



NORTH CAROLINA COUNCIL ON THE HOLOCAUST

NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
www.ncpublicschools.org/holocaust-council/

GUIDELINES FOR HOSTING SECOND-GENERATION HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS

__June 2017__

As time marches on, there are fewer eyewitnesses to the events of the Holocaust. In order to keep “bearing witness” to the Holocaust, we need to pass the torch to the next generation. Therefore, many of the speakers now available are 2nd or 3rd generation descendants of survivors. They have pledged to convey, to the best of their abilities, their parents’ or grandparents’ experiences as well as the impact of being a descendant of survivors.

In preparing to host a “next generation” speaker on the Holocaust, we suggest you consider the following:

- Obtain the speaker’s contact information and biographical summary so you can discuss details of the event in advance and prepare the audience for the speaker’s visit.
- Let the speaker know who the audience will be, how many you expect, and what they know or have learned about the Holocaust.
- **Decide what you want the speaker to talk about.** Topics may include his or her family’s survival stories, survivors’ experiences in displaced persons camps and immigration to the U.S. or other countries, growing up as a descendant of survivors, visits to a concentration camp or survivor’s hometown, the Jewish religion, overview of the Holocaust, and lessons learned from the Holocaust.
- Remember that not all speakers have extensive knowledge about the Holocaust. Those who do will let you know.
- Ask the speaker how comfortable he or she would be in talking about the Jewish religion.
- The speaker may choose to include the topic of European emigration to Palestine [as Israel was known prior to 1948] before, during, and after World War II and how the current State of Israel continues to provide a safe haven for Jews in the Diaspora. **But this is neither the time nor place to be discussing the current Israeli-Arab conflict.**
- Remember that the speaker is sharing survivors’ stories and may not have all the details of those experiences.
- You may be asked by the speaker to provide your audience with a list of definitions that the speaker will cover. It will help the audience better understand the subject matter if they are familiar with important terms and concepts.
- Ask the speaker if you have permission to invite additional faculty and staff, parents, and/or other community members to the presentation.

Presentation Logistics

- The most common format for presentations is a lecture/discussion with the speaker talking about his or her family’s Holocaust experiences for at least 40-45 minutes, followed by a 15-20 minute question-and-answer period with the audience. Let the speaker know how much time you are allowing, and any flexibility you may have.
- Ask the speaker if he or she prefers questions during the presentation or afterwards during the Q & A.

- Encourage staff to assist with respectful decorum and behavior. Speakers should not be responsible for controlling disruptive talking and behavior during the presentation.
- Because some speakers often use a PowerPoint presentation of visuals, video clips, and still images, ask them about any IT needs. Be prepared to have a projector, screen, speakers, electrical power cords, a podium/stand or table, and a portable microphone. Also consider having water and a chair for the speaker.
- Ask the speaker for permission to be photographed, interviewed, or videotaped for your organization or school.
- It is okay to have media present, as long as you inform the speaker of this.
- **Be sure the speaker knows the specifics about your venue:** address, directions, parking, entrance, location of the office for check-in, etc. Give the speaker your phone contact for the day of the event.

Program Introduction

- Ask the audience to turn off all cell phones/pagers before the presentation begins.
- Unless this is a meal function, have the audience refrain from eating or drinking during the presentation.
- Announce the length of the program and encourage audience members to stay for its entirety—both to demonstrate respect for the speaker and to minimize disruptions.
- Explain why you have invited the speaker.
- Ask the speaker how he or she would like to be introduced.
- Make sure the audience can hear the speaker.

Conducting the Question & Answer Session

- Allow time for audience questions, as most speakers enjoy engaging with the audience.
- Encourage your audience to come prepared with questions.
- Consider asking school students to share their questions with you in advance. Alert the speaker to any questions you consider controversial or inappropriate.
- Ask if the speaker prefers to act as his or her own moderator.
- Speakers are encouraged not to engage in discussion about the Arab-Israeli conflict, or to make any political comments or endorsements. But because of the rhetoric and behaviors we see in our schools and society today, they may discuss the applicable lessons learned from talking about the Holocaust.

Program Follow-Up

- In addition to sending the speaker a note of appreciation, you might encourage school students to share notes of thanks as well.
- Do not give out the speaker's address to the audience. Let the speaker share contact information if he or she wishes.
- Organizations may want to consider making a donation to the North Carolina Holocaust Foundation, which supports the work of the N.C. Council on the Holocaust. Contact Michael Abramson, Council chairman, at mabramson@nc.rr.com.