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# **ECONOMIC VULNERABILITY: JEWS AT RISK**

*Special Report No.2*

The Greater Philadelphia Jewish Population Study, 1996/97

*by*

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The Committee wishes to acknowledge the efforts made by an earlier committee which worked on the research conceptualization and proposal review process, including: Steve Sussman, *Chair*; Dr. Ram Cnaan, Dr. Carol Gantman, Dr. Rela Geffen, Dr. Allen Glicksman, Sanford Mozes, Nathan Relles, Miriam Schneirov and Wendy Wolfe.

The Federation also wishes to recognize the contributions of numerous other volunteers and communal professionals who helped design and develop the study, as well as the officers and trustees of the Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia (JFGP) for their invaluable support. Most importantly, we thank the 1,437 respondents who provided the information which now gives us a thorough and accurate picture of the Jewish Community of the five county Greater Philadelphia area.

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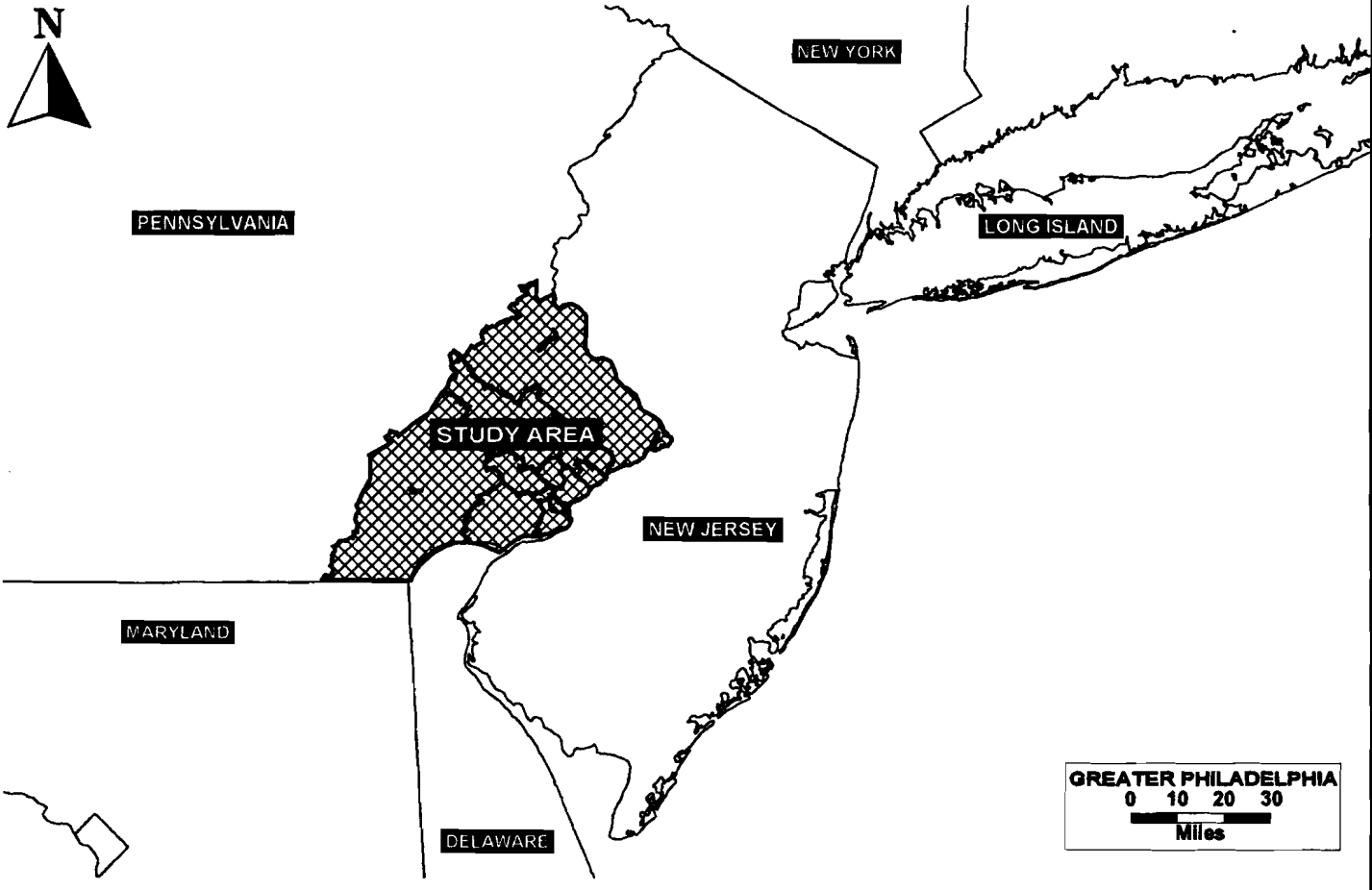
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# STUDY AREA IN A REGIONAL CONTEXT

