



## **NFTY-MAR Mid-Atlantic Junior Youth Kallah (MAJYK) Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Who is in charge?**

Hi! I'm Jessa Cameron and I'm the Director of Youth Engagement for the NFTY Mid-Atlantic Region (NFTY-MAR). My job is to work the congregations and youth leadership of NFTY-MAR to create meaningful Reform Jewish experiences for teens, including weekend regional events and local day long activities.

### **Where can I find more information about NFTY-MAR?**

I've put together this document to help answer some of your most often asked questions, and please feel free to peruse our website for more information about our leadership, specific event details, and more. You can always feel free to email me with questions, and your advisors and clergy are also well-informed and are fantastic resources.

To answer a lot of your general questions, please read on to find out:

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- What should I expect when I arrive at an event?
- Who are the regional board?
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### **The Specifics of MAJYK**

Mid-Atlantic Junior Youth Kallah (MAJYK) – December 6-8, 2019 – is NFTY-MAR's only weekend retreat open to 6-8<sup>th</sup> graders. This year, it will be held at **Temple Beth Ami** in **Rockville, MD**. This event is structured similarly to our senior youth group events, and include services, interactive programming, and a fun Saturday evening activity. Programming will focus around this year's theme: **Lights, Camera, Action**.

### **How do I get to events?**

NFTY-MAR provides a bus service to all of our events. These buses make several stops in our most populated cities, and when you register for an event, you'll be able to choose which bus stop location you'd like to utilize.

The event information page for each event will list that event's starting and ending time, and if you know how far away you live from the event location, you can get a general idea of what time you'll be leaving and arriving back home. Final bus stop information will be sent out in an email at least one week prior to each event.

In order to conserve time, gas, and money spent on our buses, we do have some regulations; each bus stop location must have at least four participants and one staff member. If the stop does not reach those requirements, we'll work with local congregational professionals to contact those who did sign up as early as possible and help find alternative transportation. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation!

### **What should I expect when I arrive at an event?**

Upon your arrival to a NFTY-MAR event, you will be greeted by members of the NFTY-MAR regional board, the regional director, teens from the hosting congregation, and the adult temple staff. The first thing you'll do when you get off the bus or out of the car is set your luggage down and go get your nametag and event schedule.

Friday evening will generally continue with mixers, dinner, Shabbat services, and a meeting to go over some basic logistics and the *Brit Kehillah* (code of conduct) and any announcements that we have, and then you will depart to your host homes or cabins for the evening.

### **Who are the regional board?**

The regional board is comprised of 6 high school juniors/seniors that were elected by the region the previous spring to bring their expertise in programming, social action, Judaism, leadership, and much more to the NFTY events this year. [You can read more about them here.](#)

### **What kinds of things do we do at MAJYK?**

Each event that NFTY-MAR puts together has a leadership, social action, religious, and social aspect. MAJYK is an introduction to all that NFTY has to offer, but we follow a similar structure every event. Friday night consists of dinner, Shabbat evening services, and get-to-know-you activities. Saturday starts with Shabbat morning services, followed by a variety of programs around the event's theme and more camp-like activities such as basketball, friendship bracelet making, or song sessions. We end the night with Havdallah and an evening social activity, and Sunday wraps up the weekend with reflections and goodbyes.

### **What are the housing guidelines?**

When you arrive at the event, you will be given your housing assignment. During registration, participants can note roommate requests, and we do our best to honor those requests. Because things can change at the last minute, we are unable to publish housing assignments in advance.

MAJYK is a temple-hosted event, participants spend the nights at host homes. We have a strict set of rules for our host homes, and a high standard for the families. NFTY's host-home policies are:

- Host homes house between four and nine participants; there will always be at least four.
- Every participant is guaranteed to be housed with at least one of their housing requests.
- Host homes may only house participants of the same gender.
- Only the immediate members of the family over the age of 25 will drive participants
- All host families are in good standing of either the host congregation, or another URJ congregation in the area.
- At the end of the day, participants are to proceed directly to their host homes and are not to leave at any point during the evening. In the morning, they will be taken straight from their host homes to the designated location.

I understand that housing can be the source of some anxiety for many first-time NFTY parents, and I'd first like to assure you that your children will be well cared for. I am always happy to work directly with you to find the best host home for any accommodation.

Many host families have children who are participants at the event, or are past NFTY parents. It is a great opportunity for participants to get to know their roommates in a way they would not in a large cabin, and many say spending time at host homes is one of their favorite parts of the event.

I'd also like to reiterate that I am always available to answer any of your questions and I am available 24/7 during the weekend for anything that may come up while teens are with their host families.

### **What is adult supervision like?**

Each event is staffed by a variety of highly qualified adult youth workers. They are either temple youth group advisors, educators, clergy, or NFTY alumni, and are at least sophomores in college or 21 years of age. All staff members, regardless of age or experience, are expected to adhere to the exact same code of conduct standards that every participant also signs.

Every staff member actively participates in all our programming throughout each day; they are each assigned to either specific program groups or activities, or to "roam" the premises.

### **Where and when can I find detailed information about other events?**

All our event dates are posted on our online calendar here. After MAJYK, all eight graders are invited to join us for two NFTY-MAR events in the spring: TheVent in March and Spring Kallah in April. Also keep a look out for other 678 programming!

### **Event Emergency contact information**

As Regional Director, I am the emergency contact for all NFTY-MAR events. In the pre-event email, I'll include all weekend emergency numbers.

### **General Do's, Don'ts, and Reminders**

- Shortly after registration closes, I'll send out a pre-event email with specific information, including a packing list and bus schedule.
- Remember to bring a small gift for your host family and cash for the shuk, where you can buy fantastic NFTY-MAR merchandise
- Be prepared for lots of laughing, learning, and meeting new people
- Please be sure that I have the most up-to-date information regarding any potential health concerns, by correctly completing the health form during registration and updating me if anything comes up. Participants are responsible for their own medications at events, but it is my job to make sure that everyone is happy and healthy. Please let me know if there are specific things I can do to make that happen!
- Along with that, please consider our fellow participants and host family when assessing potential illness as the event nears- we love you all and would hate for anyone to miss out, but please stay home if you are sick.
- We adhere to the *Brit Kehilah* (code of conduct) which participants sign during registration and which will be reviewed at the event. We want everyone to have an awesome time in a safe environment, so we ask that you refrain from any activities that would leave us forced to send you home.
- Please leave at home anything that you would be devastated to lose- NFTY is not responsible for any lost or stolen items, and we would hate for you to be out any valuables.
- Come excited to meet new people and make great new friends!

**Have more questions? Visit [midatlantic.nfty.org](http://midatlantic.nfty.org) or email Jessa Cameron at [jcameron@urj.org](mailto:jcameron@urj.org)!**