



## World Federation of Jewish Child Survivors of the Holocaust

*We are the Jewish Child Survivors of the Holocaust persecuted by the Nazis in ghettos, in camps, in hiding, on the run or forced to leave Nazi occupied Europe. Our objectives are to represent the interests of the child survivor community, to support each other, to keep alive the memory of the six million Jews – including the 1.5 million children – murdered during the Holocaust and to pass on our legacy to future generations. We pursue these objectives by telling the stories of our survival, by community interaction, education, holding conferences and by fighting anti-Semitism.*

The Hidden Child Foundation/ADL, NY  
KTA – Kindertransport Association, NY  
Friends and Alumni of OSE-USA, MD  
European Association of Jewish Child  
Survivors of the Holocaust

Ukrainian Assn. of Jews Former Prisoners  
of Ghetto and Nazi Concentration Camps  
Aloumim, Israel  
Association of Children of the Holocaust in  
Poland  
Assn. of Child Survivors in Croatia  
Assn. of Jewish War Children – Amsterdam  
Assn. of Unknown Children, Netherlands  
Child Survivors Group of British Columbia  
Child Survivor Group of Sydney, Australia  
Child Survivors' Assn. of Great Britain-AJR  
Child-Survivors-Deutschland e.V.  
Child Survivors, Hungary  
Child Survivors/Hidden Children of Toronto  
Children of The Shoah,  
Figli Della Shoah, Italy  
Generaciones de la Shoá en Argentina  
Hidden Child Assn. of the Netherlands  
Hidden Child-Praha  
Holocaust Children in Sweden  
Jews Rescuing Jews, Israel  
Melbourne Child Survivors of the Holocaust  
Mengele Twins, Israel  
Montreal Child Survivors/Hidden Children  
Organizacia Hidden Child,  
Ukryvane Diet'a Slovensko  
Swiss Assn. of Hidden Children  
Terezin Initiativa-International  
Terezin Assn.  
Union of Former Ghetto and  
KZ Prisoners, Lithuania  
Yesh-Children and Orphans Holocaust  
Survivors in Israel

Assn. of Holocaust Survivors from the  
Former Soviet Union – Brooklyn, NY  
Bay Area Hidden Children, CA  
Child Survivor Group of Orange Co. CA  
Child Survivors, Chicago  
Child Survivors of the Holocaust of Houston  
Child Survivors of the Holocaust, LA  
Child Survivors of the Holocaust  
of N.E. Ohio  
Child Survivors of the Holocaust, NM  
Child Survivors/Hidden Children  
of Palm Beach Co.  
Greater Boston Child Survivor Group  
Greater Seattle Child Survivors  
Hidden Child/Child Survivor Group  
of St. Louis  
Hidden Children/Chicago  
Hidden Children of Rockland County, NY  
Hidden Children of the Holocaust  
of Bergen County, NJ  
Hidden Children of Westchester, NY  
Hidden Children/Child Survivors of  
Michigan  
Holocaust Child Survivors of Connecticut  
Hungarian Hidden Children – New York  
Jewish Child Holocaust Survivors,  
Philadelphia  
Oregon Holocaust Survivors,  
Refugees and Families  
Rocky Mountain Regional Gathering  
of Child Holocaust Survivors  
Survivors of the Holocaust–The Last  
Generation, Washington/Baltimore  
Yaldei Hashoah, San Francisco

### FROM THE DEPTHS OF OUR TROUBLED PAST, WE REACH FOR THE FUTURE

### AN APPEAL TO THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

*If not we, who?*

*If we alone, why?*

*If not now, when?*

As our generation – the last Survivors – passes from the scene, the issue of Holocaust remembrance takes on renewed urgency. With maturity and experience, and as the events of our childhoods recede in time, we realize that the memorials and museums we helped to create are not guarantors of **authentic** remembrance far into the future.

We, the last witnesses, have done what we could to leave a legacy of remembrance for future generations. Overcoming our reluctance about speaking in public, we have emerged from our silence and gone into schools, synagogues, churches, and wherever a platform was extended to us, to bear witness before new audiences.

And we have done more, much more. We have recorded our experiences at great length in electronic media that will live well beyond our own time. We have written books. We have entrusted our precious documents and artifacts to Holocaust museums and archives. We have formed Survivor organizations that will leave a legacy of their own in publications that reflect the anguish and the joys of our adult lives.

At great emotional cost, we have told our children the stories of our childhoods and the brutal fate of our families. We have raised a remarkably generous and responsible generation of human beings, our beloved children, now known as “the second generation,” who have taken the cause of Holocaust remembrance to heart.

As our concerns focus ever more on our own mortality and the resulting uncertainties we perceive about the future of Holocaust remembrance, we must now appeal to the Jewish people, its eminent spiritual leaders, philosophers, and scholars to assure that the Holocaust will always be commemorated.

The most reliable keeper of our own memories is the collective memory of Judaism itself. Through its calendar and liturgy, Judaism transmits remembrance from generation to generation. We remember at Passover our suffering in Pharaoh's land as we celebrate our freedom from bondage. We remember Haman's thwarted plans to destroy the Jews of Persia, we mourn the destruction of the First and Second Temples in Jerusalem, and we rejoice in the miracle of a drop of oil that burned for eight days and nights, restoring a defiled sanctuary. Year after year, we celebrate the Creation of the world and the gift of Torah. **Commemoration is at the heart of Judaism.**

Does the Holocaust have an assured place in the cycle of Jewish Commemorations? Are the proliferating Yom Hashoah ceremonies merely *ad hoc* events or do they have religious standing? How will they be perpetuated when the last witnesses – Survivors and Liberators – are gone? What rituals in Jewish practice will recall the destruction of Europe's Jewish communities, the martyrdom of our parents, our own tortured lives, and the lessons to be learned?

These are the unanswered questions that haunt us in our old age. Though we acknowledge that many of us have been secular Jews, we place our trust for permanent Holocaust remembrance in Judaism's time-tested tradition for guarding memory alive: a definitive day of Commemoration in the Jewish calendar, binding upon all Jews who consider themselves such, and rituals and liturgy that perpetuate memory and do honor to our Six Million Martyrs.

This appeal, presented here in the name of the *WORLD FEDERATION OF JEWISH CHILD SURVIVORS OF THE HOLOCAUST*, constitutes a collective testament. It is an ethical charge we place upon the leaders of the Jewish people, those here today and those of times to come: **to bind those who did not survive to the Jews of all generations by designating a day of sanctioned Holocaust Commemoration.**

May the sacred memory of our Six Million Martyrs overcome all sectarian strife and religious discord within the House of Israel, and may it bring about good will and mutual understanding in pursuit of the noble task we are entrusting to you.

GERDA BIKALES and ESTHER POSNER  
Co-chairs of the Project on the Future of Holocaust Remembrance  
*WORLD FEDERATION OF JEWISH CHILD SURVIVORS  
OF THE HOLOCAUST*

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