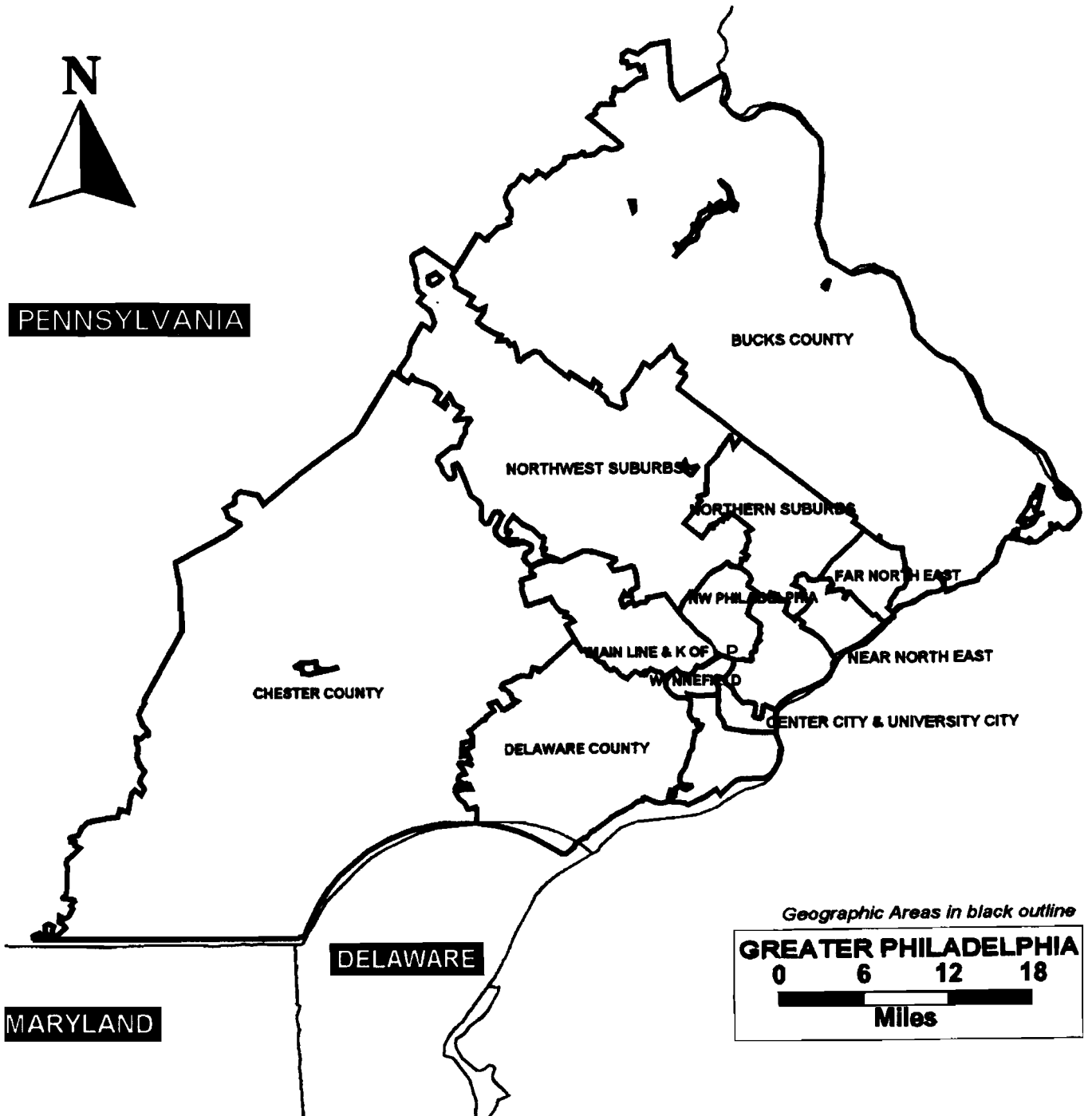


Greater Philadelphia Jewish Population Study, 1996/97

# GEOGRAPHIC STUDY AREAS



**PENNSYLVANIA**



*Geographic Areas in black outline*



## PREFACE

The 1996/97 Greater Philadelphia Jewish Population Study was commissioned by the Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia. The Study collected information from Jewish households and individuals in the 5-county Philadelphia Area to help Federation and other Jewish communal institutions and organizations plan for the future. The Philadelphia Area includes: the City of Philadelphia, Bucks County, Chester County, Delaware County, and Montgomery County.

The Study was under the direction of the Population Study Committee chaired by Alan Molod, and staffed by Lynda Paz y Mino. The prime contractor for the study is Ukeles Associates Inc. (UAI), New York, N.Y. All project decisions were made jointly between UAI and the Federation's Population Study Committee.

A total of 1,437 randomly selected respondents were interviewed via a computer assisted telephone interviewing [CATI] system by ICR Survey Research Group of Media, Pennsylvania from September 1996 through February 1997. Sampling design, population estimation, and weighting decisions were jointly developed by UAI and by Marketing Systems Group / Genesys of Fort Washington.<sup>1</sup> The 1996/97 data are compared throughout the reports to the last major survey of the region, conducted in 1984.

The study also included seven focus groups (55 people), conducted by UAI between May 4 and May 14, 1997. Two focus groups were drawn from survey respondents who had answered "cannot make ends meet" or "just managing to make ends meet". Focus group findings included in this report are not statistically significant. They are included to add a "human voice" to the quantitative, survey-based information.

