

## WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A CHAPERONE/MADRICH ON THE MARCH OF THE LIVING

This document is to help one better understand the roles and responsibilities of becoming a chaperone on the March of the Living. *\*This role is not for everyone. It is a big commitment in terms of both time and money. Please read over this document carefully and do not hesitate to contact us if you have any further questions.*

### Goals of the March of the Living

The March of the Living is an experiential educational program for Secondary V students in order to teach participants about Jewish life in Europe before the Second World War, the Holocaust and the creation of the modern state of Israel

### People, Roles and Responsibilities

#### Participants

Each year Montreal takes roughly 200 Grade 11 students on the March of the Living.

Below is an example of the student representation from 2018. *(The number of students, profiles and school representation has been relatively consistent over the last few years.)*

#### 2018 Student Profiles:

Ashkenazi - <b>60%</b>	Sephardic - <b>40%</b>
Private School - <b>97%</b>	Public School - <b>3%</b>
Jewish School - <b>60%</b>	Non-Jewish School - <b>40%</b>
Shomer-Shabbat - <b>13%</b>	Non Shomer-Shabbat - <b>87%</b>
Male - <b>47%</b>	Female - <b>53%</b>

**Total Number of Students = 194**

#### 2018 School Representation by # of Students:

Herzliah – <b>61</b>	Selwyn House – <b>6</b>
Bialik – <b>33</b>	Hebrew Academy- <b>4</b>
WIC– <b>20</b>	Trafalgar – <b>2</b>
Maimonide – <b>18</b>	Centennial – <b>2</b>
ECS – <b>12</b>	Villa Maria – <b>2</b>
Royal West– <b>11</b>	Collage de Charlemagne – <b>1</b>
LCC – <b>10</b>	Collage de Montreal – <b>1</b>
St George’s – <b>9</b>	Lake Placid, New York – <b>1</b>

MOL is a physically and emotionally demanding experience that affects everyone differently - each participant has a different reaction to it. Over two weeks, a chaperone’s goal should not be to change their attitude or behaviour, but to inspire them and bring out their potential. Chaperones should be sensitive, treat everyone equally (avoid favouritism), and strive to make everyone feel included.

A chaperone should take advantage of this unique opportunity to foster relationships with the participants. They come first on this journey and the primary goal for the chaperone should be to teach them, support them, listen to them, recognize their individuality, and above all get to know them.

#### Chaperones

The outcome and success of the MOL is highly dependent on the chaperones. By applying and having been accepted as a chaperone, you will have accepted a great deal of responsibility dealing with participants both as individuals and as a group.

**Responsibilities include, but are not limited to:**

- Total responsibility of all participants: supervision; implementing and enforcing all policies; overseeing their health and well-being; earning their respect and using it to establish control within the group
- Carrying out the itinerary and all curfew, on duty and wake-up procedures
- Helping to integrate the survivors into your bus dynamics and in group settings
- Leading debrief sessions and assisting educators with their programming
- Being part of a team - team work, communication and respect
- Being fun, intelligent, creative, mature, sensitive and energetic
- Being a leader, mentor, guide, teacher and counsellor

**Survivors**

Each year, a group of survivors accompany the Montreal delegation on the March of the Living. Survivors are the key to this program. They are brought on to share their stories with the group with the intention of passing on their first hand experience so we never forget to tragedies that occurred.

The number of Survivor participants range between 4 and 10, and vary in age and physical ability. They rotate buses each day in order to spend time with and share their personal stories and experiences with all of the students.

Chaperones and participants should make survivors feel welcome and involved in the day's touring. Ideally, survivors should lead the pace of the group while walking so they are not trailing behind and feel part of the group.

Our goal is for the survivors to follow the same schedule and itinerary as the students so they can accompany them and share in this experience with them. With the busy schedule, they are not always able to keep up and accommodations will be made as needed. Chaperones should inform the Survivor Liaisons of any concerns with the survivors that might be observed throughout the day.

Each Survivor will have a scheduled time to share part of their story. Your role as a chaperone is to help ensure that all students are quiet and respectful during this time. Chaperones should aid in informal opportunities for survivors to share their stories and insight into the experience.

**Survivor Liaisons**

Just like chaperones look after the participants, the Survivor Liaisons look after the survivors - announcements, itinerary logistics, wake up and generally ensuring that their needs are being met. Survivor Liaisons cannot be with all of the Survivors at every point during the day and therefore rely on chaperones to assist the Survivors when needed.

