

Holocaust Legacy Partners

Dedicated to Preserving the Personal Memories of the Holocaust.



The Holocaust Center, Boston North Inc.

holocaustcenterbn.org

It is with gratitude that we welcome you as
a **Holocaust Legacy Partner.**

As a guardian of the Holocaust, you have
accepted the responsibility to ensure that the world
remembers the survivors and the victims of the
Holocaust.

Due to the inevitability of human mortality, there will
be a time when there are no more survivors. You will
represent their memory by providing first hand
eyewitness testimony to current and to future
generations.

As part of this project you will:

1. **Sign** the letter of agreement and return it to The Holocaust Center, Boston North (HCBN)
(see appendix A).
2. **Be paired** with a Holocaust survivor.
3. **Contact** your survivor and arrange for a mutually convenient time and place to meet, preferably at your survivor's home. This meeting should take place **after** you have completed your research as outlined in steps 4, 5 & 6.
4. **Receive** from the HCBN a DVD that your survivor has created, detailing his/her experience, that you will use for your presentations.
5. **Preview** any additional available audio-visuals about your survivor/and or his/her history (i.e. ghetto, camps), take notes, and compile a list of questions to ask your survivor when you meet.
6. **Research** the history of your survivor's country and Holocaust experience.
7. **Meet** with your Holocaust survivor.
8. **Organize** all the information from your research and your meeting with your survivor.
9. **Invite** a friend or representative from the Center to accompany you on your first few presentations for feedback.
10. **Schedule** your presentation.
11. **Prepare** for your presentation.
12. **Give** your presentation as often as possible, preferably several times a year.
13. **Pass** on this project to a Holocaust Legacy Partner from the next generation and share your survivor's materials and your own experience with him/her.

This is not the end....

Just the beginning.

By participating in
the Holocaust Legacy Partners' project,
you are making an indelible impact on history,
ensuring that the Holocaust becomes
a legacy for today and the future
helping to "repair the world".

We must remember the past
to understand the present
so that there will be a future.

Thank You!

Suggestions for Holocaust Legacy Partners

1. **Research:**

Create a glossary of terms.

Copy maps about countries, cities, camps, etc.

2. **Tools:**

Consider creating a visual board of pictures, maps, documents, and a time line.

3. **Meeting with your survivor:**

Do not expect or request a full testimony. By this time you should be very comfortable with the survivor's experience.

Try to establish a level of mutual trust and a good ongoing working relationship.

Refer to your questions to fill in unknowns.

Possible topics for questions when appropriate:

Family life before and after the Holocaust

Antisemitism before and during the Holocaust (see appendix B)

Tattoo (see appendix section B)

DP (Displaced persons) camps (see appendix section B)

Faith and religion (see appendix section B)

Forgiveness (see appendix section B)

Coming to America

Occupation and/or education

Family, children, and grandchildren etc.

Message they might give current and future generations

Request artifacts and photos. The HCBN will cover the cost of replication.

Take a picture of yourself with your survivor.

4. Presentations

Length of presentation should probably be between 45 – 60+ minutes.

Introduce yourself to your audience. You might include information about The Holocaust Center, the Holocaust Legacy Partners Project, its importance, and why you chose to be part of it. State that you have been entrusted by your survivor (give name) to represent his/her memory and legacy.

Explain what you will be doing (DVD, questions and answers etc.) .

Relate briefly the positives of the time you spent with your survivor.

Depending on what is on your presentation DVD, give general information about the survivor.

Include any relevant info that may not be included on the DVD i.e., If the survivor does not speak about life before the Holocaust, you might. You might consider speaking about your survivor's life before the Holocaust if she/he does not.

After playing the DVD, ask for questions. Be prepared to add any relevant information about the survivor that does not appear on the DVD such as DP camps, family today, occupation etc.

At some point in your presentation, it is important that you speak about the lessons of the Holocaust. This can be done during your introduction, closing remarks or both.