This report, Special Report #2: *Economic Vulnerability: Jews At Risk in Greater Philadelphia* is one of the four special topic reports completed as part of the study, in addition to the *Summary Report: The 1996/97 Jewish Population Study of Greater Philadelphia*. Each topic report incorporates findings from the survey and the focus groups. Special topic reports have also been prepared on *Geography and Mobility: The Changing Landscape of the Greater Philadelphia Jewish Community*; *Believing, Behaving, Belonging: Jewish Identity and Affiliation in Greater Philadelphia*; and *Jewish Philanthropy: Patterns of Giving to Charitable Causes in Greater Philadelphia*.

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<sup>1</sup>A total of 738 interviews were completed in Philadelphia, 379 in Montgomery County, 174 in Bucks County, 97 in Delaware County, and 49 in Chester County. While these numbers essentially reflect the rank order of Jewish households in the five county area, all data presented in the reports reflect weighted numbers designed to project the results to the estimated 100,000 households in Greater Philadelphia. Technical details are discussed in a *Technical Report on Research Methods*. In general, for the entire Philadelphia Area, survey data are accurate within a +/- 5% range.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Income in Geographic Areas

The median income of Jewish households in the Philadelphia Area -- ranges from \$33,500 in the City of Philadelphia to \$68,000 in Chester County.<sup>2</sup>

The Far Northeast, with only 14% of the Jewish households in the Philadelphia Area, has **40% of the households earning less than \$15,000 a year**; the Near Northeast, with only 11% of the Jewish households, has **25% of the households with incomes under \$15,000 per year and 21% of the households earning between \$15,000 and \$25,000.**

### Income & Household Size

Household size, along with income, is the critical variable in defining economic stress. The modal or typical household in Philadelphia's Jewish community is a two person household earning between \$25,000 and \$50,000 a year.

