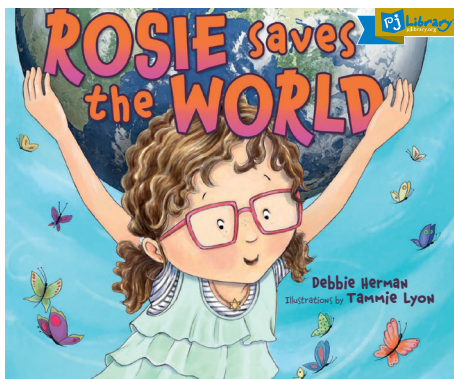


## BIG QUESTION

What does it mean to be responsible to someone?



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Published by Kar-Ben Publishing



Responsibility to others - *A-rey-vut* - ערבות



## READ

the book for Jewish values

### How does this book reflect the theme of taking action in the community?

Young children enjoy demonstrating responsibility in a myriad of ways as they learn to take care of their bodies, participate in household chores, and feel good about helping others. In *Rosie Saves the World*, a little girl enthusiastically helps people in her community and then realizes that she has neglected some of her responsibilities at home. This story helps children understand that a responsible person must **balance helping others with helping their family**.

#### Three aspects of this value to consider:

- Being a responsible member of a community implies a duty to help others.
- Responsibility can go beyond your community to help people around the world.
- It is important to balance what you do for others and what you need to do for yourself and your family.

Caring for others in their times of need, whether or not we know them, is an overarching concept in Jewish life. The word *areyvut*, responsibility to others, comes from the word *areyvim* in the teaching “*kol Yisrael areyvim zeh ba’zeh*” (Babylonian Talmud, Shevuot 39a), which translates to “all of Israel [all people] are responsible for one another.” Talmudic rabbis vigorously debated the meaning and extent of our responsibility towards others. Are we responsible for errors that people make, or is our responsibility only in making certain that others’ basic needs are met? Even though it is overwhelming to think about such large responsibilities, Judaism teaches that each of us must eagerly reach out to support one another. A famous saying and popular song from *Pirkei Avot* (2:21) teaches: “*Lo alecha hamlacha ligmor... you are not required to complete the task, but neither can you refrain from it.*”

#### Storytelling techniques

1. (*Materials needed: cans of food, school supplies, a musical instrument, pet toys, and baby items*) Place the gathered materials in different areas of your classroom. As you read about Sophie’s tikkun olam projects, have students find the related items and either bring them back to where you are reading the story or continue to read the story from their location.
2. Rosie’s “off to save the world” attitude may remind your students of superheroes. Each time Rosie sets off to save the world in a new way, encourage students to strike a superhero pose or sing a short tune together that sounds like a superhero theme song.



# DISCUSS

Jewish values with one another

## After you read

Rosie is eager to help people in her community. Who does she try to help? How does she do this?

Who are people or groups in our community who might need help? How might our class help them?

Sometimes we help others through collecting donations, such as clothes or food. Other times we help those in need by working directly with them, such as by playing games at a senior center or serving food at a soup kitchen. How are these types of help similar, and how are they different? Which way of helping do you enjoy the most? Which does Rosie enjoy the most? How do you know?



# IMAGINE

how values will come to life

## Who's helping you?

Play a categories/sing-down type of game, dividing the class into two teams: Home and Community.

Name a type of need (e.g., food, clothing, caring for the very young or old, caring for the sick).

Have teams alternate, each time listing one way to meet this need at home or in the community.

Give a point for each idea. (Older students might identify the categories themselves through discussing *Birkat Hashachar*, the Morning Blessings.)

## It's all about balance

Create a hanging mobile that exemplifies the balance of helping others and taking care of ourselves.

Provide newspapers and magazines or paper and markers.

Have children clip or draw photos showing people helping others and helping themselves.

Review content ahead of time to avoid disturbing images, or pre-clip photographs for them for a Shabbat-friendly activity.

Give children the materials to hang the clippings as a mobile, such as hangers, yarn, wire, clothes pins, etc.

The goal is not only to display photos in an interesting way, but to make sure the mobile is balanced.



# ENGAGE FAMILIES

in conversations about values

Invite local heroes (firefighters, police officers, teachers, community leaders, people who head nonprofits or community projects, etc.) into your school to talk with students and their families about their work and the role it plays in building your community. Thank them by hosting a festive meal celebrating their work.

## MORE ON THIS TOPIC

### PJ LIBRARY BOOKS

*What Zeesie Saw on Delancey Street*  
by Elsa Okon Rael

*How Dalia Put a Big Yellow Comforter Inside a Small Blue Box* by Linda Heller