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Holocaust Legacy Partners

Letter of Agreement

I, _____, on this day of _____ pledge to represent the memories and legacy of Holocaust survivor, _____, to my generation and the next no less than twice each year.

I hereby promise to make every effort to speak with students, groups and individuals, whenever the opportunity arises, to ensure that _____ personal history and the Holocaust live on in perpetuity. I have been entrusted with this sacred responsibility by _____ who has empowered me to speak on their behalf.

By my commitment to the Holocaust Legacy Partners Project, the Holocaust will never become just another page in a text book.

In accordance with this agreement, I have fulfilled the following obligations:

I have met with _____.

I have been entrusted by _____ to speak on her/his behalf.

I have received and previewed audio-visual material on _____ and have seen or been given relevant artifacts.

I have thoroughly researched this history to better understand _____'s experience and to prepare me to answer questions.

I have received _____'s approval that my knowledge of her/his experience is accurate, complete, and honest.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Witness: _____

Date: _____

General Information

Antisemitism:

Antisemitism is defined as opposition to and hatred of Jews

Blaming the Victim:

Too often the victim of a crime is accused of doing something to cause the crime. The Jews of Europe during the Holocaust years were patriotic and moral people. They were not criminals.

Bullying:

The Holocaust began with name-calling by Hitler and his 7 followers. One cannot but wonder how history may have been different had enough good people spoken up and stopped them before the name-calling progressed to intimidation and ultimately the systematic murder of millions. When unchecked, bullying can lead to violence.

DP Camps:

After the war, displaced persons camps were set up to house the survivors of the Holocaust who became stateless.

Faith and Religion:

Survivors are often asked if they have retained their religious identity and faith during and after the war. Some did. Others did not. (See Forgiveness below)

Forgiveness:

Each religion has its own doctrine regarding forgiveness and reconciliation. It is important to understand your survivor's perspective as you will be representing him/her.

"Only the victims who perished could forgive...." (Elie Wiesel)

The Forgotten Genocide:

The Armenian Genocide was the first genocide of the 20th century. When asked how he expected to successfully mass murder of millions of Jews, Hitler was thought to have responded, "Who today remembers the Armenian Genocide?" implying that the world did not care about the Armenians (who were slaughtered by the Turks beginning in 1915), so why would the world care about the Jews.

Genocide:

From the Greek, *genos* (race) and the Latin *caedes* (killing), the word genocide (race murder) was first introduced by Raphael Lemkin in 1933. Today, it is generally applied to the murder of human beings by reason of their belonging to a specific racial, ethnic, or religious group, unrelated to any individual crime. In 1948, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a convention for the prevention of genocide and the punishment of the perpetrators.

Guilt:

"Guilt is numbing; Responsibility is moral." (Father Robert Bullock) We do not blame Germans and others born after the Holocaust for what happened, but hold them responsible to ensure that this history is not repeated.

The Holocaust :

With a lower case h, holocaust means complete destruction by fire. With a capital H, the term refers to the planned annihilation of the Jewish people by Germany and the Nazis between 1933 and 1945. Gypsies, Jehovah's witnesses, political dissidents, homosexuals etc. were also persecuted during these years, but the term Holocaust applies specifically to the systematic killing of the Jews.

Holocaust Deniers:

Though most of the crimes were documented by the killers, there are still those who claim that the Holocaust was a fabrication. They are called historical distortionists. Most of the crimes were documented by the killers.

No Place to Go:

Between 1933-1945, Germany and its allies imprisoned and murdered the Jewish people in Nazi occupied Europe, in ghettos, in slave labor camps, and in death camps in what was called the "final solution to the Jewish problem". The free world had strict immigration quotas and would not allow the Jews in. "The world was made up of two kinds of countries...those that would not let the Jews out and those that would not let the Jews in." (Sonia Schreiber Weitz)

Race:

The term refers to the concept of dividing people into populations or groups on the basis of various sets of characteristics. The most widely used human racial categories are based on visible traits (especially skin color, cranial, or facial features and hair texture) and self-identification. The Jews are people, not a race.

