

# Parent Blessing Guidelines

## You shall be a blessing!

Your child has just finished leading the congregation in prayer and has become an adult in the Jewish community. Your remarks should in some way reflect the life-cycle transition we are celebrating and their commitment to Judaism and Jewish responsibility. Many parents have found it helpful to think of their words as a form of prayer, asking for God's blessing on their child.

This should not be regarded as a "speech," but rather an opportunity to share your wishes of *mazel tov* and to express what blessings you hope for your child in the future. If you have questions when the time comes to prepare your blessing, please contact a member of our clergy.

- Speak directly and personally to the young adult that your daughter/son has become. Let her/him know how proud you are that s/he has reached this milestone of becoming a Jewish young adult. Explain your emotions.
- Remember to actually bless your bar/bat mitzvah! Offer him/her words of praise and thanks, and speak of your hopes for his/her future.
- Be yourself and express your feelings! Prayers spoken from the heart always sound most sincere! This is a personal and sacred moment. Write your blessing in advance.
- This is a Jewish blessing. Consider saying *mazel tov* instead of congratulations.
- Your child has just led the congregation in prayer as well as taught and read Torah. If you can, try to connect your blessing to something that your child has said in his/her d'var Torah.
- Your child has many remarkable talents and it always amazes us that he/she can balance homework and sports and tutoring and BM3T and all of the preparations for leading a service. This is your opportunity to focus on this Jewish milestone.
- Be concise! It is very tempting to pour your entire heart out on the big day, especially because becoming bar/bat mitzvah is like nothing else your son/daughter will do. But, your child, your guests, and your family have short attention spans. Your words will actually carry more impact if you say less. Your family should limit your comments to **a total of 5 minutes. That's typically less than 700 words, 2 pages, 12pt, double spaced.** You can and should use any celebration that you hold to further toast your son or daughter.

Please submit your Parent Blessing(s) to the clergy before your final walkthrough. A link to the form can be found at [TBEWellesley.org/BneiMitzvahInformation](http://TBEWellesley.org/BneiMitzvahInformation).

Let us never lose sight that bar/bat mitzvah is a religious event and a sacred occasion. The focus of the day is on your child and helping your child understand what it means to be a part of Judaism and the Jewish community.