# Table of Contents

**INTRODUCTION**  
4

**B’M Program Overview—a 3-Year Commitment**  
5

**Study Requirements**  
6  
1. Weekly Learning  
6  
2. Family Learning—B’M Family Class  
6  
3. Individual Study (Tutoring)  
6

**Process and Preparation for the B’M Ritual**  
8  
1. B’M Date Assignment  
8  
2. Clergy Service Leaders for Your B’M  
9  
3. Service Attendance  
9  
4. Meetings and Clergy-Family Preparation  
10  
5. Parent Volunteering  
11  
6. Accessibility  
11  
7. Financial Commitment  
11  
8. Other Notes  
12

**B’M Day-of-Ritual Logistics**  
13  
1. Food and Drink  
13  
2. Printed Programs and Kippot  
14  
3. Seating, Flowers and Decorations  
15  
4. Access to the Social Hall  
15  
5. Information to Share with Your Guests  
15

**Family B’M Planning Timeline**  
17

**APPENDICES**  
19  
Appendix 1: B’M Ritual Glossary  
20  
Appendix 2: Honors During the Service  
23  
Appendix 3: Outline of the B’M Process  
25  
Appendix 4: Financial Expectations  
26  
Appendix 5: Morning vs. Minkha Service  
27  
Appendix 6: Supplies to Bring on Your B’M Day  
28  
Appendix 7: Congregational Invitation Email  
29  
Appendix 8: B’M Schedule Templates  
30  
Appendix 9: B’M Celebration Questions to Consider  
31
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FORMS</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kolot Chayeinu B’M Intake Form</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kolot Chayeinu B’M Covenant</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MENUS</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mediterranean Menu – Fairway</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park Slope Menu – Fairway</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashkenazi Menu – La Bagel Delight</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Some Online Resources for Studying Torah</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>


INTRODUCTION

Bar or Bat Mitzvah (plural B’nai Mitzvah, abbreviated throughout as B’M) is the title given to a young person becoming a more conscious, intentional, and responsible member of the Jewish community. Children become B’M simply by turning 13, but it is customary for this transition to be marked by a year of study culminating in a communal ritual. It is an important step in the transition to adulthood and the acceptance of responsibility for one’s own actions and choices.

As a public acknowledgement, the B’M ceremony takes place within the context of a worship service at which a portion from the Torah is read. During the course of that service, the B’M are given the opportunity to demonstrate that they have acquired the skills to participate in the service and fulfill some of the obligations of Jewish adulthood.

**Participation in the service is the heart and the soul of the B’M ceremony.** Through working with gifted tutors and clergy, students will be well prepared to read Torah and/or Haftarah, chant blessings and some prayers, and delve into the text and give a d’var Torah.

Kolot Chayeinu is a progressive congregation composed of individuals of varying sexual orientations, gender identifications, races, family arrangements, and Jewish identities and backgrounds. Whatever your family constellation or experience of Judaism, you are welcome within the B’M process.

B’nai mitzvah at Kolot Chayeinu take place within prayer services that are open to all, and are a celebration both for B’M families and for the Kolot congregation. The entire congregation looks forward to sharing the joy as our children become young adults.

What follows is a collection of both celebratory and ritual information/forms that a Kolot family will need throughout the duration of the B’M process. It is our hope that each family will make frequent use of this document as they enter this special time of growth and learning.

This handbook does NOT contain detailed information on the ins-and-outs of the B’M learning program, which families will receive from the leader of the Children’s Learning Program.
B’”M Program Overview—a 3-Year Commitment

Kolot’s B’”M education program is a 3-year commitment that is designed to prepare students and their families as they step into the Kolot community as intentional, contributing members. While we understand that all New York families lead very busy lives, and that our program requires much time and cooperation from all parties, we have found that students who fully commit to the 3-year process are not only the best prepared to stand in front of our community on the day of their B’”M, but also that they gain the most from the B’”M experience. To that end, we ask families to sign a B’”M Covenant Document (p. 35) before they enter into the program. Only in very rare instances, at the discretion of clergy, will a student/family be permitted to enter the program and follow a different track of study.

Here is a basic outline of the course of study. Each child’s timeline will vary, based on their ceremony date.

YEAR 1:
- B’”M Year 1 class (weekly)
- Family Class (monthly)
- Service attendance (monthly)
- Individual tutoring may start, depending on your ceremony date

YEAR 2:
- B’”M Year 1 class (weekly)
- Family Class (monthly)
- Service attendance (monthly)
- Individual tutoring starts/continues, depending on your ceremony date
- Your child’s ceremony may fall during this year

YEAR 3:
- What’s Up?! (every other week)
- Your child’s ceremony may fall during this year
- Continued tutoring if ceremony has not yet happened
- Service attendance if ceremony has not yet happened

Please see page 17 for a more detailed timeline, and page 26 for a breakdown of the financial expectations of B’”M families.
Study Requirements

Below is a brief description of three areas that comprise the study commitment of all B”M students and their families.

1. Weekly Learning

Students are expected to participate in Kolot’s B”M classes as they are the place where students will learn much of the tefillot (prayers) and critical analyses of Jewish community, rituals and texts which are essential to becoming B”M at Kolot. Beyond this, the classroom is also the primary place where students will encounter their peers and be challenged to think more deeply about Jewishness and what it means to be part of the greater Kolot community.

For more detailed information about our B”M weekly learning program, please email clp@kolotchayeinu.org.

2. Family Learning – B”M Family Class

Students and their parents are expected to participate in Kolot’s B”M Family Class. This is a time for parents and children to learn and talk together about being Jewish, becoming B”M, prayer, God, Torah, community, and more. The curriculum includes the Jewish calendar and holidays, Torah and methods of interpretation, the prayers of the Shabbat service, and the Torah service specifically, and participation in Kolot holiday observances as they align with Family Class. Parents, students and clergy meet for one hour once a month. The Family Class will usually be facilitated by clergy, including student rabbis(s) and may sometimes also be taught by a guest educator.