Resistance:

There was both active and passive resistance in every ghetto and concentration camp. Most camps had underground resistance, even in Auschwitz. Those who participated in active resistance were often found and killed. The Nazis did not document their failures. Two examples of passive resistance are: just staying alive and helping others.

Stereotypes :

Stereotypes are based on lies and generalizations. For example, the Third Reich stated that Jews were racially inferior and would destroy civilization if allowed to live. Beyond the obvious lies, Jews are not a race because they have representation in every ethnic and racial group. If you tell a lie often enough, people tend to believe it. Eliminate ethnic jokes. "If you are not part of the solution, you are part of the problem." (Lenny Zakim)

Swastika:

The swastika is a symbol representing hatred and the murder of the Jewish people. But had Germany won WWII and carried out their plan for world domination, every minority, race, and ethnic group other than the "Aryans" would be eliminated by using the same methods of extermination as against the Jews.
(see appendix I for origin of)

Tattoo:

The Nazis used tattoos to further dehumanize the victims. Not all Holocaust survivors have them as they were only done in certain camps depending on the circumstances.

Victims, Victimizers and Bystander:

"We dream about a world without victims, without victimizers, and above all, without bystanders."
(Sonia Schreiber Weitz)

What we can do to prevent Genocide?

Be informed about world crises

Write/email to the President and other US and world leaders

Attend/organize rallies

Raise money

Make a difference in your own community

Set an example with your own behavior

Do not be a bystander

Relate the past to the present and what we can do to prevent current and stop future genocides.

TEACHER AND CHILD

Chaim Ginott

On the first day of the new school year, all of the teachers in one private school received the following note from their principal:

Dear Teacher,

I am a survivor of a concentration camp.

My eyes saw what no man should witness:

Gas chambers built by learned engineers;

Children poisoned by educated physicians;

Infants killed by trained nurses;

Women and babies shot and burned by high school and college graduates.

So I am suspicious of education.

My request is: Help your students become human. Your efforts must never produce learned monsters, skilled psychopaths, educated Eichmans.

Reading, writing, arithmetic are important only if they serve to make our children more humane.

FYLFOT

A fylfot is a cross with equal arms, the ends of which are bent backward, **counterclockwise**.

The extensions of the arms of the cross are rudiments of the circle which originally surrounded the cross in the fylfot's earliest manifestations as a symbol of the sun. This design is one of the earliest known symbols to have been made by humans and one of the most widespread among primitive peoples. It is found on all continents except Australia and is the symbol of all sun-gods from Apollo and Odin to Quetzalcoatl. It still survives as a religious symbol in India among the Buddhists and Jains, in China and Japan, and among the Indian tribes of North America that continue the practice of aboriginal religion and medicine. The fylfot is the ancestor of many decorative motifs from the classic Greek meander to more elaborate forms.

SWASTIKA

The most recent European use as a symbol was the German *hakenkruz* or swastika, the emblem of antisemitism since 1918 and established as the national symbol of Nazi Germany under Adolf Hitler. The arms of the Nazi swastika, however, bend **clockwise**.

WHY STUDY ABOUT THE HOLOCAUST?

Lessons for the 21st Century

People often ask why study about the Holocaust. What is the value of education on the Holocaust? Enough is enough. Sure it was a terrible tragedy, but it happened a long time ago. Besides, what can be accomplished by stirring up those unpleasant memories? Guilt? If you are one of those people who may have thought, "Why Holocaust?" please read on.

