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5. Plan a meeting for the three-month halfway point and encourage action rings to set goals to accomplish by that time. At that meeting, each ring will be able to present accomplishments, challenges, and outcomes to date. Encourage them to share personal stories and photos about themselves and/or others they have met as a result of participating in the action rings..this is the ripple effects of the rings. Sharing personal stories will serve as inspiration for others.
  6. Record the personal stories and consider making a book or scrapbook that can be shared with the congregation. This will help with recruiting additional rings and will help promote sisterhood as well.
  7. Ask the Rabbi if sisterhood could do a presentation for Social Action Shabbat or plan a presentation for Sisterhood Shabbat that highlights the rings and their ripple effects.
  8. Repeat every six months to allow people to change rings or continue in their same one.

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION



WOMEN OF REFORM JUDAISM  
*stronger together*

# SOCIAL ACTION RINGS

An Eight-Step Program to Advocacy in Action

“WRJ Social Action Rings—An Eight-Step Program to Advocacy and Action”—provides easy “how-to” guidance to help your sisterhood set up a vibrant social action program. In providing an exciting vehicle for recruiting women from your sisterhood and congregation, WRJ Social Action Rings can also serve as a membership tool. It makes full use of the WRJ social action resources on the website and also introduces a new piece, E-Advocacy, to help your sisterhood advocate important social justice policies.

By focusing on women’s personal priorities, the rings program can generate enthusiasm and commitment and energize your sisterhood’s social action programming and advocacy. The program also enables you to promote your social action image in the congregation through personal stories, scrapbooks, and Shabbat presentations.



# To Put Rings into Action in Your Sisterhood:

1. Identify sisterhood members who are interested in social action and invite them to an introductory meeting.
2. Recruit women from the greater congregational population who are interested in social action (this is a good way to introduce non-members to sisterhood) and invite them to an introductory meeting.
3. Hold an introductory meeting
  - **Share Resources:** Present the WRJ tools that help sisterhoods with social action/advocacy programs. This presentation of resources should be brief but it is important to serve as the foundation for the smaller group discussions that will follow.
    - Demonstrate how to find advocacy resources on the WRJ website and be sure everyone leaves with the website address ([www.WomenofReformJudaism.org](http://www.WomenofReformJudaism.org)) in-hand;
    - Explain “*Social Justice: WRJ Advocacy and Programming* (the ‘action alerts’ on the WRJ website).” Distribute printed copies, explaining the various sections (explanation/definition, text study, hands-on projects, advocacy opportunities, and funding needs/donation points);
    - Distribute and review the latest Critical Issues Action Grid (available on the WRJ website) and distribute it to help participants understand how WRJ takes action on behalf of sisterhoods;
    - Distribute the *Guide for Advocacy and Action* (available on the WRJ website) to give examples of resolutions that WRJ passed in the last year. The guide comes out following each assembly for the previous biennial period.
    - Explain the resolution process and review the handout for E-Advocacy ([www.WomenofReformJudaism.org/e-advocacy.pdf/view](http://www.WomenofReformJudaism.org/e-advocacy.pdf/view)).
  - **Prioritize Issues:** Ask each woman to prioritize issues of personal interest. Capture these on a flip chart. (This will be good for future reference in planning and advocacy efforts.)
  - **Form Action Rings:** Give each woman a piece of paper and ask her to write down the answer to the following question: “If you could only advocate for one issue what would it be?” Ask each woman to stand and hold the sign up, moving around the room to find others with the same sign. Once they have found others, have them form groups between two and five women each. Call the groups “action rings.” Let them meet together for a half-hour to discuss how they might work together to impact this issue over the next six months. Ask them to record the “action items” they commit to doing. Remind them to make the action items REAL: “Relevant to the issue, Economical, Achievable, and Likable (if they don’t enjoy the activity, it will never happen... i.e. If they don’t like working on the computer, they should not decide to do an e-mail campaign.)”
  - **Document Action Items:** Come back together as one large group and have one woman from each action ring report on their action items. Have a scribe take notes on a flip chart. By the end of the meeting, you will know the most important issues based on the participants’ personal interest. After each action ring has reported, think about if there are any overlaps and discuss if it makes sense for any of the rings to connect their actions.
  - **Identify Ring Leaders:** Whoever is the one to report for each action ring, is probably the one who emerged as the leader during the discussion. Ask that person to be the “ring leader.”
  - **Establish Next Steps:** At the end of the meeting, provide two dates for follow-up meetings, one in three months and one in six months. (This will help to keep the rings moving forward with their action items.) Be sure everyone marks their calendars. Encourage action rings to set goals to accomplish by the three-month mark and the six-month mark. Let participants know that they are welcome to add advocates to their rings but to please contact the social action/advocacy chair to notify her of additions. (This will help sisterhood keep track of the women who are involved.) Encourage ring leaders to photograph activities of the ring.
4. Following the meeting, the social action/advocacy chair can document ring leaders and participants and diagram the rings w/action items which will serve as the sisterhood social action plan for the next six months. The social action/advocacy chair should be the communication link between the rings. She can:
  - Forward *Social Justice: WRJ Advocacy and Programming* e-mails from WRJ to the rings to prompt ideas.
  - Hold brief “learnshops” to help rings feel empowered to be advocates for legislative issues.
  - Create a clipping service about the issues that the rings have identified and e-mail electronic articles.
  - Write articles for the congregational bulletin to promote what the advocacy rings are doing and to recruit for expansion or the development of new rings.
  - Ask the president to forward programming ideas shared on the presidents’ listserv.
  - Report to the sisterhood board on the work of the rings.