If you cannot make a Family Class one month, your child/ren should still participate and we will have them sit with another family. If your child cannot attend, you should also still participate. Please email the Rabbi and Cantor if you and your child/ren have to miss a Family Class. rabbi@kolotchayeinu.org / cantor@kolotchayeinu.org

3. Individual Study (Tutoring)

Tutoring toward B”M begins, ideally, one year (12 months) before the date of the ceremony. This timeline allows for gaps in study for vacations, holidays, etc. When students are in Kitah Hay (5th grade), we begin the process of assigning dates for students. (See page 8 for information on the date-setting process.) After B”M dates are assigned, the Cantor works with families to connect them with one of Kolot’s many talented tutors.
We recommend parents meet with the tutor before tutoring begins to set time expectations and a fee structure. Tutors generally work with students once a week for about an hour. Tutors usually meet at your home, though it may be possible to make other arrangements.

The B’M process is intense and ultimately gratifying for all. With planning, preparation, and the support of the Kolot staff, clergy, and community, it is more than possible for students to excel and thrive throughout the tutoring process. To that end, parents are expected to ensure that students:

- practice 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week.
- keep an orderly binder for required papers.
- follow through with the tutor’s instructions.
- meet with tutor for an hour once a week; as the date of the B’M draws closer, there may be additional meetings.

NOTE: Families must make a financial arrangement with their tutor separate from membership dues and school fees. While we match tutors and students, parents must make a clear financial arrangement with tutors and are expected to fulfill that agreement. See page 26 for range of tutoring rates.

The tutor will prepare the student for the following:

- Chanting Torah blessings
- Chanting their Torah portion with trope (traditional chant)
- Writing and presenting a 7- to 10-minute d’var Torah (word of Torah) speech based on the Torah portion
- Chanting Haftarah blessings
- Presenting their haftarah portion which may be chanted traditionally or presented in an optional creative project (required only for morning service B’M, not minkha)
- Chanting a few Shabbat service prayers, including a special set of psalms for the minkha service, known as Ashrei

The tutor usually serves as the gabbai (guide at the Torah table) for the student’s Torah reading on the day they become a B’M, unless the tutor must unavoidably be away that day, in which case the Cantor or other clergy step in.
Process and Preparation for the B’M Ritual

The above categories give a broad sense of the overall educational requirements for students and families to in order to become B’M at Kolot. That being said, there are several other important details that each family will need to attend to in preparation for their students’ simcha (a joyous occasion). The following sections will address those:

1. B’M Date Assignment
2. Clergy for your B’M
3. Service Attendance
4. Meetings and Clergy-Family Preparation
5. Parent Volunteering
6. Accessibility
7. Financial Commitment
8. Other notes

1. B’M Date Assignment

In Kitah Hay (5th grade), we begin the process of assigning dates for B’M rituals. We ask parents to fill out the B’M Intake Form (p. 33) in order to gather information on their child along with some preferences regarding dates and times of the ritual. We do our best to accommodate preferences as the number of B’M students grows every year, and we appreciate your patience and understanding through the scheduling process. The B’M Coordinator collects and sorts the information, working closely with families and clergy to finalize a date.

Dates will generally be assigned in batches, with one round of dates set in late summer/early fall and another in winter. For smaller classes, we may do just one round.

We are blessed to have more and more young people becoming B’nai Mitzvah at Kolot. And Kolot has a long-standing commitment to maintain non-B’M morning Shabbatot which include opportunities to leyn (read) and drash (prepare a talk) about Torah, as well as chances for special speakers and rituals and lunchtime programs. As such, we assign morning B’M’s ONLY on the first and third Saturdays of the month in order to make room for this. As needed, we may also offer Minkha B’M’s. Those are always assigned on the second and fourth Saturdays of the month.

**Once you are assigned a date, it can be very difficult to change it.** Please ensure that you have checked on all work, family, and other obligations before accepting your date.
2. Clergy Service Leaders for Your B’M

As we have grown, it has become impossible to commit to having all of the clergy at each and every B’M service. Service leaders for your family’s simcha may include a) Rabbi and Cantor; b) Rabbi, Cantor and Student Rabbi; c) either the Rabbi or Cantor along with the Student Rabbi; or, d) occasionally, either the Rabbi or Cantor may be joined by another well-seasoned Kolot lay leader or Kolot guest clergy. We will inform you well in advance of your child’s service—at the minimum, eight weeks in advance. Please be assured that whomever is leading your simcha will bring their full energies, joy, knowledge, and wisdom to the service, along with beautiful singing and chanting, and attention to your entire family.

3. Service Attendance

Students studying to become B’M at Kolot Chayeinu are required to attend services regularly, as it is important for them to get a sense of the flow of services, especially the Torah Service, which comprises the central part of the B’M experience. It is also important that they become an active part of the community into which they are stepping.

There will be a sign-up sheet at the back of the Kolot sanctuary on Shabbat mornings so that students can record their attendance. The B’M Coordinator will record attendance in a shared Google Doc so that parents can check their student’s progress. Quarterly, the B’M Coordinator will update families on their student’s attendance record. If a student falls four months behind on their attendance, their B’M date is made tentative, conditional on making up for and continuing attendance. If a student falls six months behind, their date is forfeited.

BM1 and BM2 service attendance requirements:

- The service attendance calendar begins on July 1 and ends on June 30th.
- Students must attend MONTHLY in their BM1 and BM2 years. They must attend twelve services in twelve months.
- SEVEN of the services must be Kolot Saturday Shabbat services - morning or minkha. FIVE of the services may be:
  - Kolot Kabbalat Shabbat (held monthly at 6:30pm)
  - Kolot weekly Torah study (9am-10am on Saturdays)
  - Other services with a Torah service - either at Kolot or elsewhere* (ie, a Saturday morning service at another synagogue or High Holiday services WITH a Torah service).
What’s Up?! service attendance requirements:

- Students becoming B”M in their What’s Up year must attend THREE services BEFORE their ceremony, preferably in the month or two right before their date.
- Those three services MUST be Kolot Saturday shabbat services - morning or minkha. This is to support your child’s continuing familiarity with the specific service they are preparing to lead.

*NOTE: Students attending services at other synagogues are asked to report to their parents some reflections on the differences between Kolot Chayeinu’s services and the service they have just attended. The clergy takes particular joy in reading these reflections – please ask your child to write a short paragraph about their observations and send it to the clergy! Parents should ask their children for this reflection. At all services, parents should participate with their children, showing them the place in the book, asking them for their thoughts, encouraging them to sing or speak or listen well.

