



## **GLOWING IN THE DARK** *Harav Y. Reuven Rubin Shlita*

Glow- sticks, I bet there are plenty amongst our readership who have no idea what I am talking about nor what said items are for. As one dedicated in sharing as much necessary information as possible, please allow me to clue you in. According to my dictionary, Glow-sticks are “a novelty item consisting of a plastic tube containing two chemicals which combine when the tube is bent, so producing a luminescent glow.” If you’re scratching your head or feeling a bit discombobulated (you’ll have to look that one up yourself) you’re in good company, I also had no idea what said sticks do, nor where their place is at our recent children’s Chanukah party. As one of a certain age, I just shrugged when this particular item was mentioned whilst discussing our Chanukah plans for our shtieble. Although not yet finished, we wanted to open the new facility to our young at the very first opportunity. Chanukah was the perfect occasion, and things went great. Children of all ages arrived, each receiving a small bunch of these colourful plastic sticks. I looked on in bemusement, as the kids twisted them in different shapes, spectacles being the most popular, (I guess our children aspire to becoming great Rosh Yeshivas with thick glasses). I still didn’t understand what these plastic straws offered our kids, then someone dimmed the lights and it all came alive. Colours sprang up and the children whelped in glee as they created all sorts of intricate colourful designs. One of the children recited the appropriate brochos and after lighting the candles, it all kicked off. We had music, (extra strength loud variety, as per current minhag) and food galore (donuts that should carry a health warning), and were soon enveloped in a robust and joyous mingling of Chanukah nigunim. Parents and children sang and danced, and this particular old Yidel had the nachas of kvelling in the joyousness of the moment. I kvelled with a full heart, watching these young neshomalech singing and dancing amidst their colourful creations.

בס"ד



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I am a great believer of creating positive memories that will remain for the future. Our children need to feel the warmth of Yiddisha simchas hamitzvos, not only in a wedding hall, or some sterile eatery. What better place than their shtieble, their home, with Tatty and all their friends. I am thankful that the Eibishter has given me the koach to participate along with them. Singing, dancing, offering sweets, what better way is there in this time and place to give our young a simchas Yom Tov that will live on within their tender sensitive neshomahs? It has long been my practice to make certain I say Gutt Shabbos to youngsters whilst walking home. Let them have a vague memory of a white bearded Rov bending over to greet them. Many of our young are disenfranchised from the everyday joy of Yiddishkiet. Their connection with their teachers can often be sterile and cold, whereas in truth, these neshomalech need warmth desperately. Their reality of Yiddishkiet is often played out in boxes that don't fit their individuality. For many the call of today's ambiguous technological marvels is louder than any shiur.

So, this old Rabbi dances with the kids and their Glow Sticks, maybe it will open one child's heart, maybe it will speak to one soul. Anyway, it's good exercise and my doctor says I need it.

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