For many years, people did try to forget about the Holocaust, and they were successful. Most history texts summed up this period in one sentence, "During World War II, six million Jews died." Parents avoided telling their children about the Holocaust in an effort to shield them from the pain of their past. Almost an entire generation grew up knowing nothing about these years. Not until Gerald Green's novel was made into a movie for television in 1978 did the world, including many Jews, become conscious that this unimaginable tragedy really happened. Perhaps time was needed to put the history in the right perspective and to view it with objectivity. That time certainly has passed.

Why should the Holocaust be remembered you may still be asking. For Jews, the Holocaust is an indelible part of their history. It is better to face the reality as part of their heritage than of their destiny. To forget the six million would be the same as saying they never existed.

The Holocaust should be remembered and studied by everyone. A report from the Carnegie Foundation concluded that the study of the Holocaust is a crucial part of American history and must be incorporated into all education.

The Holocaust was not and is not just a Jewish issue. It was a crime against all humanity committed against the Jewish people. The Holocaust was carried out by people calling themselves Christians in a Christian world, by both victimizers and bystanders. There are many places to lay blame and guilt, but that would be fruitless. Instead, it is necessary to examine the events and circumstances of this modern period in an attempt to at least try to prevent history from repeating itself.

There are people today who deny that the Holocaust happened. PhDs from prestigious institutions erroneously claim that the Holocaust was Zionist propaganda to arouse public empathy for the rebirth of a Jewish homeland. Gas chambers are explained away as showers, crematoria as ovens to bake bread for the war-torn German people.

One of the first lessons of the Holocaust is that if a lie is told often enough, people will start believing it. The big lie that the Jews were racially inferior and not fit to live helped rally the nation of Germany behind Adolf Hitler and the Nazi party resulting in the systematic extermination of six million Jewish lives and countless others.

The Holocaust was not inevitable. Hitler could not have accomplished it alone. A nation of doctors and lawyers, engineers, chemists, industrialists and laborers helped to carry out the fanatical plan of Jewish genocide without compromise of policy, even when it threatened the nation's survival. And it almost worked.

Why dwell upon the study of the Holocaust when history is filled with other tragedies? The horrific events of the Holocaust were/are beyond human comprehension, never before seen in the history of civilization. The word "Holocaust", with a capital H, was coined to refer to the planned, systematic annihilation of Jews between 1933 -- 1945.

During this time, many other people were also killed, twelve short years in world history; the darkest and most significant period in the 20th century. It has been said that after Auschwitz anything is possible. As we still fail to fully react to the unimaginable aftermath of a nuclear war, so we are still unable to understand the unimaginable of the Holocaust. But we must try.

In the past, Jews were killed for what people termed reasonable goals: land, religion, politics. During this period, however, Jews were killed just because they were born Jewish. There was no way out. No escape. Even conversion would not have helped. And there was no place to go. No Israel. The free world greatly restricted immigration, closings their borders to the Jews being threatened in Europe.

The Nazis used the tools of modern technology to kill. They were proud of what they were doing and kept detailed and accurate records with pictures of their activities. They collected Jewish memorabilia: Torahs, books, Kiddush cups, etc., planning some day to open a museum showing the world what they had done for it. The original documents are available to provide the ready tools to study this period.

The Holocaust should not be studied to terrify or to shock, either children or adults, but to teach what happens when a nation blindly follows a leader and conventional morality is abandoned.

Proper analysis of this major historical event educates people to the meaning of human dignity, morality, citizenship and law. Individuals are encouraged to think about the choices and implications of their decisions for a society which abuses civil liberties and censors the freedom to think. Questions are raised which defy simple solutions. What would I have done? What could I have done? How could civilized people be capable of such inhumanity? Where was the rest of the world? Perhaps the very act of thinking may be the crucial tool to prevent and condition people from committing evil acts.

If you are still skeptical about the value of Holocaust education and remembrance, consider this. Study of the Holocaust has helped many people confront their own prejudices, the first step in combating discrimination. Analysis of this period helps to make people more sensitive to current world-wide violations of human rights and raises the question, can we afford to stand idly by.

