

Dear 7G Parents,

As our year of learning Sefer Bamidbar draws to a close, it's time to talk about our class final. The goal of the Bamidbar final is to reflect upon the totality of the skills and lessons of the sefer and apply them in one last meaningful way. Your daughters have been working hard towards this culmination of their learning. While finals are opportunities that carry significant academic value, the true goal here is to tie all of our learning together. This is where I need your help.

Bamidbar has taught us all about the values of an ideal community. The homes that you have built for your daughters, your family communities, reflect and are built upon your values.

Please write a values letter to your daughter sharing with her the fundamental things that you value in your home and how each of those values are reflected in an observable way in your family community (some examples are provided below for reference). I will give your daughter your special letter upon her completion of the Bamidbar final in two weeks. I hope that this exercise will help emphasize for her what our learning this year has truly been about.

Please make every effort to email your letter to me by June 9 so that it will be printed in time for the final. It would be so sad for someone not to receive a letter after her final while all of her friends do. Additionally, please note that, to ensure your privacy, I will not read your letters. They will be folded right away and tucked into an envelope just for your daughter.

As always, I am grateful for your partnership. Please be in touch with any questions.

Kol tuv,
Shira Greenspan

SAMPLE VALUES LETTER:

Dear Daughter,

You did it! You finished your Chumash final. Daddy and I are so proud of all of your hard work and growth this year- especially in Torah.

Your learning this year focused on the values of an ideal community. Our home is like a mini-community, one which is based upon fundamental values of our family. And so, now in celebration of your work exploring the values of an ideal community, we wanted to share with you some of the things we value in our home community.

In no particular order, here are some of the things that we value most:

Family and spending time together-

Shabbat and Yom Tov meals are times with everyone in mind- everyone gets a chance to participate and contribute. Our family "no phone or devices rule" for the first hour of a long drive gives us time to bond and connect. We visit Savta and Saba whenever we can even though long plane trips can be a hassle and are expensive. Family is everything.

Giving to others-

If someone is sitting shiva in our community, Daddy makes every effort to be part of the minyan at the shiva house. And since you've helped me so many times with this, you know how I make it a priority to help prepare meals for families who are sitting shiva, just had a baby, or for whatever reason could use a good meal. We give tzedakah to help support organizations that are helping others like Magen David Adom and Project Ezra.

You chose to prepare for your bat mitzvah by raising money for the amazing work that Sharsheret does and your volunteering with the Friendship Circle is inspiring in so many ways.

Health-

Our family's physical and emotional health are especially important. Think about how many parts of our home are devoted to keeping us healthy- the bathroom is a place to maintain proper hygiene, we try to keep the refrigerator stocked with fresh and nutritious foods, we have comfortable beds for getting a good night's (and sometimes day's rest), and our basketball driveway for exercise. You are a valued member of the hockey team just like your brothers and sister are part of their respective teams, too. We make sure to have regular checkups with our doctors and don't hesitate to go in for a visit if we're feeling a bit off. We take our mental health just as seriously. During the years of Grandma's cancer, I started seeing a psychologist to help me deal with the challenges of caring for someone hurting so much. Daddy goes running almost every morning to, as he says, keep his head clear and you know how much I love my yoga. When things got overwhelming for you at school, you took a mental health day so that we could talk things over properly.

A relationship with Hashem-

Obviously, Hashem is part of everything in our lives but in our family we value setting aside time to recognize that and to build our relationship with Him. Of the many examples of this, the ones that are standing out most to me now as I write this to you are davening and how careful we are to say our brachot out loud. We wouldn't have anything without Hashem and building a relationship with Him allows for us to be humbled in a constant expression of hakarat hatov to Him.

Music- I think this one speaks for itself. It's the biggest family compliment when people tell us that we should start a family band. Musical havdallah (when we manage to make it happen) is one of the greatest highlights of my week. You know I can't listen to you sing with the choir without crying. Zmirot at our Shabbat table somehow melt away any stress I have from the week and help me stay present and enjoy our family time together. There is just something about music that seems to just bring our family together and set our neshamas free. It's a very special gift we share.

While, of course, there are many other things we value as a family, these are some of the key ones in our home. But our biggest source of pride, daughter, is the many ways we already see you and your siblings living by these values in your own lives.

We love you so, SO much!

Love,

Mommy and Daddy