### Poor Jewish Households

There are an estimated 15,200 poor Jews living in 6,800 households -- 7% of the Jewish households in the Philadelphia Area. In the context of the widespread myth that there are no poor Jews, this is a substantial number of people. Most of these **households** are relatively small, consisting of three or fewer persons. Most poor **people** live in two or three person households.

### Lower Income Households

"Lower income" includes all households with less than \$15,000 income per year; households with two or more persons earning less than \$25,000 combined, and households with four or more persons with total income less than \$50,000 a year. Together, these categories account for a little less than 23% of those surveyed, including the 7% previously defined as "poor." Almost 23,000 Jewish households in the Philadelphia Area can be considered lower income. Nearly 57,000 people live in these households, including the 15,200 people living in households previously defined as "poor". More people live in lower income households in the Philadelphia Area than in the entire Jewish community of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

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<sup>2</sup>In the 1990 Census, median household income ranged from \$24,600 in Philadelphia to \$45,600 in Chester. In current dollars, the corresponding values would be \$30,200 and \$56,000 respectively.

## **Employment, Occupation and Lower Income**

While only 11% of the people working full-time have lower incomes, three out of five of the people who are unemployed and nearly eight out of ten of the people with a disability have lower incomes. While nearly half of the students have lower incomes, for most in this group their economic difficulties are temporary, not permanent, and so they are in a qualitatively different position than the other groups, particularly as it relates to communal policy.

Over 15,000 households include one or more persons who were unemployed at some point within the last three years. While about 30% of this group were unemployed for a relatively short period of time -- 3 months or less -- about 25% experienced serious long-term unemployment: for a year or more. People who experienced unemployment within the last three years were very much more likely to have lower incomes [32% vs 19%].

Lower income is also characteristic of people working in relatively low-skill, low-pay occupations. Whereas only 9% of people working in professional, managerial or executive positions have lower incomes, over 20% of those who are self-employed or those in clerical, service, or craft positions have lower incomes.

## **Age and Household Structure and Lower Income**

People over 65 are much more likely to have lower incomes. One out of three households with a respondent over 65 has lower income, compared with 16% of those between 28 and 49. Single women, living alone, who are 75 years old and over have the lowest incomes -- **three out of four have incomes of under \$25,000**, compared with only one out of four couples 65 years and older. There are an estimated 5,700 single women 75 and older in the Philadelphia Area.

## **Single-parent Families and Lower Income**

Two out of five of the single-parent families in the Jewish community have lower incomes. These families also merit attention because they are under pressure on a number of fronts. Single-parents are twice as likely to report personal problems within the last three years than are two-parent families. Single parents have a greater child-rearing burden. They often feel isolated -- they are twice as likely to answer "strongly disagree" when questioned as to whether they "felt part of the Jewish community" as are two-parent families, and they are three times as likely to call the JIRS when experiencing personal problems as are two-parent families.

## **New Americans from the Former Soviet Union [FSU] and Lower Income**

New Americans from the FSU are experiencing economic difficulty -- even those who are in income-earning age and capacity.

While a substantial number have entered the economic mainstream of the community, a surprisingly large proportion, including some who have been in the United States for a decade or more, are lagging behind. **Over 60% of the Jewish households originating in the Former Soviet Union**

**have lower incomes.** Unfortunately a large number of these households are not able to work. In addition to the significant number over 65, a large number of those in their late fifties and early sixties are disabled -- probably a function of the relatively low level of health care in the FSU. **Over 80% of the older New Americans from the FSU have lower incomes. In fact, all of these lower income households report incomes of under \$15,000 per year.**

### **Making Ends Meet**

The third level of economic difficulty is defined by the subjective measure: "Are you having difficulty making ends meet?" While only 4% say they are having difficulty making ends meet, over 34% say they are just managing. There is a strong relationship between reported income and the perception of difficulty in making ends meet. Very few households with incomes over \$75,000 indicate financial difficulties, but some do -- these tend to be larger households. Most households with an income of under \$25,000 indicate that they are having difficulty making ends meet or are just managing. Those that are managing on under \$25,000 tend to be older, single person households.

