

How to conduct a **Pesach seder** to include people with special needs



Conducting a Pesach seder with adults or children with cognitive disabilities may be challenging. It's difficult to keep everyone at the Seder engaged and interested at their level, all at the same time.

At our group homes for adults and children with special needs, we have experience conducting Pesach seders that are engaging and enjoyable for every person. Here are some ideas that can help you conduct a Pesach seder with people with neurotypical challenges this year.



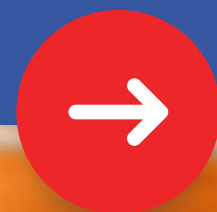
Preparation.

Preparing people with special needs is crucial. People with intellectual disabilities may be very sensitive to change or a deviation in their regular schedules, making them feel anxious and tense when it does occur. Preparing them in advance of the change, and informing them what they can expect, can prevent meltdowns, confusion, anxiety, and other adverse reactions.



Individual adaptation.

A regular haggadah means very little to an adult or child who cannot read or understand what is written in it. It is worthwhile to create a specialized haggadah with pictures they can follow. You can include some limited text for adults or children who can read, but images are the best way for them to visualize the story to keep them interested.



Personalized equipment.

Personalizing equipment for every person goes a long way to having them feel pride and involvement in the seder. Personalize a non-breakable cup, pillow, and matzah bag with a picture of themselves so they feel connected to the rituals and willing to participate.



Practice.

Model the Pesach seder as often as possible before the actual seder. This teaches the adults and children with disabilities what they can expect, increasing their chances of being interested and engaged. They will also be proud to share the knowledge they have gained through the practice seders.



Involvement.

The more you involve people with intellectual disabilities in the preparation of the seder, the more they will participate on the day. Allow them to help you clean, shop, and cook in preparation for Pesach. This will help build up the excitement of the big day and allow them to feel part of the holiday in their own way.



We hope you found
some helpful pointers
in this e-book.

The purpose of writing it was to share our
experiences so you can help every adult and
child with special needs experience the Pesach
seder in a meaningful way.





Ohel Sarah is a non-profit organization in Israel dedicated to caring for and advancing children and adults with special needs from age six until the end of their lives. Our goal is to give every person with special needs the tools they need to become as independent as possible and to live happy, meaningful, connected lives. We operate 5 schools for girls and boys, 5 employment and day centers for young adults, and 40 group homes for children, adults, and married couples. All 800 children and adults we care for daily feel loved, cared for, and validated by their Ohel Sarah family.

To find out more about Ohel Sarah,
visit **en.ohelsarah.org**