4. Meetings and Clergy-Family Preparation

At certain points throughout the B”M process, families will meet with clergy in order to discuss the specifics of their student’s B”M. Below is a description of those meetings:

Seasonal Group Meeting

All of the parents who will have a child becoming B”M in a season (i.e., Fall & Early Winter; Mid-Winter & Spring) will gather with the rabbi, cantor, and the B”M coordinator for an intimate cohort meeting. At this meeting, parents will give and get advice, share their expected joys and fears for the upcoming simcha, and begin to write a blessing for their children that they will give on the day of the B”M.

Family + Clergy Meeting

Six to eight weeks before the student’s b’nai mitzvah date, the family and the student will meet with the Rabbi or Cantor or student clergy in order to review the student’s progress and to present the family with an outline of the service with indications of honors they can offer their friends and family. This meeting is usually two hours, and includes one hour with the student alone, and one hour with the whole family.

Student B”M Rehearsal

Approximately 10 days before the student’s B”M, the B”M family and clergy will meet in the sanctuary with the Rabbi, Cantor, student clergy, and/or tutor to rehearse their anticipated participation in the service by reading Torah, rehearsing and delivering their d’var Torah and Haftarah or prayers where appropriate, chanting blessings, practicing Hakafah/walking around with Torah, and other choreography.
5. Parent Volunteering

In the spirit of Kolot’s mission, all hands are needed to make our B’M season a success. Our parent volunteers get the sanctuary and social hall ready for b’nai mitzvot, serve as shamases, put out food and pack it up, and take care of many other “backstage” tasks to ensure a smooth simcha. **Families with two or more parents are asked to volunteer three times and one-parent families are asked to volunteer twice.**

The B’nai Mitzvah Coordinator will share the online volunteer sign-up site with you. Please volunteer in the school year previous to the year your child’s date falls in. It can be helpful to volunteer for the kind of service your child will be leading (morning or minkha) to get a sense of what your experience might be.

6. Accessibility

Kolot recognizes that our space is not fully accessible to people with mobility differences. We have created a policy to govern when and how we move B’M off-site in response to accessibility needs. If you anticipate this as an issue for your family, please be in contact with the B’M Coordinator or clergy.

7. Financial Commitment

Beyond Kolot membership and High Holiday pledges, B’M families can expect to incur costs in these areas:

- Tutoring
- B’M class tuition
- Food on the day of the service
- A financially significant (to you) contribution to Kolot

These costs are outlined in Appendix 4: Financial Expectations (p. 26). If your family finds these costs to be a financial burden, please know that you can reach out to any of the clergy in confidence and we will do our very best to work with you and the tutors etc to find ways to help offset costs.
8. Other Notes

Photography

Photography, still or video, is not permitted on the Sabbath during services. Your family has two opportunities for photographs:

- During the rehearsal: The rehearsal is the best time to get photos of your child on the bimah. This is a good opportunity to take photos of your child with the Torah, etc.
- On the day of the simcha: For morning services, photos may be taken on the day of the ceremony in the sanctuary immediately after the motzi and kiddush blessings. For minhag services, photos may be taken just before the service, at 3:15. This is a good opportunity to get photos of guests who have traveled or family that is not often in the same room. This is intended to be a brief (not more than 15 minutes) photo session.
- Photography and video are not permitted during Kolot services. In cases where a close relative is unable to attend the service, it is sometimes possible to video a B’M.

Honors

There are a number of moments for participation by your family and by Kolot members during the B’M service. You will be asked to assign many of those honors, in conversation with clergy. They are listed and described in Appendix 2: Honors During Service (p. 23).
**B”M Day-of-Ritual Logistics**

The day of a student’s B”M is an exciting day for families. In addition to the excitement, it is also a day of many moving parts. To that end, clergy and staff do our best to make sure that everyone involved feels supported and looped in to what is going on. The B”M Coordinator will check in with you on these details about a month before your celebration, and again the week before your date.

1. **Food and Drink**

Below is a list of things that families will be responsible for providing to their guests and the Kolot community on the day of their student’s simcha.

- Challah for motzi (ritual blessing of bread for a meal)
- Food for congregants and guests
- Paper and plastic goods for all meals

**Congregational Breakfast**

Kolot services begin every Saturday morning with breakfast, brought by various members. On days when there is a morning B”M, breakfast is brought by the B”M family. It is a lovely way to bridge the gap between Shabbat regulars and the community your family is bringing to Kolot. We have a standing order with La Bagel Delight. The B”M Coordinator place that order after speaking with you. Once the order is placed, it will be delivered to and set up by the B”M Coordinator and the parent volunteers. You can see the breakfast menu on page 38. You will be billed for breakfast after your simcha.

**Kiddush and Motzi**

Immediately after all B”M, the Rabbi will bless bread and wine for the entire congregation to share. You are responsible for providing challah for this blessing. A full list of kiddush and motzi items is on page 28.

**Kiddush Lunch (morning services only)**

All families whose service is in the morning are required to host a kiddush lunch for the congregation and their guests. We have established three different menus for Kiddush lunch, which you can find, along with cost estimates, on page 38. Our congregation spans the income spectrum, and so we established the standing order system to foster community rather than comparison at the Kiddush lunch.

The B”M Coordinator will work with you to estimate and adjust quantities if needed.
We can swap items from menu to menu, but as a general rule the menus should be used essentially as is.

**Afternoon Nosh (minkha services only)**

Kolot was started around a meal, and food continues to be an important part of what binds us together as a community. We invite minkha families to offer a snack to their guests and Kolot members before the service. A simple tray of cookies and a box of coffee is a lovely way to greet the congregation and settle into prayer. This is an option for minkha families, but not a requirement.

**Paper and Plastic Goods**

Your family is responsible for paper and plastic goods for the congregational breakfast, the kiddush blessing, and, for morning services, the kiddush lunch. A full list of items to bring can be found on page 28.

Please check in with the B’M Coordinator prior to purchasing these items. Kolot often has extra supplies in the closet, and it would help the community to use them up.