### **Just Managing and the Cost of Jewish Living**

"Just managing" financially for many households also means managing without Jewish content in their lives or the lives of their children. Families that cannot make ends meet or that are "just managing" are less likely to belong to a synagogue, to give their children a Jewish education, or to belong to a JCC.

## **Conclusions: Policy Implications**

This report underlines the urgency of putting the economic condition of Jews in Philadelphia on the Jewish communal agenda.

The data highlight three important policy issues for the Jewish community:

1) How can the community best mobilize its limited resources to respond to the needs of the 7,000 poor Jewish households in the community?

In large measure, poverty in the Jewish community is not different from poverty in any other sector of the community at-large. The Jewish community has three major responsibilities:

- to play an active role in the public policy arena to insure that the public and general voluntary sector safety net is strong and effective.
- to insure that individuals within the Jewish community receive the support that they are legally entitled to. This is particularly urgent with regard to older immigrants from the FSU. It is likely that many of them are dependent on public support. To the extent that they are not yet citizens and have difficulty in preparing for citizenship, their ability to survive is at issue.
- to act where the public and general communal safety net does not work.

2) How can the Jewish community best mobilize scarce resources to serve lower income Jews who are above the poverty level? While some public services are available for this group, to a significant extent, the Jewish community needs to mobilize its own resources<sup>3</sup>:

- The data suggest the Jewish community needs to help Jews in the area of jobs and job training. As in most communities, the volunteer leadership of the Jewish community in Philadelphia has the capacity to engage actively in job development for lower income Jews whose economic difficulties are job-related.
- The major concentration of lower income populations in the Northeast suggests the need for a geographic concentration of programs and services aimed at helping meet economic needs. The concentration of low-income households from the FSU in the Far Northeast suggests that an analysis of resettlement policies in relation to job location may be in order.
- A special focus on the economic condition of immigrants from the FSU is needed. It would be the height of irony if the community which helped to rescue Jews from the Former Soviet Union, was unable to respond to their economic plight now that they live in Philadelphia.

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<sup>3</sup>These implications follow from 1996/97 data. Subsequent improvements in the Philadelphia Area's economy need to be factored into any actions to be taken.

3) How can the Jewish community best meet the needs of the many thousands of households who are just making ends meet? Community leadership may wish to experiment with new ways to reduce the cost of participating in the community, especially for families with children with lower incomes.

- One way that many communities help individuals and families that are just managing, is through interest-free loans. Surprisingly, the Philadelphia Jewish community's diverse and strong service system does not have a community-wide Hebrew Free Loan Program.<sup>4</sup> A serious investigation of the feasibility and cost of developing such a program would be appropriate.
- Another way to help families in the "just managing" category that a number of other communities are considering is a "community membership" whereby a low or moderate income family can pay a single reduced fee to join a congregation and a JCC, and to access other services at a reduced rate.
- Opportunities to purchase specific services on a more selective basis may be more useful to families that are "just managing" than the membership programs that are currently the norm.

The organized Jewish community faces a significant challenge in responding to the information presented in this report. From Biblical times, Jews have been urged to take care of those in need: "Defend the poor and orphan, do justice to the weak and needy; help the pauper."<sup>5</sup> The challenge in the Philadelphia Area today is the same as that faced by Jewish communities from time immemorial.

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<sup>4</sup>There are a number of small interest-free loan programs in the community, but none receive a Federation grant, nor are they widely known in the community.

<sup>5</sup>Psalm 82:3.

