



Rabbi Rachmiel Tobesman is a Boy Scouts chaplain.

Scout's Motto: He's Prepared

Rabbi Rachmiel Tobesman, a Pikesville resident and chairman of the Jewish Committee on Scouting, has taken the Boy Scout credo, "Be Prepared," to heart. The scout chaplain recently completed extensive training through the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Department of Homeland Security, the National Incident Management System and the National Disaster Interfaith Network to receive his certification in disaster spiritual care, field operations and disaster mental health.

Rabbi Tobesman, who's been involved with the Boy Scouts of America for a decade, has frequently been called on to help out spiritually when tragedy has struck. In 2007, he spoke with youngsters after a lightning strike injured 14 scouts. Two years later, following the death of a 14-year-old boy during a mountain hike, he counseled scouts.

So how does being a Jewish chaplain differ from non-Jewish ones? "It's surprising," says Rabbi Tobesman, who also serves as the head chaplain at Broad Creek Memorial Scout Reservation in Harford County. "I bring a different perspective. Judaism has an emphasis on the preservation of life and comforting those in need. It's part of our tradition and is codified in Jewish law. With other faiths, they take a much different view, putting things in the hands of God. We believe in a proactive process."

— Rochelle Eisenberg