**Leftovers and Food Waste**

Serving food to large groups often results in food waste, and, as a justice-focused congregation, we are committed to working to reduce that waste. As you plan your simcha, we encourage you to be thoughtful about food quantities, keeping in mind that many of us were raised to offer significantly more food than is actually needed.

We have a relationship with CHIPS, a local shelter, which can take some leftover items. You can also bring leftovers containers or we can pack up leftovers on the serving trays for you to take home. The B’M Coordinator will help you plan for that.

**2. Printed Programs and Kippot**

It is entirely up to you whether you would like to create a printed program, or offer custom kippot. There are several sample printed programs in the shared Google Drive that you can use to guide you. Please share a draft of the program with clergy prior to printing, and, of course, check with clergy if you have any questions.

While custom kippot are a lovely way to mark your ceremony, please note that Kolot probably cannot use most of the kippot that your guests do not take home (though it’s nice to add one or two to the collection). You might consider the seed paper kippot from *Circles of Life*, which can be torn up and planted to create a bed of wildflowers. Kolot has an ample supply of kippot if you choose not to get your own.
3. Seating, Flowers, and Decorations

It is also up to you whether you decorate the social hall or bring or order flowers for the bimah and/or food tables. Flower deliveries should happen between 9am and 10am on the day of your ceremony. When considering decorations, please keep in mind that we have limited time for setup and breakdown, and the custodians are generally not available to help. If you plan on doing more than setting up table centerpieces, please discuss your plan with the B”M Coordinator.

Please plan to keep your guest list at or below 120 in order to ensure your guests’ comfort. When the congregation grows larger than 160 (your guests plus Shabbat regulars), seating becomes cramped and sometimes guests must stand.

Please have the immediate family sit in the front row and friends of the B’M and children who are guests in the first 3 rows, if possible.

4. Access to the Social Hall

Kolot has access to the social hall and sanctuary beginning at 8:30am on the day of your simcha. Most families arrive between 9 and 9:30, but if you would like to arrive earlier, you can arrange it with the B’M Coordinator. For morning services, Kiddush lunch should wrap up by 2:30 unless a prior arrangement has been made. For minkha services, Kolot has access to the space from 3pm to 6pm.

5. Information to Share with Your Guests

Dress

As an eclectic community, Kolot does not have a dress policy. So long as guests use their judgment, they should be fine. We welcome those in attendance to wear a kippah (Jewish ritual head covering), or tallit (prayer shawl) if they so choose. Our custom is to put on tallitot together and with the B’M student at morning services. At minkha services, only service leaders wear tallit.
Respecting Shabbat

Shabbat is a beautiful and needed pause in our busy lives to allow us to focus on community, spirit, and reflection. It is our practice also to pause in our use of electronics.

Photography, still or video, is not permitted on the Sabbath during services. Please inform your guests beforehand so that they do not bring cameras into the sanctuary. There will be opportunities for photos at the rehearsal and immediately after the Kiddush blessings if you wish.

We welcome all to sing with us, to follow the prayers and engage in the practices led by clergy and family members, and enjoy the ruach (spirit) of the celebration.

Service Times

Morning Services begin at 10:30 am and end approximately at 12:30-12:45 pm. Congregational breakfast is at 10, and kiddush luncheon is at approximately 1pm.

Afternoon/Minkha Services begin at 4 pm and end approximately at 5:30 pm. When families choose to offer a nosh, it is at 3:15pm.
Family B’”M Planning Timeline

This timeline pertains only to the B’”M ceremony itself, and any on-site celebrations (motzi, kiddush, breakfast, etc.). Families may choose to have an addition reception elsewhere, but that is not covered here.

FOURTEEN TO EIGHTEEN MONTHS BEFORE B’”M

● Towards the end of the Kitah Hay (5th grade) school year, attend meeting to start the B’”M process.
● Fill out the B’”M Intake Form (p. 33) and return to the B’”M Coordinator by deadline.
● Read and sign B’”M Covenant Form (p. 35) and return to B’”M Coordinator by deadline.
● Receive and finalize date of B’”M with B’”M Coordinator.

TWELVE TO FIFTEEN MONTHS BEFORE

● Receive B’”M tutor assignment from Cantor

ONE YEAR BEFORE

● B’”M students start lessons with tutor
● Sign up for parent volunteer slots with B’”M Coordinator
● Plan for student to attend required services

THREE TO SIX MONTHS BEFORE

● Attend seasonal family meeting
● Put student’s Gelilah (Torah-wrapping) date in calendar

FOUR MONTHS BEFORE

● Start thinking about Synagogue honors (p. 14-16)
● Begin work on d’var Torah with tutor

TWO MONTHS BEFORE

● Divide up friends’ volunteer responsibilities
● Begin work on B’”M program (optional)
● Meet with clergy

ONE MONTH BEFORE

● Conversation with B’”M Coordinator about logistics
● Arrange food
TWO WEEKS BEFORE
• Get paper goods, plasticware and cups for the breakfast and Kiddush Lunch.

TEN DAYS BEFORE
• The B”M does a run through rehearsal with clergy. Reminder: This is a time for the family to take photos.
• Send list of honors to clergy
• Second check-in with B”M Coordinator on logistics
• Send B”M coordinator text and pictures for congregational invitation (p. 29)

TUESDAY BEFORE
• Congregational invitation is sent by Kolot
• Food order is placed (morning only)
Appendix 1: B’’M Ritual Glossary

ARK/ARON HA’KODESH (lit. “Closet of holiness”)  
The Ark or aron ha’kodesh is the place where Torah scrolls are stored during Shabbat services.

BIMAH (lit. “stage”)  
The bimah is the stage, or ritual space, at the front of the congregation where the clergy and B’’M conduct the service as part of the Shabbat service ritual.

D’VAR TORAH (lit. “word of Torah”)  
The d’var Torah is the main speech that the B’’M delivers during the Shabbat service, based on the Torah portion of the day. It encompasses a meaningful expression of Jewish ideals, identity or values, and is an opportunity for the youth to stand up as a member of Kolot and offer the congregation their teaching of Torah. The d’var torah is not merely a collection of facts, but it also includes the child’s own feelings and opinions as well as traditional and modern commentary. Desired length is between 8-13 minutes.

Students work on this with their tutor, who will provide guidance throughout the process.