## INTRODUCTION

The Jewish community of Greater Philadelphia supports an extensive network of subsidized Jewish communal services. Much of this network functions as a "safety net" for the vulnerable in the community. Most of these services are part of the Federation system of agencies, receiving funding, planning assistance, and other kinds of tangible and intangible support. The Jewish "safety net" is linked to the safety net developed and supported by the general community, especially the various levels of government. With the reshaping of these systems in the general community, especially the withdrawal of Federal dollars from the human service system, the pressure on the Jewish system has grown. It is urgent that limited Jewish dollars are spent wisely.

The Jewish service system is dependent on philanthropic dollars for support. Yet there is a widespread myth, even among the generous people in any community, that there are no poor Jews.

Those responsible for allocating scarce Jewish communal dollars and those who are raising and giving money need the facts. What is the level of economic stress in the Jewish community? Are there poor and near-poor Jews in the community? Are they a tiny minority of the community or are the numbers fairly substantial?

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to describe the economic condition of the Jews of Philadelphia in order to inform the decisions of volunteer and professional leaders in the Jewish community who are responsible for the delivery of Jewish communal services in the greater Philadelphia Area. Understanding the size and character of populations at various levels of economic stress is a fundamental pre-requisite for sound planning and effective fund-raising.

### CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The use of terms like "poverty," "low income" and "economic stress" involve issues of definition as well as objective information. Poverty, for example, is sometimes defined in absolute terms and sometimes in relative terms. In absolute terms, the poverty line might correspond to the income required to purchase the minimum basket of services and products required to sustain life. In a relative definition, the poverty line could be the income level corresponding to the lowest quartile of the population, or the poverty line could be drawn at 50% of the median income.<sup>6</sup>

The critical variable in defining economic stress at any level (in addition to income) is the number of people in the household who have to share the income. Clearly, forty thousand dollars buys a higher standard of living for a single person than for an eight-person household.

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<sup>6</sup>This is the type of standard used in Israel and Western Europe.

In the United States, the poverty standard administered by the US Department of Health and Human Services, uses an absolute definition modified by political realities. The most recent poverty standard is shown in Exhibit 1. Unfortunately, this standard has some significant flaws. Adjustments in the standard lag behind actual cost of living increases; regional variations in the cost of living are not well represented; nor is the increased allotment corresponding to each additional household member a realistic reflection of the true costs associated with feeding, clothing and housing an additional person -- thus deflating the standard for larger households.

A multiple of Federal poverty levels (150% or 200%) is sometimes used to define “near-poverty” guidelines.

The issue of poverty in the Jewish community is complicated by three additional factors. First, if a relative standard is used, is a Jewish household poor if their income is low relative to the Jewish community OR is it considered low if it is low relative the community at large? Second, how should the cost of living Jewishly be factored into definitions of adequate income? If the organized Jewish community has a stake in the active involvement of Jewish families and children in Jewish life, how does the community regard the Jewish household that does not have enough income to provide Jewish education for their children, belong to a JCC or synagogue, or purchase kosher meat. If, as the research suggests, Jewish camping, the Israel experience, and a day school education seem to enhance Jewish self-identification, households with insufficient income to purchase these programs are deprived of the opportunity to engage fully in Judaism and in the Jewish community.

And finally what is the importance of perception (i.e. the extent to which people **feel** under economic pressure vs. reported income)?

In this report, three different levels of economic difficulty will be defined:

- 1) **Poverty:** households whose incomes are below the US Federal Poverty guidelines (see Exhibit 1). Households in this category need the active economic assistance of the general community, and in the last resort, of the Jewish community, to maintain a minimum standard of living.
- 2) **Lower Income:** households whose incomes are below 200% of the US Poverty guidelines, adjusted to reflect a more realistic incremental cost per additional individual and rounded to the category used in the survey instrument (see Exhibit 2). Households in this group are the ones most likely to need the assistance of the Jewish community to improve their economic condition as well as to receive subsidized services, including subsidies to maintain a decent general and Jewish standard of living. Most of the analysis in this report will focus on this level of economic difficulty.
- 3) **Making Ends Meet:** Households that report having difficulty making ends meet, or are just making ends meet as self-reported in the Survey. Households in this third group are assumed to perceive themselves as having limited discretionary income and hence are less likely to be able (and or willing) to purchase Jewish programs or services.



