

Local triplets raise awareness and funds for Darfur refugees in Israel

JEN MAIDENBERG

Noah, Julia, and Anna Greenblatt, a set of triplets from Teaneck who are two weeks shy of their 11th birthday, have formed an organization in advance of their b'nai mitzvah called Triplets 4 A Cause. Fifth-graders at the Rosenbaum Yeshiva of North Jersey, they hope to make a lifelong commitment to good deeds and acts of kindness.

From an early age, the triplets say, they learned from their parents, Dr. Naomi and Jason Dov Greenblatt, the importance of giving to others. "We've been taught to help those in need around us," says Noah. "Part of our commitment as we become bar and bat mitzvah is to take responsibility for our own actions and reach out to those who are suffering around the world."

The idea for their first project came upon them quite quickly, says Julia. "Our parents read us two articles these last few weeks that started this project. They were about what has happened in Darfur. The stories made us cry. We wanted to know more about how we could help them."

In their research, the triplets were inspired by stories of ordinary people who have made it their mission to help the refugees of Darfur: They were particularly touched by a story of a girl who organized a "shoeless day" in her school for people to learn about the



Cookie chefs are, bottom row from left, little brother Avery with triplets Julia, Anna, and Noah Greenblatt. Older sister Sophia Greenblatt is above them.

suffering in Darfur and another about a pediatrician who traveled to Darfur to help heal children.

They learned that some teenage refugees managed to

escape from Darfur, travel through Egypt, and eventually settle in Tel Aviv. The journey was not easy, though. Many of these teenagers' families had been killed in Darfur. Some teens were separated from their family during the difficult journey.

"There is an organization run by the city of Tel Aviv called Mesila that helps families from Darfur," says Anna. "There is one project they need money for that will help more than 100 homeless teenagers have winter clothing and other basic needs. Something about helping out teenagers in need really sounded right."

On Sunday, Nov. 22, from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., the triplets will hold a "Cookie and Cocoa Sale" to try to raise the \$1,500 Mesila is seeking for these teenage refugees. The sale will be held on the front porch of The Rocking Chair Women's Wellness Center, 60 Grand Ave., in Englewood. They hope the community will come out, enjoy some cookies and cocoa, and feel good that the entire proceeds will go to the Mesila program in Tel Aviv, specifically designated for these teens.

For information about Triplets 4 A Cause or to learn about future events and be put on a mailing list, visit www.triplets4acause.com.