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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What is JChoice?

A: JChoice.org – the website for the next generation of giving – is a non-profit organization that supports overlooked and meaningful causes embodied in Jewish values. JChoice offers a social network for learning and consciousness raising that connects these important causes with the next generation of contributors. JChoice facilitates and broadens the opportunity for individuals to perform Tzedakah (charitable giving) through an organization global in reach and open to helping many deserving causes in the United States, Israel and other countries in the world.

Q: What is JChoice’s mission?

A: JChoice’s mission is to empower the next generation of contributors to learn and experience Tzedakah and become more thoughtful in their relationship to society.

Q: Why should someone use JChoice?

A: JChoice provides the online ability to easily search, compare, and select a cause closest to your heart and donate directly to it. In many cases, small non-profit organizations do not have the mechanism to receive online donations, and even if they do, they are rarely directed to a specific project. Donor groups are also available.

Q: What role does education play in JChoice?

A: One of the most exciting elements of JChoice is the opportunity for the JChoice community to learn and engage each other about Tzedakah. The JChoice website features music, videos, and other resources relating to Tzedakah and the obligations to participate as a giving community.

Q: What does JChoice have to do with a Bar or Bat Mitzvah?

A: Being that the Bar or Bat Mitzvah was intended to occur at the beginning of one’s Jewish journey into adulthood, we have chosen to focus most of our initial campaign efforts on this age group. If a person begins adulthood by performing Tzedakah (which “is as important as all the other commandments put together” - Baba Batra 9a, Babylonian Talmud), and stays involved over time, that person

will perform Tzedakah for the rest of his or her life. As a result, many of the Causes that JChoice features are particularly meaningful to this age group. Nevertheless, persons of any age can also consider themselves part of “the next generation of contributors,” and we encourage their participation in JChoice.

Q: How does JChoice provide the Bar or Bat Mitzvah student an opportunity to make clear, relevant connections with his or her D’var Torah, Mitzvah project, and choices of Tzedakah as they relate to the larger global community?

A: The opportunity to expand the Bar or Bat Mitzvah experience in a vibrant and dynamic way within a larger global community of peers has not been possible until now. JChoice has launched with several contests and Tzedakah promotion opportunities (Yes, students will be able to win money to give away to their causes of choice!) One contest involves the creation of a “donor reflection” video featuring the experience of an individual’s Tzedakah efforts or internal processing of a Jewish value. Another contest involves the submission of D’var Torah, prepared by most Bar and Bat Mitzvah students in alignment with their weekly Torah portion. As our database builds over time, JChoice members will be able to learn from each other and network about their concerns and accomplishments as they deepen their relationship to important Jewish values they admire.

Q: How does JChoice hope to stay relevant to the youth of today?

A: JChoice is both an attractive, appealing website AND a social network that empowers this online generation to explore Jewish values in action and discover their own character growth and heightened consciousness. At JChoice, the individual makes his or her own Tzedakah choices; group consensus is not required. Additionally, JChoice has created fan clubs for teens to get involved through YouTube videos and other viral sensations. JChoice also produces original videos which will be broadcasted on the internet as “Webisodes.” Giving is an expression of their Jewish identity.

Q: How can I donate money?

A: Tax-deductible donations may be made via credit card, check, or money order. You can also buy a JChoice Gift Card and give it as a gift for lifecycle events, and in honor or in memoriam.

Q: Is there a minimum donation?

A: Every donation makes a difference. The minimum donation is \$18.00. Larger donations are most welcome. In Jewish tradition, the number eighteen is symbolically special because it is the numeric equivalent of the letters that spell “Chai” (Life). The message at JChoice is the same as the message of Tzedakah: It is not how much you give, but simply the fact that you give something.

Q: Is my contribution tax deductible?

A: The parent of JChoice.org – Jewish Causes of Choice, Inc. – is a US 501(c)(3) organization, which means that 100 percent of every donation to JChoice is tax-deductible under the US tax code.

Q: How will JChoice.org grow?

A: JChoice will grow through faith-based partnership. The first phase of JChoice’s outreach strategy is to engage the estimated 40,000 young people becoming Bar and Bat Mitzvah annually in North America. The organization seeks to support the many synagogue communities that seek logical and appealing strategies for linking the now popular “Mitzvah project” (community service) with meaningful Tzedakah choices and the Jewish values found in their Torah portions or relevance to their higher expressions of identity. Today, JChoice.org is working closely with approximately 20 pilot sites in Greater Boston, including Hebrew schools and day schools across all denominations. Over the next five years, JChoice.org will seek to partner with 250 synagogues, community institutions and giving clubs nationwide to make use of JChoice.org’s curriculum materials and free services.

Q: What are the criteria for a charity to be part of JChoice.org? Do they have to be invited?

A: JChoice.org maintains an established set of criteria for all charities it works with. Major criteria include that the charity have legitimate status (such as being a 501(c) (3)) and a mission that is in line with Jewish values. JChoice.org also looks at things like how the organization governs itself, the constituents it serves, effectiveness of their work and impact on repairing the world. It is a careful process. Some charities are invited to join, some have reached out to JChoice.org, and some have been recommended by users, partners and advisors.

Q: How does JChoice.org get paid?

A: At startup, JChoice.org is mostly funded by philanthropic supporters as JChoice.org allocates 90 percent of donations to the charities. As that includes credit card and transaction fees, across the non-profit world, this is an excellent rate for a fundraising service. The organization’s long term strategy is to establish an endowment that would cover all administrative and programming costs, thus bringing 100% of every dollar directly to the charities.

Q: How is JChoice.org approaching temples?

A: There are staff and volunteers dedicated to synagogue outreach. Their job is to establish and maintain the organization’s dialog with the religious community. There is also a board of advisors that is well-connected in the Jewish community. Ultimately, Mr. Troderman spends a great deal of his time communicating with this audience as well.