Exhibit 1 Poverty Guidelines, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, March, 1996.

HOUSEHOLD SIZE	ANNUAL INCOME: POVERTY LEVEL
1 PERSON	<\$7,740
2 PERSONS	<\$10,360
3 PERSONS	<\$12,980
4 PERSONS	<\$15,600
5 PERSONS	<\$18,220
6 PERSONS	<\$20,840
7 PERSONS	<\$23,460
8 PERSONS	<\$26,080
EACH ADD'L PERSON	\$2,620

Exhibit 2      Definition of "Lower Income" Used in this Report

HOUSEHOLD SIZE	ANNUAL INCOME	SURVEY CATEGORY*
1 PERSON	<\$15,000	<\$15,000
2 PERSONS	<\$25,000	<\$25,000
3 PERSONS	<\$32,500	<\$25,000*
4 PERSONS	<\$40,000	<\$50,000*
5 OR MORE PERSONS	<\$45,000	<\$50,000*

\* Rounded to the nearest income category used in the Survey instrument.

## I. INCOME IN THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

Jewish median income is relatively high -- ranging from \$33,500 in the City of Philadelphia to \$68,000 in Chester County.<sup>7</sup> Exhibit 3 indicates the distribution of households by income level.

**One out of four Jewish households in the Philadelphia Jewish community has an annual income of less than \$25,000 a year; and about half have an income of less than \$50,000 a year.<sup>8</sup>**

### INCOME IN GEOGRAPHIC AREAS

Exhibit 4 addresses the issue of the distribution of households by income level in the Philadelphia Area. Not surprisingly, relatively few households earning less than \$25,000 a year live in Bucks, Chester, Delaware or Montgomery Counties. These households are most likely to live in the City of Philadelphia -- especially in Northeast Philadelphia.

By comparing the percentage of Jewish households living in an area (the last column in Exhibit 2) with the percentage at a given income level in that area, one can assess the degree of concentration in a particular area. Areas with relative concentrations at a particular income level are highlighted in Exhibit 4.

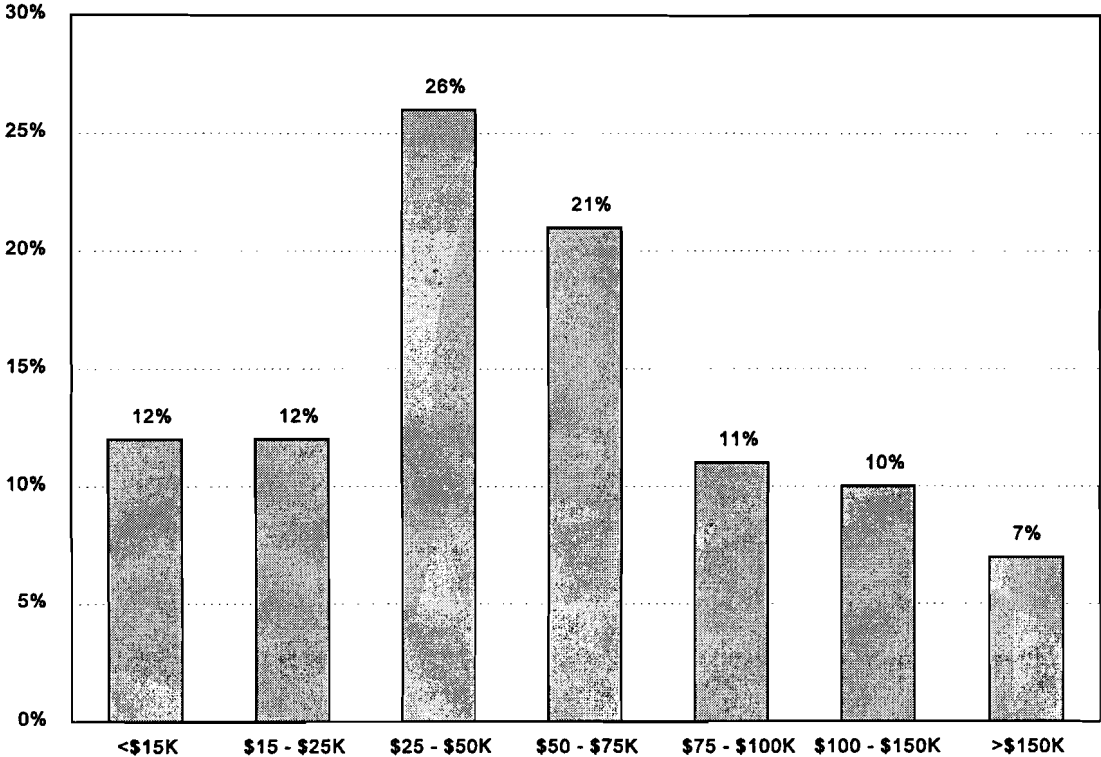
The Far Northeast, with only 14% of the Jewish households in the Philadelphia Area, has the greatest concentration of households with incomes under \$15,000 --- **40% of the households earn less than \$15,000 a year**; the Near Northeast, with only 11% of the Jewish households, **has 25% of the households with incomes under \$15,000 per year**. Wynnefield and Northwest Philadelphia have more than their proportionate share of households earning under \$15,000, probably concentrated in Wynnefield.

