

OR TZEDEK SUMMER PROGRAM INFORMATION

What is the program content for Or Tzedek?

Each teen comes away with a greater understanding of what it means to do activism, do advocacy and do community organizing.

What's Jewish about this program?

Inspired by Hillel's question, "If not now, when?" Or Tzedek provides teens with a Jewish framework to explore their social justice identities and gives them the tools to build a better world.

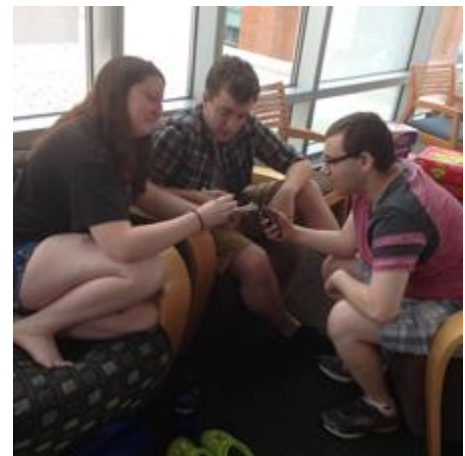
Or Tzedek reaches teens at a point in their lives when they are making critical choices about their identity. We work to ensure that when teens ask the age-old question "Who am I?" that "I am a Jew" resounds loudly somewhere in the answer. Each Or Tzedek program provides an opportunity for the teens to explore their Jewish identity in an exciting and unique way.

Every program includes in-depth text study opportunities. Workshops are facilitated by rabbis and Jewish educators to provide a deeper exploration of what Judaism has to say about social justice. Each summer session also includes two Shabbatot. Our Shabbat experiences are also a way to connect to Jewish identity, community, and expression.

Housing and Transportation

Housing information for summer 2017 for the first session will be at the University of Illinois at Chicago dorms (718 W. James M. Rochford Drive, Chicago, IL 60607). Participants in the second session will stay at the Br. David Darst Center (2834 S Normal Ave, Chicago, IL 60616). Both locations have provided great spaces for our summer programs in the past.

We choose locations that are safe and accessible to exciting areas of Chicago, as well as have meeting spaces and kitchens where we can prepare some of our meals. Or Tzedek staff are always housed on the same floor/wing as Or Tzedek participants. Throughout the sessions, we travel all around Chicago to work with a broad range of community organizations and social justice leaders, activists, and youth on the forefront of social justice work in Chicago. Transportation mainly include passenger vans. We use public transportation and walking when possible and appropriate.



Who should participate?

Or Tzedek's summer program is open to all teens entering 9th-12th grade! **(In past years, participants must have completed grade 9 – we are excited to welcome incoming 9th graders to our program this year!)** Each session offers opportunities for new and returning participants. Or Tzedek provides an amazing foundation for understanding activism, advocacy, and organizing. For teens who have previously participated in an Or Tzedek program, each session will provide new opportunities to deepen and strengthen their social justice identities, understanding and skills.

Are you the perfect person for Or Tzedek? Do you...

- Get fired up about social justice issues, but don't know how to take the first step?
- Ask "why" when we talk about Jewish rituals and traditions?
- Want a meaningful way to spend 12 days this summer while having fun?
- Want to create change in your community but aren't sure how?

Then Or Tzedek is definitely for you! [Register here.](#)



What do we do for fun?

Yes! Every Or Tzedek program creates a community of teens passionate about social justice. The program also takes full advantage of Chicago in the summer, including Millennium Park, the lakefront beaches, and exciting neighborhood events. Participants will explore Chicago and make life-long friends in the process.

Or Tzedek's Commitment to Inclusivity

Inclusivity is at the heart of Or Tzedek's programs. We are committed to making Or Tzedek a safe space for all participants to celebrate both the similarities and differences of people's practices and identities. Our Shabbat observance, kosher practices, and LGBTQIA inclusion practices are all developed to create a supportive, inclusive, and pluralistic Jewish community.

Or Tzedek staff are trained and familiar with creating thoughtful, respectful and inclusive pluralistic Jewish communities. Our staff serve as role models for the teens by showing what it means to create a Jewish community that lives its commitment to inclusivity in all aspects of its programming. All participants and their parents sign Or Tzedek's B'rit Kehillah, code of conduct, before participating in our program. Our B'rit Kehillah asks participants, among other things, to be open to and to take seriously Or Tzedek's commitment to inclusivity.

► Shabbat Observance

Each Or Tzedek summer program includes two Shabbatot. Or Tzedek as a program is Shabbat-observant (e.g., the program does not drive participants anywhere, require writing or the use of technology, or prepare food on Shabbat). Teens are encouraged to share their own diverse Shabbat practices with the group to teach and expose each other to new traditions. We spend significant time before welcoming in Shabbat as an Or Tzedek community discussing our Shabbat community and the practices and how we want to celebrate Shabbat as a group.

► Keeping Kosher

Or Tzedek uses kosher kitchens to prepare all food. While there will be an occasional catered, kosher meat meal, we are otherwise vegetarian and ingredient-kosher. Our practices with respect to kashrut also ensure that anyone with food allergies can safely participate in the program.

► LGBTQIA Safe Space

Or Tzedek is a welcoming and safe community for LGBTQIA teens. Housing is split into a male-identified and female-identified section. Gender neutral housing is also available. Before the start of the program, we would love to meet with any families and their teens with questions or concerns to ensure we are building a supportive community.