The Butterfly Project
Levine Jewish Community Center

Audience: 5th - 12th grade students, with some prior Holocaust knowledge

Curriculum: *2 ½ to 3-hour experience that includes a Holocaust survivor’s story (in most cases a survivor will be available to tell his/her story)

* artistic, educational, hands-on project that remembers the 1.5 million children who perished in the Holocaust; students will paint a ceramic butterfly that memorializes a child whose name they will learn during the seminar

* visit to our Butterfly Sculpture and participation in a discussion group where they will be inspired to be an active participant in building bridges of communication, understanding and respect for all people

Purpose: The Butterfly Project teaches the lessons of the Holocaust and what can happen when prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination are allowed to flourish. It is critical that today’s youth examine the past in order to understand what can happen when individuals and governments fail to take a stand against injustice. It is our goal that students implement what they have learned here into their daily lives, so that ultimately they can better understand how to interrupt hateful behaviors in their schools, communities, society and beyond. Students walk away with an awareness of the effects of the Holocaust on its most innocent victims – the children.

Background: Created at the San Diego Jewish Academy (www.sdja.com) in 2006, their Butterfly Project seeks to create 1.5 million ceramic butterflies worldwide in honor of the children who lost their lives in the Holocaust. The Levine JCC is a proud participant in this effort and has expanded on this idea by reaching across cultural barriers and positively influencing our children and communities. For more information, please visit The Butterfly Project at the Levine Jewish Community Center at www.charlottejcc.org.
Community Response:

“I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for organizing the 5th grade JCC field trip today. It was very powerful for Garrett. Usually, when he comes home, I get the typical, ‘How was your day? GOOD. What did you do?’ NOTHING.’ However, today was completely different. He couldn’t wait to launch into the retelling of the Holocaust survivor’s harrowing tale. He felt that every detail was important. He wanted to know when I could take him back to the JCC to see his painted butterfly and the wall. THAT is history come to life that my son won’t soon forget.”

Olde Providence Elementary Parent

“The message was clearly the single most important lesson we can pass onto our children especially while survivors are here to speak. The delivery was amazing . . . everyone left the program giving pause to how we treat others, discrimination and having each other’s backs. We need to keep that message resonating throughout our Jewish community and beyond.”

Temple Israel Religious School Parent

“I don’t know what I was expecting when I came here, perhaps the history or culture of the Jewish people. I was instead given a lesson in compassion. There can be no peace without love, no love without understanding, and there can be no understanding without thinking. As an educator, I will encourage critical free thought and inquiry to foster understanding.”

Participant in the North Carolina Teaching Fellow Program

“Thank you for having us visit for a great learning experience about the Holocaust. We have learned not to have stereotypes about anyone we see, and to get to know them first so that what happened during the Holocaust never happens again.”

Charlotte Secondary Middle School Student

Cost: The cost per person for the workshop is approximately $15, however, with the help of generous donations and grants we are happy to be able to offer this experience to groups for $5 per participant. This is an interactive and educational program that we would like everyone to be able to take part in no matter your financial ability. Scholarship information is available upon request. Workshops are limited to 100 participants per day. If your group is larger, it will be necessary for you to attend on more than one day.

Location: The Levine Jewish Community Center (LJCC) is located on a secluded 54-acre campus in the heart of South Charlotte. The LJCC is a family-oriented, vibrant facility where you can feel a sense of community and belonging. We are a diverse, multi-cultural community center, open to people of all faiths. The LJCC is located on Shalom Park, one campus that represents a unique joint venture of the Sandra and Leon Levine Jewish Community Center, the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte, Jewish Family Services, Temple Beth El and Temple Israel.

Resources: www.levine-sklutjudaiclibrary.org
www.yadvashem.org
www.adl.org/main_Holocaust/default.htm

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