

## Compete in Makeshift Maccabiah Games

In paying homage to the Maccabiah Games, you too can bring this unique aspect of Jewish heritage to your children. Played every four years, the Maccabiah Games are governed by the Maccabi Federation in affiliation with the International Olympic Committee and World Federation of Sports. Much like the Olympic Games, the Maccabiah Games are comprised of multiple events, and your children will delight in testing her own skills to go for the gold!

This game is not only perfect for paying tribute to all of the Maccabiah athletes (and Maccabees of the past), but in helping your own child (and friends) develop her own athletic abilities and coordination. Finally, at the end, she will hone her math skills as she totals up the scores to declare the winner!



### What You Need:

- Cones (like those used for soccer practice)
- Permanent markers
- String
- Red construction paper
- Scissors
- Tape
- Baseball bat and one base
- Baseballs
- Cookies

### What You Do:

1. The circle will be used for the running race, so make it an appropriate distance for the kids, and space the cones out to mark the bounds. Lay a string across the grass at the point where they will line up, and this will be the start and finish line.
2. Inside of the area marked as the outside perimeter of the race, set up a cone at one end that will mark the start of the standing broad jump. Have you child mark the name of a participant with permanent marker on each cone. Each player's cone will be used to mark the distance that she jumped.
3. In preparation for Frisbee golf round, take a piece of red construction paper and cut it into a circle, or target. Tape this circle up on a fence or tree where the kids will try to hit the target. Designate where each child will make her first toss from by placing a cone marker about 30 or 50 meters from the fence or tree target.
4. For the softball event, you will only need to place down a base to for "home plate" where the children will stand to hit the ball. Ask your child to mark each participant's name on separate baseballs so they can later find out who hit the farthest distance.
5. For the awards ceremony, bring some cookies to award children with at the end of their long day! Beforehand, you may want to use some icing decorations to write Gold, Silver, and Bronze on three of the cookies.
6. The first event will be the standing broad jump. Place a cone on the grass for the children to stand behind. Encourage them to take a leap as far as they can, and where each child lands, another participant can mark her spot with her own cone. Let everyone take a jump, and then award points to the winners. The person who jumped the farthest will get one point, the second best jump will get

two points, and so forth.

7. The next event will be the "marathon" race. Using the perimeter cones you set up around the playing field, you will have the children all line up at the start line designated by the string. Instruct them with, "On your marks, get set, and GO!" and send them off! Make sure they all stay along the outside of the cones, and the first to make it back across the finish line will be the winner. Again, award one point to first place, two points to second, etc.
8. The third event will be the Frisbee golf tournament. You will have the children stand on the site you marked with the cones as the start for the event, and they will then try to hit the circle target you have taped either on the fence or on a tree. The first child should stand at the cone and make her first throw, and wherever the Frisbee lands, she will stand at and make her next toss until she hits her target. Have each child count how many tosses it takes for them to hit the target.
9. The fourth event will be that of a makeshift softball competition. Have each child take turns standing at "home plate" with her bat in hand, as you stand back and give each player a toss with her own personalized ball. Let each ball lie where it lands after each child's hit. The child with the ball the furthest distance from the starting point will be given one point, and then proceed to give points to the next child, and so forth.
10. The final portion of the Maccabiah Games will be just like the ones set in Israel, complete with an awards ceremony. Help the children to total up their scores from all of the events, and the child with the LOWEST score will be awarded the gold medal! The second lowest score will get the silver, and the next will get the bronze. All the other children will get hardy hand shakes and congratulations too, as they are all winners!

### **Did you Know?**

The very first Maccabiah Games were played in 1932 and dreamed up by Yosef Yekutieli, when as a fifteen year old he witnessed the 1912 Olympic Games. He wanted to bring this same structure to the Jewish Community and looked to unite his people to earn money to build the stadium that would hold the games. By traveling to neighboring countries, such as Syria, Turkey, France, Belgium, Egypt, Greece, Scotland, Austria, and more, Yosef earned enough to build the stadium of his dreams in Tel Aviv, and named it Maccabiah Stadium. The first games were comprised of only track and field, football, and swimming, but today the schedule of events is that of the Olympic Summer Games. The 2009 games brought athletes from 51 different countries to take part of the 31 events. The term Maccabiah derives from the revolt that was lead by Judah Maccabee and his Maccabee army to bring the Jewish faith back to his people and reclaim their sacred temple as their own. It is for this event that we celebrate Hanukkah today!