DARSHAN (lit. “seeker”)  
A teacher or explainer of Torah. At Kolot, a B’’M is referred to as a “new Darshan.”

HAFTARAH (lit. “parting; taking leave”)  
The haftarah (plural: haftarot) is a reading from the biblical prophetic books (called the nevi’im) that accompanies the prescribed Torah portion (i.e. parasha/parsha) on a given Shabbat morning.

HA’MOTZI (lit. “the one who brings forth [bread]”)  
The Ha’motzi (often just called “motzi”) is the blessing that is said over bread before starting a meal.

For Kolot B’’M, this blessing is said just before the start of breakfast that the family will provide for their friends and the congregation.

**Blessing**  
*Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech HaOlam Hamotzi lechem min ha’aretz.*  
(Praised are you, Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, who brings forth bread from the earth.)
**GABBAI** (lit. “to collect”)  
While the B’M chant their weekly parsha, a gabbai will join them at the edge of the Torah table to follow along and correct the reading in case they make a mistake or forget part of their portion. Often, the B’M’s tutor will serve as the gabbai for their simcha. The word “gabbai” comes from the Hebrew word “gav,” meaning “back,” so the gabbai has the B’M’s back.

**KETER** (lit. “crown”)  
Keter is the name for the ornamental crowns that are placed on top of the handles of the Torah scroll.

**KIDDUSH** (lit. “sanctification”)  
The kiddush is the ritual blessing over wine/grape juice, to sanctify the joy of Shabbat.

For Kolot B’M, this blessing is said just before the start of the Kiddush lunch that the family will provide for their friends and the congregation (copies of the blessing are available at services) or at the briefer celebration after a minkha (afternoon) service.

**Blessing**  
*Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech HaOlam, borei p’ri hagafen.*  
(Praised are you, Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.)

**PARASHA/PARSHA** (lit. “section; case”)  
The parsha/parsha (plural: parshiyot) is the prescribed section of Torah that is meant to be chanted on a particular Shabbat (i.e. Bereshit/Genesis is the first section of the Torah that is read at the beginning of the Jewish year). This cycle repeats every religious year. This is interchangeable with the English term “Torah portion.”

**SHAMAS**  
At Kolot, the shamas is a volunteer from the congregation who will serve as the person to welcome your guests and family to services by saying “Shabbat Shalom” (lit. “a peaceful Shabbat”) and then handing them a siddur (prayer book), program (if applicable), and a copy of the parsha (section of Torah being read that day).

**SIDDUR** (lit. “order”)  
The siddur is the book that contains the prayers, readings, and blessings for the Shabbat service.
SIMCHA (lit. “gladness; joy”)

The word simcha is a traditional word that is used to reference a Jewish ceremony or festive occasion (e.g. B”M, brit milah, wedding).

TORAH (lit. “instruction; teaching”)

Torah can refer to many things. It can reference the first five books of the Jewish Bible, the actual teachings and stories inside of those books, or any aspect of Jewish teaching that makes use of traditional texts.

At Kolot, when we say that the B”M student will learn a Torah portion, we mean that they will learn how to chant the text of of that day’s portion of the first five books of the Jewish Bible.
Appendix 2: Honors During the Service

During a Shabbat morning service, a number of people are given various honors by being called to the bimah for an Aliyah, to raise or dress the Torah, to open or close the Ark, etc.

Often, these honors are given to congregants celebrating life cycle events such as another B’M, a forthcoming marriage, or the birth or naming of a child, a yartzeit, or a birthday.

We know that you will want to honor family members and friends with aliyot to the Torah and other honors in the service. What follows is a list of those honors. **You are welcome to distribute honors to family and friends.** Your selection of honorees should be discussed with the Rabbi several weeks in advance of the B’M ceremony.

**OPENING THE ARK**
The B’M family may designate a person to come to the bimah to open the Ark. The Ark is opened twice, once before the Torah reading and again after the reading, and closed at the end of the service.

**CARRYING THE TORAH/HAKAFAH**
The B’M are expected to carry the Torah around the congregation in a procession. Alternatively, a family member can serve as a carrier if the B’M cannot do so. A second person is chosen to carry the larger, heavier Torah—a Jewish family member or friend, post-B’M age.

**ALIYAH** (lit. “going up”) – **one to be assigned by Kolot**
An *aliyah* is the process of going up to the bimah in order to bless the ritual chanting of the Torah (see the blessings below). During a Shabbat morning, or minkha service, three groups of people will be called up to the Torah in this order: Kolotniks, family members, and finally the B’M. **Kolot will assign the first aliyah for Kolotniks**, often with reference to a theme based on the Torah portion. You may assign the remainder.

One person—a Jew, wearing a tallis—can be designated to be the one who will touch their tallis/tzitzit to the Torah for the Aliyah, prior to the reading. Then, before the Torah portion is read, all those in the Aliyah will recite the following blessings in Hebrew (we supply a card with transliteration):

*Barukh attah Adonai Eloheinu melekh ha-olam asher bahr banu mi-kol ha-amin v’natan lanu et torato. Barukh attah Adonai noten ha-torah.*

(Praised are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe who has chosen us from among all peoples by giving us Torah. Praised are You, God who gives the Torah.)
The Torah reader (the B’M) will then read a portion from Torah.

At the conclusion of the reading, the Rabbi will indicate for the person who touched the Torah for opening blessings to touch the concluding place with their tallit/wrapper, kiss it, hold the Torah handles closed, and all will recite:

*Barukh attah Adonai, Eloheinu melekh ha-olam, asher natan lanu torat emet, o’hayei olam nata b’tokhenu. Barukh attah Adonai, noten ha-torah.*

(Praised are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe who has given us the Torah of truth, planting within us life eternal. Praised are you, Adonai, who gives the Torah.)

**HAGBAH/HAGBAHAH (lit. “lifting”)**

Hagbah refers to the person who raises the Torah after it has been read as part of the Shabbat service. This honor should be given to a Jewish person with the capability to raise the Torah in a proper manner. This person should be approved by the Rabbi. This person will sit and hold the Torah scroll while the Haftarah blessings are being chanted.

**G’LILAH (lit. “binding”)—to be assigned by Kolot**

G’lilah refers to the person who rolls and dresses the Torah after it has been raised. This is usually the next student scheduled to be B’M in the season. If they are not available you can choose someone.