**MOL Staff & Chairs**

The MOL Staff and Chair(s) work the whole year planning and preparing. They are experienced chaperones and should be used as a resource.

The Staff and Chairs juggle the needs of the group as a whole, the survivors, the educators, Federation CJA, MOL Canada, MOL International, the participants, and chaperones - not to mention their own. Chaperones should be patient, not question decisions, and do what is asked of them.

### **Educator/Guide**

Every bus has a dedicated Israeli educator who will be with you for the entire trip and is part of the bus chaperone team. They undergo extensive training and are incredibly familiar with the program. They play a huge role in the MOL experience and essentially lead your bus regarding timing, itinerary, education, and programming.

### **Educator Role**

- Responsible for the educational aspect of MOL - learning will be formal (tours and talks) and informal (small chats, watching bus movies, debriefs)
- Chaperones must actively assist in this area and will be leading most debriefs

### **Tour Guide Role**

- They are in constant contact with MOL Staff to determine timing and logistics - chaperones must help ensure the group stays on schedule
- They always have safety and security as a number one concern so chaperones and participants must respect and follow all their directions.

### **Relationship & Communication**

- Having a positive, respectful and supportive relationship with the educator is integral to the success of the trip. The more time invested into developing a relationship with the educator, the stronger the group dynamic will be.
- Chaperone teams should speak with their educator before the trip to begin the relationship. Communication should continue throughout the trip to ensure bus and team dynamics.
- Chaperones should do whatever they can to help the educators achieve their goal by keeping participants engaged, respectful, motivated - and on time!

### **Clergy**

The spiritual team for the March of the Living can consist of a: Rabbi, Ruach and/or Senior Jewish Educator. Each are responsible for planning and leading many of the ceremonies, Shabbat services and programs, and are there to provide Jewish conversation, guidance and insight throughout the program. The clergy are often addressing the entire group which can be challenging, so chaperones need to help these moments run as smooth as possible.

### **Doctors**

Doctors are part of the team to provide medical support to all participants and adults. They need the help of all chaperones to oversee the health and well-being of the group (ex: making sure participants are following the doctors' orders).

### **Photographer**

A photographer from Montreal will be travelling with you throughout the program to document the experience.

### **Local security and guides**

There are always security officials on your bus. When it comes to safety and security, they always have the final say and it is important to listen to any instruction from them.

- In Poland, each bus has a Polish tour guide (Pilot) and an armed Polish security guard. The Polish guide assists the educator and will arrange payment for bathrooms.
- In Israel, each bus has an armed Israeli security medic.

## **Being a Chaperone - Pre-Trip Commitment**

### **Prep- Sessions and Shabbaton**

From December until the trip departure, there are educational preparatory sessions that students and chaperones are required to attend. The content varies each session and from year to year.

All chaperones are assigned to one of the two monthly prep-sessions as a way to familiarize themselves with the students, survivors and other co-chaperones. Chaperones are also assigned to one of two Shabbaton weekends.

The weekends take place at Camp B'nai Brith in Lantier Quebec, from Friday Morning until Sunday afternoon. The time and intensity of the weekend mimic that of the March of the Living itself. There will be early mornings, jammed packed days, and late nights. This will be the opportunity for chaperones to get a taste of what the role entails prior to the trip itself.

### **MOL U**

MOL U is a series of educational sessions designed to help provide chaperones with tools and information to feel confident as facilitators and to encourage informal conversations with participants.

Some of the sessions will be mandatory and some will be optional, but we encourage chaperones to take part in as many as possible.

### **Pre-Trip Parent Communication**

Once buses are confirmed (usually in February), chaperones will be responsible for calling the parents of their small groups. Other than these initial calls, chaperones will not likely have significant contact with parents except at some information sessions. For the calls:

- Chaperones should Introduce themselves and their co-chaperones and answer any questions possible
- Ask parents if there's anything to know about their child
- Do not promise anything that can't be kept (like an exception to a rooming list)
- When chaperones are given participants' medical info, speak with the parents to learn how best to support certain medical conditions (ex: allergies, anxiety...)

### **Fundraising**

Each chaperone has a commitment of raising a minimum of \$1,800.00 CAD. The money raised goes towards helping survivors and students who would otherwise be unable to afford the trip and participate in the program.

