

Irena boxes, and  
things like that. once  
she

[Life](#), [Friendship](#)



Irena Sendler was a big upstander in World War II.

She helped and saved many Jewish children and made a huge impact on our world. She secretly helped kids escape knowing that if she got caught, there would be major consequences. Irena Sendler started helping the Jews in the beginning of World War II in 1939.

She offered shelter and food to whoever needed it and gave generously. Also she and a few others were forging documents and papers for Jewish families. Between 1939 and 1942, they had forged over 3,000 documents and saved all of their lives. Later in 1942, two ladies asked Irena to head the children's department of Żegota, a way to help people escape the ghettos in Poland.

Without thinking twice she agreed. At that time she was head of the welfare department for the Germans. The Nazis wouldn't step foot in the ghettos because of germs and disease so they made their workers do the job.

Taking advantage of both of her positions she had taken, Irena began going into the ghettos and "looking at the Jews for signs of disease." Really she was looking for kids to smuggle out of the awful ghettos. There were many ways they smuggled the children out of the ghettos. For the older kids, they would teach them Catholic prayers and sneak them out of one of the churches next to the ghettos. Younger children could not be rescued through buildings. Irena hid them in different things like sacks, tool boxes, suitcases, boxes, and things like that. Once she even used a coffin! Another way she could sneak kids out was on ambulances.

Sick or not she hid them in the ambulances and would take them out of the ghettos. After the kids had successfully escaped, Irena would take them to her good friends house right down the street from one of the ghettos to get them showered and fed. Then she would take them to safe homes that they could stay in until after the war. After the war, the kids would be returned to their families if there was any left.