**PRAYER FOR PEACE, following the Amidah**

This can be chosen and offered by one or more family or friends, and can be a Jewish text or song or poem, or an ecumenical or non-religious poem, song or reflection.

**OTHER HONORS**

You may choose to celebrate your family’s individuality by adding beloved family songs, poems, or other supplements to the service, including participation by family and/or friends. Also, some families may choose someone to lead kiddush or motzi, following the service. In any case, clergy will work with you to integrate these offerings into the service.
Appendix 3: Outline of the B”M Process

Group Study — meets at Park Slope Jewish Center
- Year 1:
  - B”M Years 1 & 2: 2 hrs/week (student only)
  - Family Study 1 hr/month (whole family)
- Year 2:
  - B”M Years 1 & 2: 2 hrs/week (student only)
  - Family Study 1 hr/month (whole family)
- Year 3:
  - What’s Up?!: 2 hrs/every other week (student only)

Individual Study — at your home
- Time Commitment
  - Lesson with tutor: 1 hr/week (student w/ parent support)
  - Individual Prep: 30 mins—5x/week (student w/ parent support)

Planning and Support — various locations
- Meetings (one each)
  - One B”M introduction meeting — (parents — group meeting)
  - One B”M seasonal meeting (parents — smaller group meeting)
  - One planning meeting with clergy (family — private, 6-8 wks b/f B”M)
  - Two planning meetings with B”M Coordinator (parents, on phone)
- Rehearsal prior to ceremony (one, 10 days prior to ceremony)

Service Attendance — Kolot and other congregations
- Year 1 12 services (student)
- Year 2 12 services (student)
- Year 3 3 services (if not already completed) (student)

Parent Volunteering — at Kolot
- Volunteer at other ceremonies 2-3x, 3.5 hr shifts
## Appendix 4: Financial Expectations

Families going through the B’M process should expect the following expenses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| $1440-$1550 | B’M Year 1 tuition  
Discount for early registration. Subject to change in future years. | |
| $1440-$1550 | B’M Year 2 tuition  
Discount for early registration. Subject to change in future years | |
| $640-$750 | What’s Up?! tuition  
Discount for early registration. Subject to change in future years | |
| $2700-$4400 | Individual tutoring  
The talented tutors Kolot works with have a range of fees. This is a separate financial agreement between your family and the tutor, and is paid directly to the tutor. The total cost of tutoring will depend on exactly how many sessions you end up scheduling, and the exact cost per hour. | |
| $1300-$3100 | Congregational breakfast and kiddush lunch (morning only)  
This will vary depending on the number of guests you have, and the menu you select. | |
| Determined by family | A financially significant (to you) contribution to Kolot in honor of your child’s B’M, before or following the B’M itself. This has ranged from $100 to $10,000. | |

PLEASE NOTE: If your family is finding some of this to be a financial burden, please know that you can reach out to any of the clergy in confidence and we will do our very best to work with you and the tutors, etc., to find ways to help offset costs.
Appendix 5: Morning vs. Minkha Service

There are a few important differences between a morning and a minkha B’M service, the main one being that a minkha B’M will chant Ashrei instead of a haftarah, and a minkha service does not include the morning blessings and prayers. The order of the service is also different. We have put into boldface what the family or B’M are responsible for:

Morning Service
Niggunim/Songs
Welcome by clergy
Welcome by parents
Tallis presentation
Asher Yatzar and Elohai Neshama
Words of Torah from clergy/leader
Morning blessings and psalms (followed by Hatz Kaddish)
Morning prayers (including Barkhu, Yotzer, Ahava Rabbah, Sh’m a and V’ahavta and Mi Khamokha)
Amidah
Hoda’ah/prayer for gratitude
Prayer for Peace
Torah Service
  • Ki Mitzion, procession (parents join)
  • D’var Torah by B’M
  • B’M Chants Torah
  • Aliyot
  • Parent’s blessing
  • Healing prayer
  • Wrapping of Torah
  • Haftarah with blessings
  • Special project, if any, by B’M
  • Siman Tov
  • Gift from congregation (often by tutor)
  • Blessing from clergy/leader
  • Return Torah to ark

Minkha Service
Niggunim/Songs
Welcome by clergy
Welcome by parents
Tallis presentation
Words of Torah from clergy/leader
Ashrei lead by B’M and clergy or tutor
Torah Service
  • Ki Mitzion, procession (parents join)
  • D’var Torah by B’M
  • B’M chants Torah
  • Aliyot
  • Siman Tov
  • Parent’s blessing
  • Gift from congregation (often by tutor)
  • Blessing from clergy/leader
  • Healing Prayer
  • Wrapping of Torah
  • Return Torah to ark

Aleinu
Mourner’s Kaddish
Announcements, closing song (can be chosen by family)
Havdalah (if appropriate)
Appendix 6: Supplies to Bring on Your B’M Day

For the motzi and kiddush

- 1 challah for every 50 people
- 1 sleeve of rice cakes or another gluten-free option

Note: we now do ceremonial kiddush from the bimah, rather than serving grape juice to every congregant. If you would like grape juice to be available for those that want it, it can be put out.

For the breakfast and kiddush luncheon (morning services only)

- 10 tablecloths for 8-foot long rectangular tables
- Large plates
- Small plates
- Hot cups
- Cold cups
- Utensils (forks are primarily what is needed, spoons and knives in much smaller quantity)
- Napkins

Sustainability

Serving food to large groups often results in substantial paper and plastic waste. As a justice-focused congregation, we are committed to working to reduce that waste. Here’s what you can do:

- We encourage you to use reusable tablecloths. Kolot has a set of tablecloths that make the social hall look especially nice for your kiddush. You may use them, and wash and return them after your simcha. You may also use our wipe-down plastic tablecloths, or tablecloths of your own.
- There are now a variety of compostable paper and plastic products available that use renewable materials. Kolot strongly encourages families to use compostable paper goods. Look for links to these products in the shared Google Drive.
- Please do not use styrofoam.
- Kolot has a set of glass teacups you can use for either cold or hot drinks. They must be washed and returned to Kolot after your simcha.
- We have experimented with composting food waste and making sure recycling streams are pure. If you are interested in further reducing your simcha’s footprint, talk to the B’M Coordinator.
- Many parents have purchased decorations and tablecloths for both the social hall and off-site receptions that they are willing to lend. We encourage you to to connect and share resources rather than buying new.
Appendix 7: Congregational Invitation Email

At Kolot we ask that all B’M write a brief email inviting the congregation to celebrate with them on their special day. It doesn’t need to be anything grand, or profound, we just want a little information about you to share with the rest of the community.

