



## ACTIVITY

# All of Israel is Responsible for One Another

### Materials Needed

- Video clip, screening device and internet connection
- Copies of the Survey

### Time Needed

45 minutes-1 hour

### Goal

- To think about who we help, who we don't and why.
- To consider how the Jewish tradition of '*Kol Yisrael arevim zeh b'zeh*' ('All Jews are responsible for one another') helps motivate us to help other Jews in need.

## Before You Get Started

Look at the list of enduring understandings. Which one would you like to emphasize through this activity?

- Jewish tradition created a society where the members of the Jewish People have a responsibility to each other as joint participants in a collective.
- Judaism outlines ‘*Kol Yisrael arevim zeh lazeh*’ as an imperative. The word “*kol*” emphasizes that it is an obligation for each and every person.
- Jewish communities have always organized themselves according to this principle, building structures for mutual support of those in need.
- In the late 20th century there are numerous examples of when Jews mobilized in support of their brethren around the world based on this principle.

## Directions for Activity

1. Introduce the concept of the “Bystander Effect” and show the clip ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=OSsPfbup0ac](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OSsPfbup0ac)).
2. Ask participants to share their general reactions. What did they find surprising or compelling about the clip?
3. Now introduce the concept ‘*Kol Yisrael arevim zeh b’zeh*’. The concept is first seen in the Talmud (Shavuot 39a) and is translated as “All of Israel is responsible for one another.” In its original context it had to do with the responsibility that one Jew had toward another to prevent him/her from sinning. Understood more broadly it lies at the foundation of Jewish communal responsibility. Each Jew needs to ensure the well being of every other Jew (and vice versa.)
4. Give the participants a one-page survey in which they have to complete the following questions. Don’t give them too long to complete these, they should be their “gut feelings.”
  - When I see a person asking for money on the street I feel...
  - If a stranger who is like me asks me for help on the street I will...
  - When I hear about a disaster that has happened far away from home what I do is...
  - When I give to charity the first people I think of helping are...
  - When someone in my family needs help I...

- When I need help the first person I ask is...
  - The last time I needed some kind of help (financial or otherwise) what I did was...
  - When I hear the phrase '*Kol Yisrael arevim zeh b'zeh*' it makes me feel...
5. Ask them to choose a study partner (also called chevruta) or simply turn to the person next to them to share their answers. What surprised them about what they or their chevruta wrote? Is the concept '*Kol Yisrael arevim zeh b'zeh*' a relevant concept to for each of them? Why or why not?
  6. Sum up the discussion and ask participants to share a question or idea they are left with.

### Note to Educator

Did the enduring understanding that you set out to teach surface during this activity?