



PRAYING WITH LIOR:

Free screening and post-show discussion on disability and faith communities; Presented by the National Council of Jewish Women with the Omaha Down Syndrome Parents Network and Film Streams at the Ruth Sokolof Theater

Omaha, Nebraska (July 25, 2008)—On Monday, August 25, at 7 p.m., the National Council of Jewish Women, the Omaha Down Syndrome Parents Network and Film Streams at the Ruth Sokolof Theater will team up to host a free screening of the 2008 award-winning documentary **PRAYING WITH LIOR**. The free screening will take place at Film Streams' Ruth Sokolof Theater, 1340 Webster Street, with a post-show panel discussion to follow.

A tender, engrossing documentary from director Ilana Trachtman, **PRAYING WITH LIOR** introduces viewers to young Lior Liebling, nicknamed "the little rebbe." Lior, who has Down syndrome, has spent much of his life praying, leading some to believe he is a "spiritual genius." But while everyone around him agrees that he is close to God, some question Lior's "genius" label. Depending on which family member is speaking, he is considered a burden, a best friend, an inspiration, and an embarrassment. The film follows Lior as he approaches Bar Mitzvah, the Jewish coming-of-age ceremony, with different characters providing varying glimpses into a life spent "praying with Lior."

Writing for *New York* magazine, critic David Edelstein wrote that **PRAYING WITH LIOR** "engages us on so many levels... It depicts a warm and nurturing community that gathers around Lior, both to protect him and to be transformed by his miraculous presence. It's about cruel limitations and sudden, blessed freedoms."

The family-friendly film poses difficult questions about disability and how people with disabilities are treated within faith communities. A post-show discussion, moderated by Rabbi Aryeh Azriel of Temple Israel, will draw out those questions in a dialogue with the audience. The panel will also feature Mary McHale, president of the Omaha Down Syndrome Parents Network, and parents Sarah and Doug Wolfson. The discussion will begin immediately after the **PRAYING WITH LIOR** screening, which starts at 7 p.m. and runs approximately 87 minutes.

Both the screening and post-show discussion are free and open to the public. Advance passes will be available starting Wednesday, August 6, and can be picked up at Film Streams' Ruth Sokolof Theater, located at the corner of 14th and Webster.

More information is available at filmstreams.org. For questions or requests, please contact Casey Logan at (402) 933-0259 (ext. 11) or casey@filmstreams.org.

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About the National Council of Jewish Women

The National Council of Jewish Women is a volunteer organization that has been at the forefront of social change for over a century. Inspired by Jewish values, NCJW courageously takes a progressive stance on issues such as child welfare, women's rights, and reproductive freedom.

For more information, visit www.ncjw.org.

About The Omaha Down Syndrome Parents Network

The Omaha Down Syndrome Parents Network is a non-profit organization which serves families of children and adults with Down syndrome, and interested professionals in the Omaha, Nebraska and surrounding areas.

ODSPN was formed in 1999 by parents who felt a need to associate more closely with other parents of children with Down syndrome.

Currently we work with The ARC of Omaha at the Ollie Webb Center, Inc. in conjunction with their P.R.I.S.M (Parent Resource Information & Support Meetings). We are affiliated with the National Down Syndrome Society and National Down Syndrome Congress.

For more information, visit www.odspn.org.

About Film Streams

Film Streams is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization dedicated to enhancing the cultural environment of the Omaha-Council Bluffs area through the presentation and discussion of film as an art form. In late July 2007, we opened the Ruth Sokolof Theater at the corner of 14th & Webster, within the Saddle Creek Records development in downtown Omaha.

Dedicated to showing films based on their artistic, creative, and social merits, our cinema features both First-Run Films—new American Independents, documentaries, and foreign films—and Repertory Selections celebrating the history of cinema. In addition to screening movies seven-days-a-week, we also host lectures, forums, Q&A's with visiting filmmakers, and other community development events that contribute to an ongoing dialogue about film. In 2008, we will launch our Education program for area high school students, focusing on film history and criticism.

As a nonprofit arts organization committed to screening films based on their merit, we depend on the support of our membership program, individual donors, and grants from foundations, corporations and government organizations.

For more information, visit us online at www.filmstreams.org.

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