

Avi the Ambulance to the Rescue!

written by
Claudia Carlson

illustrated by
CB Decker

Why is saving a life so important?

Life Above All Else

What rule is so important you can even break other rules to follow it? It's *pikuach nefesh*, Hebrew for "saving a life." This *mitzvah* ("commandment") is so deeply valued that following it takes precedence over other Jewish laws. The Talmud (the core collection of rabbinic writings) says, "If you save a life, it is as if you saved the entire world" (Sanhedrin 37a). All people are unique worlds unto themselves, full of beautiful abilities, strengths, and potential. In this story, Avi and his friends take the job of *pikuach nefesh* very seriously, knowing the difference they are making in the world.

It Takes Two

Avi and Zack work together as a team — neither one can do their whole job without the other. Without Avi, Zack wouldn't be able to quickly reach people needing help or transport medical supplies. Without Zack, Avi wouldn't be able to give care to injured people. In real life, doctors, nurses, paramedics, EMTs, and others in the business of saving lives work together to care for people — it's too important a job to do alone. This idea goes way, way back: "Two are better than one... If they fall, one can help the other" (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10). When you work with others who share your mindset and mission, you can accomplish big things. (And as Avi finds, working with a friend makes things more fun, too.) To learn more visit pjlibrary.org/avirescue.

Call 101!

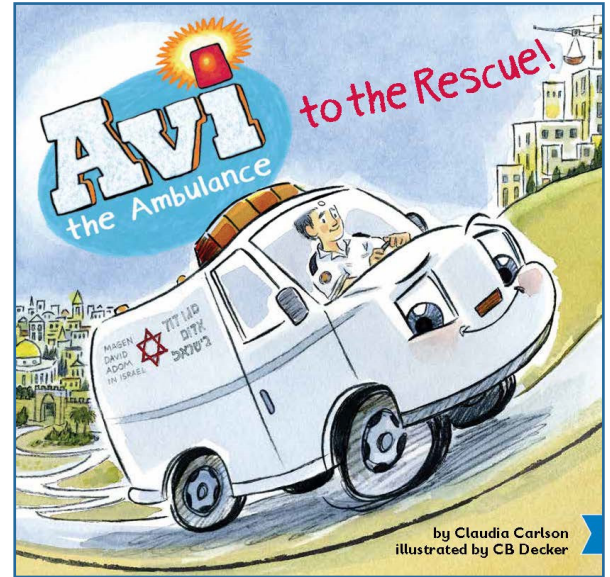
That's right — in Israel, 101 is the number to call for Magen David Adom ("Red Star of David"). MDA is Israel's national ambulance, blood services, and disaster relief organization. The symbol of the red star is known to all and is always a welcome sight when there is trouble. Teenagers sometimes volunteer to work with the MDA Overseas Volunteer Program, which gives young adults from across the globe a chance to learn and work on Israeli ambulance crews. For a small, young nation that faces many challenges, the mission and values represented by the red star of the MDA are a source of great pride.

TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR KIDS

If a friend or family members get hurt, what can you do to help them?

When does your family work together as a team to get things done? How do you take care of each other?

Can you draw Avi's symbol (a six-pointed red star)?



HANDS ON!

Make a Travel First-Aid Kit



A first-aid kit is important for every family to have. Keep one in your car, too — you never know when or where you'll need it. Kids can help put one together.

Supplies

Shoebox

Basic medical supplies —

Band-Aids, first-aid ointment, bandages, ice packs, pain relievers, etc.

Markers or crayons



You may have most of the medical supplies you need in your medicine cabinet, or you can make a family trip to the drugstore. Arrange the items in your shoebox. Kids can decorate the outside with markers or crayons (red Jewish stars could be a good choice!). Keep the kit in the trunk of your car where it can be easily grabbed on the go.