Students are responsible to raise their minimum goal of \$360.00 each. Students will be given information to create an online peer-to-peer fundraising page in December or January. Chaperones are to encourage their small groups and send friendly reminders if they are behind.

### **Code of Conduct and Policies**

1. Conduct yourself as a role model at all times and set a professional tone. Provocative remarks, sexual innuendos and lewd comments/jokes with anyone are inappropriate. These situations can inevitably affect a chaperone's authority.

2. Chaperones are not allowed in the rooms of participants of the opposite sex (unless it is an emergency/medical situation).
3. Do not yell at or threaten participants. If you are unable to keep your calm, walk away and get assistance.
4. Do not bet participants money to complete a challenge or gamble with them.
5. Chaperones are not allowed to leave the group or leave the hotel during free time without permission from MOL Staff.
6. Chaperones cannot add any stops or activities without permission from MOL Staff.

### **Chaperone's Role during the Trip**

All participants are divided into buses with approximately 30-35 participants per group. Each bus has three or four chaperones and an educator. The bus groups are permanent for the entire program - participants, chaperones and educators travel exclusively on the assigned bus (no switching). Most of the touring time during the day (walking tours of cities, ghettos and camps) is generally separated by bus. Most meals, ceremonies, evenings, and Shabbat programming are generally spent with all of Montreal together, giving everyone ample time to socialize with those from other buses.

### **Chaperone Groups**

MOL Staff will divide the participants of each bus into pre-arranged groups of approximately 10-12 per chaperone. The system is designed to help effectively manage a large group of participants. It also helps some participants feel more comfortable approaching a particular chaperone rather than perhaps worrying about choosing whom to approach.

In general, chaperones will have the following responsibilities with regard to their Chaperone Groups:

- Pre-trip communication with parents
- Passports: each chaperone holds all the passports of their group throughout the entire trip
- Medical issues: doctors/parents/MOL Staff will speak with chaperones before departure about any pertinent medical issues
- Epipens: chaperones will hold additional epipens for participants with allergies

### **Bus Liaison**

Each chaperone team appoints one Bus Captain, an administrative role that does not affect the participants or how the bus is run - all chaperones are equal and have the same authority. In general, these are the Bus Captain's responsibilities:

- Some other administrative responsibilities as per MOL Staff
- The Bus Captain will be the main contact to disseminate information from the MOL Staff to their co-chaperones

### **Chaperone Roles**

As you can imagine there are many tasks for a bus to run smoothly. It is often helpful if specific chaperones have specific responsibilities so that nothing is forgotten and to work effectively as a team. Some tasks may be one person's responsibility for the duration of the trip, while others may rotate on a daily basis. Do not assume that everything will happen automatically.

Tasks include:

- Ensuring all floaters are present on the bus throughout the day

- Being responsible for the bus bag
- Being first at the bus to count participants as they board
- Tracking participants as they arrive at breakfast
- Overseeing a duffel crew to unload the bus at every new property
- Keeping the bus clean

### **Bus Procedures for Chaperones**

- The bus cannot depart until approval is given by MOL Staff and the assigned bus Educator
- The bus may not make any additional stops without the approval of MOL Staff and/or the educator - even for an unplanned washroom stop
- When arriving at a destination by bus (especially back to the hotel in the evening), one chaperone must ensure everyone is off the bus by checking all the seats - a sleeping teen is common and we don't want to lose anyone.
- Ensure survivor chairs are loaded on and off the bus as needed
- Ensure the bus is kept clean

### **Selflessness**

The best chaperones are selfless and mature; they are committed to the role, the March, their co-chaperones and most of all, to the participants. Remember that this is not about being the most popular or coolest chaperone, or becoming friends with the participants. The dynamic of your chaperone team will suffer if you do not share the same goals of supporting each other and the participants as a team.

This is a demanding and exhausting position and you will not always have time to yourself to sleep, shop, eat, or work out - the needs of the group come before those of the chaperones. Chaperones may have to miss parts of the itinerary if a participant needs to stay back at the hotel or if a participant needs a washroom in the middle of a tour. Chaperones are to stay with their groups at all times.

### **Teamwork**

Look out for each other and help each other. There is always work to do, so take initiative. Confer with your co-chaperones and MOL Staff/Chairs upon return to the hotel; ask how you can help before heading to your room to shower or rest. We all have our own strengths and the only way to work well as a team is communication - do not let pettiness get in the way of achieving a successful trip.

