SIX-PART UNIT ON SOCIAL LEARNING AND THE INTERNET
Part 4: ADVOCACY
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ACTIVITY
1) Set Induction
Show your class this Wordle, http://www.wordle.net/show/wrdl/2359119/Advocacy_Wordle, by projecting it onto the board or handing out printed copies. Ask them what words stand out the most in the image (most prominent words) and what they might mean. Using the Wordle, define what Advocacy is. Ask students to go around the room and share one change that they would advocate for in their schools and how they might do it. Have students vote:
How many feel that advocacy is a Jewish concept?
How many think they have been advocates for something in the last month?
How many think that their one voice can make a difference?
[Note: you can use a free http://polldaddy.com/ to have the students use their computers to vote on this; consider creating a few more questions to add to the poll and then display the results on your computer.]

2) Text Study
Have you told a friend when you think s/he is doing something wrong?
How did it feel?
When has a friend told you that you were doing something wrong?
Share a time when you witnessed someone doing something wrong and didn’t intervene. Why?
What does Judaism have to say?

Print and hand out copies of the above Wordle to pairs/triads of students, and print and hand out source sheets (available to print at BabagaNewz.com) with the following four texts. Have students highlight in yellow words in the English translations that also appear in the Wordle. Have them highlight on the Wordle in blue themes or words they think are mirrored in the Jewish texts. Have them highlight in pink words in the texts they think are “advocacy” words.
### Maimonides, Mishneh Torah, Laws of Character Traits 6:7

If someone sees his friend transgressing or going down a bad path, it is a mitzvah to restore him to goodness and inform him that he is transgressing through his evil deeds, as it says: “You shall surely rebuke your neighbor”… Anyone who has the ability to intervene but does not is held responsible [by God] for those sins because he had the ability to intervene against them.

### Devarim 10:18

[God] upholds the cause of the orphan and the widow, and befriends the stranger, providing him or her with food and clothing.

### Esther 4:14

On the contrary, if you keep silent in this time, relief and deliverance will come to the Jews from another place, while you and your father’s house will perish. And who knows, perhaps you have attained a royal position for just such a crisis.

### Bereishit 18:27

Then Avraham answered and said, “Behold now, I desired to speak to my God even though I am only dust and ashes.”

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Next, make a list on the board of all the words that are highlighted in pink. Discuss:

- **What does it mean to “uphold a cause”?**
- **What is the danger of “keeping silent”?**
- **Can you recall a time in history when people kept silent and others suffered? What is the context for the Bereishit text? What is the significance of Avraham taking it upon himself to “speak to God”***?

### 3) Conclusion/Take Home Web Resource

As a class, generate a list of ways students think they can use the internet for advocacy. Some possibilities: signing petitions, e-mailing senators, writing op-ed pieces, and blogging.

- **Signing Petitions**: At [http://www.gopetition.com/](http://www.gopetition.com/), you can create your own petition to be sent to senators, members of congress, the president, the United Nations, etc.

- **E-mailing senators**: Visit [http://www.senate.gov/index.htm](http://www.senate.gov/index.htm) or your state government’s official website to find your City and County leaders.

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Writing Op-Ed Pieces: As a class, consider an issue you’d like to address and write an op-ed piece together. Submit your article to your local newspaper via its website. You can also write to your local Jewish paper or school newspaper.

Blogging: Consider creating a class blog using Wordpress.com or Blogger.com.

NEXT: Part 5: COMMUNITY ORGANIZING