

# The Mensch Challenge!

If someone tells you you're a mensch (MENCH) don't worry. Being called a mensch is the highest compliment! In Yiddish, "mensch" means "person," but if someone calls you a mensch, what they really mean is that you are a good person. A mensch is someone who treats others with kindness and respect. A mensch considers his or her actions and tries to do the right thing in every situation.

The idea of "menschlichkeit" (MENCH-LICH-KITE), or being a mensch, has its root in Jewish values. A real mensch is someone who gives *zedakah*, gives help to people who are sick (*bikkur cholim*), honors her parents, and is concerned with *tikkun olam*, the repair of the world. And perhaps most importantly, a mensch does *g'milut chasadim*, acts of loving kindness.

Can you think of three ways in which you've behaved like a mensch? Write them down!

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



## Now take the MENSCH CHALLENGE!

Think of three ways you can be a mensch in the coming weeks. Write them down:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Now do them!

If you can, take a picture of your favorite mensch activity. Describe what you did. Send your picture and description to me at [jane@janekohuth.com](mailto:jane@janekohuth.com) and I'll put you on my blog and website. You might even be my *MENSCH OF THE MONTH!* If you are my Mensch of the Month, I will send you a signed copy of my book, **Estie the Mensch** to donate to a school or library of your choice.



The word "mensch" comes from **Yiddish**, a language that Jews have spoken for a thousand years. Yiddish got its start in Europe, in what is now Germany, as a mixture of German and Hebrew. As Jews moved into Eastern Europe over the centuries, Yiddish gained some Polish and Russian words, too. Jewish immigrants in the late 19th and early 20th centuries brought Yiddish with them to America. Today many Yiddish words have been adopted into English and are familiar to Jews and non-Jews alike.