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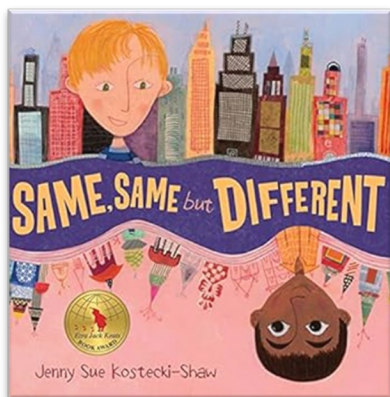
Yom Ha'atzmaut: Celebrating Israel's Birthday with Young Children

Yom Ha'atzmaut is Israel's birthday; a joyful time to celebrate all that makes Israel special! We can begin to develop a connection to Israel through exploration, play, and storytelling from a very young age. Below are ideas for you to connect Israel and your family, along with songs, stories, and simple ways to make this day meaningful for your children.



Photo by Johnk85 on Flickr

In Hebrew we call Israel, **Eretz Yisrael**. Hebrew is the language they speak in Israel. Can you try saying “**Eretz Yisrael**”? We will spend some time exploring Eretz Yisrael in this article.



Together with your child read or listen to the book [Same, Same but Different by Jenny Sue Kostecki-Shaw](#). Although it is not specifically about Israel, it beautifully introduces the idea that children can live in different places but still have shared experiences. Use this as a springboard to compare life in Israel and your own home:

- **What is the same?** Parks, playgrounds, and play are similar in both countries.
- **What is different?** In Israel, people speak Hebrew—and even everyday foods like hummus and chocolate milk often come in a bag instead of a box.

To go further, add a visual element: print a photo of a playground in Israel and one from your neighborhood. Or compare a house in Jerusalem made of Jerusalem stone with one in Florida. What do your children notice that's the same? What is different?

Have a Song & Dance Celebration! Music is one of the most joyful ways to celebrate! Here are a few kid-friendly songs to sing and dance to:



“Am Yisrael Chai” – Sing along with [Yirmi G.](#) Simple words, big spirit!

Am Yisrael Chai
Od Avinu Chai

English Translation:
The People of Israel Live
Our Father Still Lives

Try listening to other versions of Am Yisrael Chai... it's the hottest song in Israel right now as [sung by Eyal Golan](#)

And these [Israeli school children sing Am Yisrael Chai with all their heart and soul!](#)



“Eretz Yisrael Sheli” - An oldie but goodie! And it is perfect for little ones; it includes images of flowers and land and speaks of how the Jewish people built up the land.

You might consider having a mini dance party with Israeli music or try simple movements for each song, like planting for *Eretz Yisrael Sheli* or making a beating heart hand movement for *Am Yisrael Chai*

Visit Special Places in Israel with Virtual Visits & Real Memories

Choose one or two iconic locations to "visit together" - consider:

- [Masada](#) – Talk about mountains and desert hikes.
- [The Kotel \(Western Wall\)](#) – Share a photo and explain it is a special place where people write notes and send wishes.

Ask family or friends if they have been to Israel. Can they share a photo, artifact (like a kippah or small stone), or video from their trip? Invite your child to hold, touch, and ask questions.



Fireworks over Jerusalem by Lavi Perchik on Unsplash

Explore [Israel All Around Us: Everyday Inventions](#) -- Did you know some of the things we use every day were invented in Israel? [Waze](#) – the app many grownups use to drive! [Drip irrigation](#) – a special way to water plants invented in Israel.

- Show your child how you open Waze and explain it came from Israel.
- Water a plant using a cup with a tiny hole (DIY drip irrigation!) and explain how this idea helps farmers around the world.

Wear Blue & White and Celebrate with a Birthday Bash

Since it is Israel's birthday, make it a party! First, show your children the Israeli flag- notice it is blue and white. Decorate your table with blue and white streamers or balloons. Maybe you can even print pictures of Israeli flags. Bake cupcakes and top them with mini flags of Israel (or blueberries and white frosting). Sing "Happy Birthday" in Hebrew:

[Ha'Yom Yom Huledet](#), Israel's birthday song!

Use Art to Connect to Israel: Create a "My Israel" Poster - Invite your child to make a collage or poster about what they have learned.

Materials:

- Pictures of Israel (cut from magazines or printed)
- Hebrew letters or words they know
- Drawings of special places, inventions, or foods



Create an Israeli Flag - You will see blue and white flags hanging from balconies, cars, and buildings all over Israel. Kids wave flags in parades and celebrations. Make your own Israeli flag with crayons, paint, or fabric. Let children wave them as they sing or march around the room!



Photo by Timo Wagner on Unsplash

Experience Israeli Mangals - Just like we might grill on the 4th of July, in Israel, it's common to have a ["mangal"](#) - [an outdoor barbecue](#) with family and friends.

Have a picnic-style lunch or dinner; try it outside! You can even make Israeli-style food like pita, hummus, or falafel, or just eat together in honor of the day.

And make sure to have your outdoor celebration with music and dancing. Streets and parks come alive with music, Israeli dancing, and fireworks the night before and day of Yom Ha'atzmaut.

Yom Ha'atzmaut is more than a birthday—it is a chance to explore, celebrate, and connect. From dancing in the living room to tasting hummus or hearing Hebrew, these

small moments help build a big connection to Israel. Let this day be full of fun, discovery, and meaningful memories for your family.

[The Robert Russell Early Childhood Department of CAJE | The Center for the Advancement of Jewish Education](#) in Miami presents a new initiative aimed at enriching your children's understanding of Israel through engaging and thought-provoking content from a monthly article penned by two early childhood education experts: [Rabbi Dr. Meir Muller](#) and [Alana Gelnick](#).

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