### **Unity and Consistency**

Travelling with hundreds of teenagers is not easy. Chaperones must remember that they are all essentially leaders of a group of 200 participants, not just their bus group. It is equally important that co-chaperones appear as a united team to their buses, and that all chaperones appear as a united team to the entire delegation.

## Policies and Procedures

### General Policies for Participants

1. **Drinking:** Zero tolerance for consuming alcohol - you will be sent home at own expense.
2. **Illegal Drugs:** Zero tolerance for possession or using illegal drugs - you will be sent home at own expense.
3. **Gambling:** No gambling or betting is tolerated
4. **Illegal Behaviour:** illegal behaviour like vandalism, destruction of property or shoplifting. Any damage to property will be the sole financial responsibility of the participants involved. Should no participant assume responsibility, the entire group will collectively be responsible to pay damages.
5. **Anti-Social Behaviour:** Participants are required to have a positive attitude throughout the program, treating everyone with respect and consideration.
6. **Rooming:** Participants are not allowed in the rooms of the opposite sex.
7. **Curfew:** Participants are not allowed out of their rooms after curfew.
8. **Smoking:** Participants are not allowed to smoke (including e-cigarettes).
9. **Safety:** Participants are never to be alone (in public and in hotels).
10. **Lanyards:** Participants must wear their lanyards at all times

### Food Policies

- **Kosher:** all provided food is kosher.
- **Nut-safe:** some participants have serious nut allergies so please do not buy any nut products
- **Outside food:** if participants are not allowed access to other food options during meals, then chaperones should not take advantage of their position to purchase outside food either.
- **Allergies and special food needs:** there are vegetarian options at all meals - for other allergies or special requests, chaperones should help advocate for participants and assist as needed to ensure they are taken care of (ex: speak with a chef to find out what may have nuts). Sometimes there may be special boxed meals that need to be distributed.

### Policies at hotels

- Male and female participants are never allowed in each other's rooms.
- Participants cannot leave their rooms after curfew.
- Participants should not walk around the hotel alone.
- The following actions are prohibited: leaning out of windows or off balconies, attempting to climb between rooms using window ledges or balconies, throwing any objects out windows or off balconies.
- No one is allowed to leave the property without explicit permission from MOL Staff
- Room service and food delivery is prohibited
- No one may use the swimming pool (unless MOL Staff say otherwise).

### Checking In

- When arriving at a new hotel for the first time, everyone should remain on the bus until MOL Staff give further instruction to unload the bus and enter. One chaperone should exit the bus to get more information and acquire keys. During this time, the other chaperones should make announcements - Have a small group of students unload the bags under the bus.
- It is easiest to distribute keys on the bus - once participants have keys, they can grab their bags and head to their rooms.

- If there are survivors on the bus, they are a priority. Assign one student to each survivor to carry their bags and help them to their room.

### **Room Assignments**

- Roommates are pre-assigned by MOL Staff both for participants and chaperones. All roommates are same sex. Participants are to mix things up socially. Participants on the same bus will usually not be roommates (so that participants are interacting with as many peers as possible)
- Everyone learns who their roommates are upon arrival at the hotel
- Participants are **not allowed** to switch rooms without approval from MOL Staff. If participants are not happy with rooming, chaperones should find out why and help them feel comfortable.
- Rooms in Europe and Israel vary widely and not all rooms in the same property will be the same size or have the same number of beds. Participants are generally two to four in a room, while chaperones are usually two in a room. While bed sharing is not common, it is a possibility.
- The same participants should not always end up on a rollaway cot at each property. It is often quieter and smaller boys to whom this happens. Chaperones should discreetly be on the look out for this potentially unfair pattern during room checks.
- Upon arrival to the hotel, each chaperone must ensure they receive a rooming list which will be needed for room checks.

### **Curfew**

- Curfew is a safety issue and must be enforced by chaperones.
- The curfew time will be set by the MOL Staff and will be shared with the participants by the chaperones during evening announcements.

### **Evening room checks**

- A breakdown for evening room checks will be given by MOL Staff for each hotel. Every chaperone is assigned four or five rooms for evening room checks. After curfew each night, the chaperones must check each of their assigned rooms to ensure that all participants on the rooming list are in the appropriate rooms.
- Chaperones should use the evening room checks to review the schedule for the next day

### **On Duty**

- After evening room checks (which all chaperones perform), it is time for On Duty. Each night, all chaperones will receive a list of each evening's not all chaperones are On Duty each evening. The designated chaperones must sit in the hallway outside the assigned rooms for at least 45 minutes - or later if everything is not quiet.
- Except for an emergency or medical issue, there is no acceptable excuse for participants to leave their rooms after curfew.