In your invitation, make sure to include:

- An invitation to the congregation to join you at Kolot’s Shabbat service to celebrate with you as your child becomes B’M. (We stay clear of inviting the congregation to “my Bar Mitzvah,” but instead acknowledge that the student is becoming B’M within the congregation’s regular Shabbat service.)

- Your first and last name and the date of your B’M

- The full names of your parents

- Your grade level and where you go to school

- What you like to do in your free time

- The Torah portion you will be reading

- Three photos you would like to share, at least one of which must be of the B’M together with their family. Make sure to include descriptive captions in your email.

Please check in the shared Google Drive or in your email for examples of recent B’M congregational invitations.

Once done, send to the B’M Coordinator at bmc@kolotchayeinu.org.

NOTE: Please send your invitation email and photos to the B’M Coordinator by the Thursday before your B’M at the latest.
Appendix 8: B’M Schedule Templates

MORNING SERVICE

8:30am – Lead custodian arrives

8:45am – Other custodial staff arrive

9am – B’M Coordinator arrives. Morning Parent Volunteers arrive; B’M Coordinator and Parent Volunteers to set up space; breakfast delivered

10am – Breakfast served

10:30am – Service starts

12:00pm – Afternoon Parent Volunteers arrive; lunch delivered; lunch is set up by parent volunteers

12:30pm – Morning Parent Volunteers dismissed; lunch and kiddush setup continues

12:35-12:45pm – Service ends

12:35-2:00pm – Kiddush lunch; photos may be taken in the sanctuary for ~15 minutes during the luncheon, after kiddush and motzi are said

2:00-2:30pm – Kiddush lunch winding down

2:30-3:30pm – B’M Coordinator, Parent Volunteers, Custodians clean up and go home

MINKHA SERVICE

3:00 pm – B’M Coordinator and custodians arrive; setup begins; families may offer a nosh/gathering

3:30 pm – Parent Volunteers arrive; setup or nosh/gathering continues

4:00 pm – Service starts

5:15pm – B’M Coordinator sets up challah for motzi and grape juice for kiddush

5:30 pm – Service ends; kiddush and motzi downstairs—may be followed by havdalah, depending on time of year. If during fall and spring, it may be too light outside for havdalah. Gathering/nosh may also happen at this time, as may a short photo session in the sanctuary

6:00 pm — end
Appendix 9: B’M Celebration Questions to Consider

The B’M Coordinator will set up a phone call with you to go over these questions about a month prior to your celebration. The following are some of the details you will need to go over at that time. Please carefully review the section titled “B’M Day-of-Ritual Logistics,” beginning on page 13, prior to that call.

1. Name(s) & Phone number(s)

2. How many guests do you expect (beyond regular Kolot service attendees) at the service? (Please also tell the Rabbi at your rehearsal.)

3. Does anyone have special needs in terms of seating location or access to the church?

4. For morning B’M: How many guests do you expect at breakfast? At lunch?

5. For morning B’M: Which menu would you like? It is fine to swap items between menus.

6. What are your plans for breakfast/kiddush leftovers? We have a system for donating them to CHIPS if that is helpful.

7. Do you have the list of paper goods and supplies for the motzi and kiddush? (Hint: they are on page 28!)

8. Have you decided with the Rabbi who from the congregation will be giving your child the Tanach?

9. Will you decorate the social hall or bring flowers for the bimah? (entirely optional)

10. For minkha services in the winter: Will you do havdalah?

11. Would you like to take photos on the bimah directly after the service?

12. Do you have the instructions and deadline for the congregational email invitation? (Hint: it is on page 29!)

13. Will you print programs or bring kippot? (entirely optional)

14. Anything else you would like to tell or ask us?
FORMS
Kolot Chayeinu B’M Intake Form

Please return to B’M Coordinator at: bmc@kolotchayeinu.org

Please PRINT full name of Student: ____________________________________________

Student’s Birth Date (month/day/year): _________________________________________

Hebrew or Yiddish Name(s) of Student: (if you don’t have one we will help you find one!) Please write here in Hebrew or transliteration and we will check spellings.

__________________________________________________________
(First Name) (Middle Name) (bar/bat) (One parent’s or two parents’ first Hebrew or English name)

English Name of Parent _____________________________________________

English Name of second Parent (if there is one) _____________________________

TUTORS: We have a terrific roster of tutors, and will assign you a tutor who we think will be a good match with your child. We recommend 12 months of private tutoring, and financial arrangements are made directly between you and the tutor. The tutor should also have a first informational meeting with your family before beginning to meet with your child.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

1) Dates will be assigned September through June. Dates are sometimes assigned before a child’s 13th birthday but only 3 weeks or fewer before.

2) Many tutors make home visits, but you may need to travel a short distance in Brooklyn to meet with a tutor.

3) A number of students will be assigned a minkha (Shabbat afternoon) B’M service, when Torah is traditionally read. This is not a Havdalah B’M.

☐ We prefer a morning B’M    ☐ We prefer a minkha B’M

5) For families with very small guest lists, if would you be interested in sharing a B’M with another student and family with a small guest list, please check the following box. If you and your child are especially close with another B’M family, and your guest lists substantially overlap, this could also be a good option.

☐ We would be interested in a shared B’M
DATES:
PLEASE PROVIDE US BELOW WITH THREE (3) DATES THAT ARE COMPLETELY OFF LIMITS FOR YOUR CHILD’S B’M. These dates should be no earlier than their 13th birthday and no later, if possible, than their 14th birthday.

