

# Summer Fun Checklist

Courtesy of The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington

What's Jewish about summer? Anything can be! It's an opportunity to connect with your family and make time to be together. Try some of these ideas this season!

## Come Together As a Community

- Eat a frozen treat or healthy summer salad with friends. Visit [bit.ly/cookwithPJLibrary](http://bit.ly/cookwithPJLibrary) for recipes.
- Make a cheesecake for Shavuot on June 11-13. Get recipes on [JewishFoodExperience.com](http://JewishFoodExperience.com).
- Watch a movie, concert or show outdoors.
- Hang a flag for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July.
- Celebrate Tu B'Av, the Jewish holiday of love, on August 19.
- Host a block party.
- Root for your favorite local team.



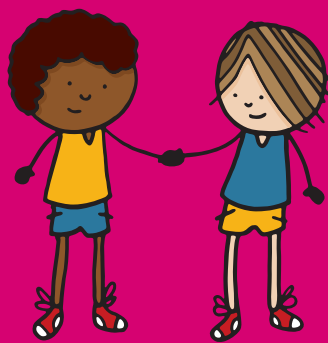
## Appreciate Nature

- Plant seeds to grow veggies or herbs for soup.
- Plant a garden that is bee-friendly.
- Visit the animals at your local sanctuary or zoo.
- Pick up any trash you see when on a nature walk.
- Explore your local parks.
- Go berry picking and make something delicious with them.



## Do Good

- Open a lemonade stand and donate the money to a favorite charity.
- Volunteer as a family. Get ideas at [bit.ly/DoGoodIdeas](http://bit.ly/DoGoodIdeas).
- If you see a child on the playground who is playing on their own, invite them to play with you.
- Start a conversation about inclusion. At the beach or at the park, notice what has been done (or can be done) to make spaces accessible to people with disabilities.
- Take care of your body: use sunscreen, bug spray, helmets and other safety devices.
- When buying Back 2 School supplies, collect extra to donate to children in need.
- Make sure that there's no standing water near your home to breed mosquitoes.
- On Tisha B'Av, August 14, think about how we treat each other.



## Spend Time Together

- Go on a scavenger hunt for five things you haven't seen since last summer.
- Read a PJ Library book outside.
- Hit the "pause" button on screens for a designated amount of time together.
- Go swimming together.
- Make fresh fruit popsicles.



## Create a Sense of Wonder

- Ooh and aah while watching fireworks together.
- Stand at the edge of the ocean or a river and appreciate its gifts.
- Pick a bouquet of flowers for your Shabbat table.
- Capture the moments in pictures and in words, including reactions and thoughts.
- Watch one sunrise and one sunset.
- Say the *Shehecheyanu* prayer when doing something for the first time.
- Try a new food.



Get more information on these ideas at:  
[PJLibrary.org/Beyond-Books/PJBlog/](http://PJLibrary.org/Beyond-Books/PJBlog/)

Turn over this page for the "back story" on the Jewish values.

# The “Back Story” on the PJ Library Summer Fun Checklist

Judaism values many things, but one of the highest is valuing time as sacred. While this can mean marking the holidays yearly and Shabbat weekly, it can also mean carving out time as a family that is sacred—without the interruptions of work, school, electronics and other distractions. Summer can be a great time to relax and “reJEWvenate” as a family.

Here are explanations for some of the other Jewish values encouraged in the activities on the front.

**B'yachad** (“inclusion”): fully including children with disabilities in play, both physically and socially, improves all children’s social and communication skills, and self-esteem. It also helps children increase their comfort level with differences, acceptance of and respect for others.

**Beriyut** (“protecting your health”): “We have an obligation to protect the general health of oneself and one’s society.” —Maimonides, rabbi, philosopher & physician

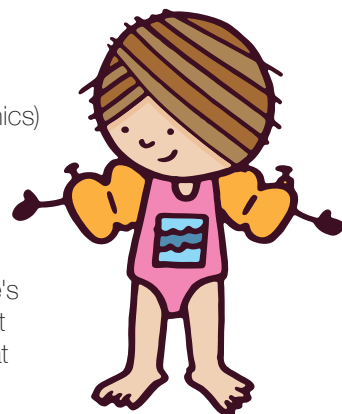
**Hineni** (“being present”): We live up to our potential when we answer the call to serve with a willingness to be “present” and when we are concerned with people’s need for personal growth, human comfort and human interaction.

**Shehecheyanu**: This blessing gives thanks to God for enabling us to experience a new or special occasion. “*Bah-rukhh ah-tah Ah-do-nai El-o-hay-nu meh-lekh ha’o-lam sheh-hekh-ye-anu, v’key-ye-mah-nu, v’hig-ee-yah-nu lah-z-man hah-zeh,*” which means “Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who has given us life, sustained us, and allowed us to reach this day.”

**Shomrei Adama** (“caring for the environment”): In Judaism, environmentalism focuses on human beings as having responsibilities to the earth and to animals, including *bal tashchit* (“not wasting resources in nature”).



**Swimming**: One of the obligations of parents in the *Talmud* (rabbinic discussions on Jewish laws and ethics) is to “teach your child to swim.” This can be literal as well as figurative—i.e. how to swim in life, sometimes against the currents.



**Ta’am Hachayim** (“appreciating life’s many flavors”): The *Talmud* says that when a person faces their Creator at the end of their days, they will be asked, “Did you taste all the fruits of my creation?” *Ta’am Hachayim* is an Israeli phrase meaning “taste of life,” signifying the pleasure to be had in enjoying different foods.

**Tikkun Olam** (“repairing the world”): This value is a way of describing the work that each person must do to make the world more just, fair and kind.

**Tisha B’Av**: This is an annual, solemn day that commemorates many Jewish tragedies, including the destruction of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Temples. Rabbinic commentary points to the social ill of “baseless hatred” that caused social strife and led to the destruction of Jerusalem. In the spirit of *tikkun* (“repair”), many today use this day to highlight the challenge of, and solutions to, bullying and destructive relationships.

**Tu B’Av**: This Jewish-Hebrew day of love is particularly popular in modern-day Israel, though its roots go back to ancient times.

**Tza’ar Ba’alei Chayim** (“being sensitive to animals’ needs”): This phrase is the strict prohibition from causing unnecessary pain to animals and to see to their needs first.



**Tzedakah**: Commonly translated as “charity,” its root is *zedek*, or “justice.” The aim of *tzedakah* is to bring justice or balance.