### **Wake-up and Morning Routines**

- Each night every chaperone will receive wake-up times for the following morning (Poland: usually between 5-7AM; Israel: usually between 6-8AM). Chaperones are expected to go door-to-door waking up the participants.
- A proper wake-up means getting a participant to open their door and ensuring that all occupants of the room are actually awake. Remind everyone of the times for breakfast, prayer and departure, and any other important information.
- Breakfast is mandatory. This is the time where we count each participant and give eat, pack lunches and hear announcements.

- At breakfast, each chaperone ensures that his or her Chaperone Group is present.

### **Checking Out**

There are a lot of tasks for chaperones at this time so teams must work together supporting each other: wake-up room checks, take attendance at breakfast, collect room keys, give instructions, supervise luggage, help load the bus, etc.

### **Bus Bag**

Each chaperone team receives a backpack prior to the trip. In general, this bag should remain with the group during the day and be brought into the hotel at night. It comes with pens, kippahs, tampons, sunscreen... but you can add items to the bag as needed.

### **Staff Meetings**

The MOL Staff and Chair(s) will call a few staff meetings throughout the trip. This is an opportunity to explain the upcoming programming, itinerary, and review policies and systems. These meetings are mandatory and will likely take place during 'free time' at the hotel.

### **What it is like in Poland**

#### **Travelling & Stops**

- You are on the bus a lot in Poland - sites are often a few hours from the hotels.
- Buses generally all travel as a group and stick to a strict busy schedule. Buses will make pre-arranged stops for bathrooms and lunch.
- The educator will advise the amount of time allocated to rest stops. Chaperones need to assist in order to stay on schedule –
- Chaperones should encourage everyone to use the washroom during these stops. The Polish pilot/guide will assist if any payment is required to use the washrooms.

#### **Food and Snacks**

The food is not bad but often plain and very repetitive - particularly breakfast and lunch. All breakfasts and dinners are usually eaten at the hotels. There is a lunch table at breakfast time where everyone must pack their own daily lunch. Participants will not always want to pack their lunches (they are tired...the food is boring...) so please encourage them to do so.

#### **Debriefing (Processing)**

There will be designated times during most evenings in Poland to spend time with your bus to talk about the day. This is an important and mandatory part of the program. Seeing the sites of the Holocaust and being part of the March is intense and there is not always enough time in the moment to sufficiently address everyone's thoughts and emotions.

Please consider the following:

- Look out for informal conversations becoming teachable moments and encourage participants to learn from themselves and each other
- The debrief should be a safe space where people feel comfortable sharing personal thoughts - be sure to set the tone from the first day and remind your group as required
- Let teens do most of the talking - chaperones are there to prompt and moderate

## **What It's Like: Israel**

Arriving in Israel after your experience in Poland will be special. Understandably, the tone of the trip changes - there will be more singing, more music, more partying, and more laughing. The upcoming week will be uplifting and energetic so take advantage of each opportunity to have fun and make meaningful moments for your bus.

This marked change in the trip, can be a good opportunity to use the first day in Israel to think critically about the experience thus far.

- Yourself
  - Think about your goals for your time in Israel and what you can do to be a better chaperone - how can you be better support for both your participants and co-chaperones
- Co-chaperone teams
  - If you haven't had any "alone time" recently, find time to meet and talk about the last week and what's on your mind for the next one
  - Don't be shy to ask your co-chaperones and educator for help and talk about how to work better together - communication is extremely important
- Your bus
  - Consider having a check-in with your bus group as a whole
  - If there are ongoing issues with participants, now can be a good time to address them directly and an opportunity to review anything

## **Staying healthy**

The week in Poland was probably exhausting and there's a good chance that many will arrive in Israel run down. While time in Israel will be a little more relaxed, it is still a busy itinerary and there may not really get an opportunity to sleep it off until you get home - the late night parties and hot sun won't really help either. Chaperones need to encourage everyone to drink water and stay safe in the heat because it is so easy to become dehydrated.

## **Food and snacks**

The food in Israel is great and often a highlight of the trip. In general, breakfasts are at the hotel; as are most dinners, or buffet style at MOL events.