Date/month/year: ________________________
Date/month/year: ________________________
Date/month/year: ________________________

Based upon the dates you provide above, we will offer you four (4) dates, one of which WILL be your child’s B’M date. We will do our best to accommodate your preferences with regard to date and time of service. In years with a very large B’M class, date-setting becomes a complex puzzle. Please understand that we may not be able to accommodate everyone’s preferences. Please consider the dates we will offer you carefully before agreeing to a date as we will not be able to make changes later.

PLEASE NOTE:
Services with a B’M take place on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays in the morning. Minkha B’M will take place on the 2nd or 4th Saturday afternoon. Note that the Torah portion for Minkha is the portion that will also be read on the following Saturday morning, not the one read on that Saturday morning. Also note: For Saturday morning services, the students prepare a haftarah as well as a Torah portion and d’var Torah. For Saturday afternoon services, the students prepare special prayers as well a Torah portion and d’var Torah.

COMMENTS/QUESTIONS:
Kolot Chayeinu B’”M Covenant

NOTE: For parents and students, please read entire document carefully, sign at the bottom, and return document to B”M Coordinator, before the start of the B”M 1 year. You can return document in person, or scan it and send via email to bmc@kolotchayeinu.org.

The most important feature of Kolot Chayeinu is its community. As such, all hands are needed in order to make our community work. This document outlines an agreement for participation in Kolot Chayeinu’s B”M Program for students and their families. The purpose of the program is to provide families with a sustained way to engage with Jewish tradition as their students prepare to step into the rites and responsibilities of the broader Jewish Community. This agreement commences in the spring of a student’s Kitah Hay (5th grade) year, and continues through the completion of the “What’s Up” program (typically 8th grade).

Kolot Chayeinu will provide students/families with the following:

- A holistic Jewish education via B”M weekly classes and Family Classes engaging students and families in tefillah/prayer learning, text study, and deep investigation of traditional, contemporary and personal Jewish identity and practice.
- A B”M date with approximately 12 months of preparation time between date assignment and the event.
- Connection to a Kolot-trained B”M tutor starting approximately 12 months before student’s B”M date. It is the family’s responsibility to make a financial arrangement with the tutor and to pay the tutor in a timely manner.
- A date and time to meet privately with clergy regarding simkha details 6-8 weeks before student’s B”M date.
- A B”M rehearsal approximately 10 days before student’s B”M date.
- Access to other B”M resources as needed.

B”M Candidates

In order to maintain a steady and productive understanding of their Torah portion and responsibilities for the service, each B”M student agrees to:

- Prepare for weekly lessons with a B”M tutor.
- Participate in all three years of the B”M Program: the weekly B”M class for the first two years, and the twice-monthly What’s Up?! Class in the final year.
- Attend monthly Family Classes.
- Attend a total of 12 services a year AND sign attendance sheet.
  - 7 services MUST be either a Kolot morning service, or an afternoon minkha service (Kabbalat Shabbat does not count in this required 7 services)
  - Remaining 5 services may be a combination of the following services:
    - Kolot’s Weekly Torah study (9am on Saturdays)
    - Kabbalat Shabbat Services
B’M Parents

So that each parent understands the deeper meaning of Shabbat services, how Kolot’s B’M program operates, in addition to having the opportunity to interact with the clergy, each parent/guardian agrees to:

- Serve as a parent volunteer for AT LEAST 3 B’M during a given B’M Season.
- Participate in monthly Family Classes.
- Participate in seasonal meetings with Clergy, B’M staff, and other parents, where important information will be covered.
- Check online attendance record to ensure that your student is on track with attendance.
- Make a personally significant financial contribution to Kolot.

If a student and/or family fails to meet the above outlined requirements without communicating with staff or clergy regarding a legitimate issue, then a student’s B’M date will be marked as tentative.

If, after multiple warnings from staff and clergy, the student and/or family still has not made a concerted effort to fulfill their obligations by 6 months before the student becomes B’M, then Kolot reserves the right to cancel the student’s B’M date. In the event of a cancellation, Kolot Chayeinu is not responsible for any financial liability or obligation that the family may incur in connection to the B’M date cancellation.

Parent(s) / Guardian(s) Signature(s)  Date

Student Signature  Date

Please print your family name
MENUS
Congregational Breakfast - La Bagel Delight
Prices are approximate: 30 people – $300

  Bagels and Cream Cheese
  Fruit Salad
  Assorted Muffins and Pastries
  Coffee, Juice

Mediterranean Lunch — Sahadi’s
Prices are approximate: 100 people – $800; 150 people – $1100

  Grilled Vegetables
  Classic Greek Salad
  Spanikopita
  Grape Leaves
  Hummus and Baba Ghanoush with Pita
  Lentils and Rice or Macaroni and Cheese
  Cookies, Brownies, and Bars Platter
  Orange Juice; Coffee Service

Park Slope Lunch — Sahadi’s
Prices are approximate: 100 people – $800; 150 people – $1100

  We are working on this menu, which will include sandwiches and other items. Please speak to the B”M Coordinator for more information.
**Ashkenazi Lunch — La Bagel Delight**

*prices are approximate: 100 people – $1100; 150 people – $1400*

- **Bagels & Cream Cheese**
  *assortment of flavors, sliced*

- **Fresh Lox Platter**
  *garnished with kale, sliced tomatoes, sliced cucumbers, and lemon wedges*

- **Spreads Platter**
  *whitefish salad, baked salmon salad, tuna salad, egg salad*

- **Tossed Salad**
  *field greens, tomatoes, carrots, cucumbers, onions, dressing*

- **Fruit Bowl**
  *watermelon, cantaloupe, honeydew, pineapple, seedless grapes*

- **Assorted Cookies and Rugelach Platter**

- **Orange Juice and Seltzer; Coffee Service**

**NOTE:** this menu can be ordered without the lox to substantially reduce the price.
Some Online Resources For Studying Torah

- http://uscj.org – United Synagogue (Conservative) Torah Sparks
- http://sefaria.org – Sefaria: an online collection of many Jewish texts
- http://learn.jtsa.edu/x1941.xml – JTSA
- http://urj.org/learning/torah/ - Reform Movement
- http://www.jrf.org – Reconstructionist Movement
- http://bible.ort.org Navigating the Bible – ORT/ Ohr Somayach
- http://www.ou.org/torah/index – Orthodox Union
- http://www.shemayisrael.co.il – Rashi Analysis for the technical stickler