As long as one person is deprived of freedom and dignity, as long as one person is the victim of prejudice and ignorance, no one is truly free. We do not know who will be the next victim, only that there will be another one.

Genocide can be prevented and stopped only if people learn from the past. What is the alternative?

(Why Study About The Holocaust) Harriet Tarnor Wacks

TIME LINE

Date	Detailed Information
January 30, 1933	Adolf Hitler was elected Chancellor of Germany.
March 22, 1933	The first concentration camp was opened at Dachau in Germany.
April 1, 1933	Germans were told to boycott Jewish shops and businesses.
November 24, 1933	'Undesirables', the homeless, alcoholic and unemployed people were sent to Concentration camps.
May 17, 1934	Jewish persecution began with an order prohibiting Jewish people from having health insurance.
September 15, 1935	The Nuremberg Laws took away Jewish rights of citizenship stating that Jews were no longer German citizens, could not marry non-Jews, and could not have sexual relations with non-Jews.
March 13, 1938	Following Anschluss which joined Germany and Austria, Jews in Austria were persecuted and victimized.
October 5, 1938	The passports of all Austrian and German Jews were required to be stamped with a large red letter 'J'.
November 9, 1938	Kristallnacht, "the night of the broken glass" resulted in the murder of approximately 100 Jews. 20,000 German and Austrian Jews were sent to camps, hundreds of synagogues were burned, and windows of Jewish owned shops were smashed.
November 12, 1938	Jews were fined one billion marks for damages caused by Kristallnacht.
November 15, 1938	Jewish children were not allowed to attend non-German schools.
October 12, 1939	Jews living in Austria and Czechoslovakia were sent to Poland.
November 23, 1939	Jews in Poland were forced to wear a yellow star for easy identification.
Early 1940	Jews in German occupied countries were persecuted by the Nazis and many were sent to concentration camps.
May 20, 1940	A new concentration camp, Auschwitz, opened.
November 15, 1940	The Warsaw Ghetto was sealed off with approximately 400,000 Jewish people inside.

July, 1941	The Einsatzgruppen (killing squads) began rounding up and murdering Jews in Russia. 33,000 Jews were murdered in two days at Babi Yar near Kiev.
July 31, 1941	The “Final Solution” was implemented by Reinhard Heydrich.
December 8, 1941	The first ‘Death Camp’ was opened at Chelmno.
January, 1942	Mass-gassing of Jews began at Auschwitz-Birkenau.
Summer, 1942	Jews from all over occupied Europe were sent to ‘Death Camps’ where they were gassed to death.
January 29, 1943	An order was issued to send Gypsies to concentration camps.
April 19-May 16, 1943	The Warsaw Ghetto uprising took place following news of an order to liquidate the ghetto as a birthday present for Hitler and to deport the Jews to Treblinka. A group of 750 Jews, realizing they had nothing to lose, held the German troops for nearly a month with smuggled weapons before being rounded up and shot or sent to death camps.
May 14-July 8, 1944	44,000 Hungarian Jews were transported to Auschwitz.
October 30, 1944	Auschwitz gas chambers were used for the last time.
January 27, 1945	Many remaining camps were closed and evidence of their existence destroyed. Those who had thus far survived the camps were taken on forced ‘Death Marches’.
April 30, 1945	Faced with impending defeat, Hitler committed suicide.
May 7, 1945	Germany surrendered and the war in Europe was over.
November 20, 1945	Surviving Nazi leaders were put on trial at Nuremberg.

Bibliography

Encyclopedia of the Holocaust
I Promised I Would Tell
Never to Forget
Night

Sonia Weitz
Milton Meltzer
Elie Wiesel

Audio-Visuals

Genocide
The Holocaust (Yad VaShem)
Present Memories, Six Survivors of the Holocaust
Theresenstadt
Twisted Cross

These are only a few of suggested audio-visual materials. Please find others that relate directly to your survivor's experience.