

UNDERSTANDING CONSENSUS

Jewish youth philanthropy participants use consensus as a tool to make group decisions throughout the giving experience. In order to do this, the group will need to gain a basic understanding of consensus and consensus-building tools.



Consensus is...



- A mutual agreement among members of a group where all concerns of the individuals have been addressed.
- An agreement to move forward with a decision even if it is not every group member's first choice.
- A process that listens to everyone's opinions and respects personal differences.



Consensus is not...

- A majority vote
- About winners and losers.
- An endless discussion.



Tips for coming to Consensus

- Active listening.
- Our next move, thought, or sentence may be reliant on what someone has just said.
- It's ok to change direction or to change your opinion.
- Give permission to change our minds without penalty.



Tools

- Process of elimination: If there is an item among the options that no one has selected, we feel ok to remove that item from consideration.
- Temperature check: Instead of using a classic "Yes" or "No" vote, use the Thumbs Up/Thumbs Down method:



Thumbs Up: "Yes, I feel good about this decision."



Thumbs Down: "I do not want to move forward with this option / I need several questions answered before I can move forward."



Thumbs to the Side: "I feel ok, but I have a question"

