through Their Eyes - Original Project Documents

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## THROUGH THEIR EYES

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### **Project Need**

The window of opportunity to personally involve Holocaust survivors in the Holocaust education process is closing rapidly; now is the time to leverage the survivors' relationship with the second generation while they are still with us. Therefore, we are seeking funds for *Through their Eyes*, a program that involves the second generation and or others who knew the survivor in the telling of their parents' or friend's survival stories.

Just as each survivor's story is unique, so are the many ways their stories impact their children's lives. The hatred, prejudice and apathy that each survivor endured during the Holocaust forged a legacy that is embodied in the lives of the second generation and in their children. This legacy is a valuable lesson for the rest of humankind. This project teaches and encourages the second generation to continue telling the survivor stories of their parents, including the historical background and their personal observations and viewpoints, thus continuing the legacy into the future.

The world must know the total scope of the impact of the Holocaust from generation to generation. Only through education and testimony can we hope to prevent future generations from enduring such horrific tragedy.

This program has served as the example for educators across the nation facing the same problem: how do we successfully continue telling the stories of survivors to students and members of the community? *Through Their Eyes* ensures the survivors' testimonies are not forgotten.

### **About the Program**

*Through Their Eyes* began as a project of Holocaust Museum Houston in 2008. Previously recorded oral testimonies from survivors were edited to an appropriate length for classroom use, approximately 25 minutes. In addition to showing the edited oral histories, second generation participants, who received training, traveled to classrooms around Houston to provide the historical context in conjunction with the survivors' testimonies.

This presentation has a significant impact on students—particularly those in middle and high school, as they are learning about the Holocaust for the first time, just as many of the second generation participants were this same age when they first learned of their parents' experiences. This program is also made available to universities and community organizations interested in viewing a survivor's testimony and hearing the historical aspect and personal commentary from a second generation participant.

Holocaust survivors' adult children are regularly visiting classrooms to tell their and their parents' stories. Since the survivors themselves will not be able to share with students in person for many more years, *Through Their Eyes* is necessary to preserve this important time in history.

Your support will enable us to continue this important journey for the second generation—a journey of reflection, remembrance and reaffirmation of the enduring quality of the human spirit—and for today's students. With your help we will teach the world's children how to be proactive against hatred, prejudice and apathy.

### **Project Goals**

1. *Through Their Eyes* will positively affect the lives of the students viewing the second generation testimonies. Students will be in a position to empathize with and find points of connection with survivors and second generation participants.
2. Holocaust studies in schools will be strengthened by the oral testimonies we provide
3. The history of the Holocaust survivors conversing with their adult children will be preserved for the next generation.

### **Evaluation**

The effectiveness and relevance of the Second Generation Legacy program will be tracked with an evaluation form provided with each testimony sent to schools who participate. These evaluations will ask students and teachers to comment specifically on the content and effects of the testimonies by Holocaust survivors and second generation participants. The evaluations will then be reviewed by project personnel and all comments taken into consideration to ensure the program is effective.

### **Populations Served**

*Through Their Eyes* will benefit middle and high school students across the nation, who will view the testimonies of Holocaust survivors and their adult children during a Holocaust education unit at their school. The effect of real people telling their story will be a remarkable moment for many of these students. In many situations, this will be the first time these students have been confronted with true racism, hate, apathy and discrimination. These students will take what they viewed with them throughout their lives. The powerful effect of these testimonies will influence their decision making processes for years to come.

### **Conclusion**

Our children and those who follow must understand the rights, privileges, and importance of living harmoniously in a diverse society. *Through Their Eyes* will continue to inform generations to come about the atrocities of the Holocaust so they can learn the damage of apathy and the importance of individual responsibility. Your support will ensure that we can continue to provide students with an environment that fosters mutual respect, dignity and understanding.