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<sup>7</sup>In the 1990 Census, median household income ranged from \$24,600 in Philadelphia to \$45,600 in Chester. In today's dollars, the corresponding values would be \$30,000 and \$56,000 respectively.

<sup>8</sup>About 16% of those interviewed refused to answer the income question; another 9% would answer only whether their income was over \$100,000 or less than \$100,000. An inspection of the refusals on the income question by occupation, education and economic stress indicates that, in general, people who refused to answer the income question were not radically different from those who did answer. Higher status people (with higher levels of education and/or occupation and lower levels of economic stress) were somewhat more likely to refuse to answer the income question, as were older persons with lower socio-economic status.

**Exhibit 3 Income of Jewish Households, Philadelphia Area, 1996/97**



With regard to households earning between \$15,000 and \$25,000, the Near Northeast has the greatest concentration: **21% of the households earn between \$15,000 and \$25,000** compared with 11% of all Jewish households. But not only Wynnefield and Northwest Philadelphia have a relatively high concentration; so does Center City/University City, with its significant student population.

The Near Northeast also has more than the proportionate share of households earning between \$25,000 and \$50,000 along with Delaware County and Main Line/King of Prussia.

Some of the focus group participants felt stuck in declining neighborhoods. “In the city there are more and more concerns. People are moving out of the city. Do we run or do we try to do something to change it?”... “What I see is that the people who are staying in the city are like me, like the policemen... I’m stuck as a condition of employment. (According to a 1983 law, City/Public School system employees have to live in the city.)”... “I would move if finances weren’t...yeah, I would move”... “My street was 90% Jewish population. Old people die. Children sell houses. People buying them not Jewish.”... “Federation needs to provide more services to the Northeast. Federation people don’t realize what’s happening in the real world. They don’t see the real financial crunch that we’re going through. They don’t realize how many Jews are below poverty. There’s a lot of especially elderly Jews that are below the poverty level.”

Exhibit 4 Household Income by Geographic Sub-Area, Philadelphia Area, 1996/97

SUB-AREAS	INCOME					ALL JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS
	UNDER \$15,000	\$15,000 TO \$24,999	\$25,000 TO \$49,999	\$50,000 TO \$74,999	\$75,000+	
BUCKS	3%	3%	15%	27%	22%	16%
CHESTER	**	**	**	**	**	4
DELAWARE	*	2	7	10	7	6
MONTGOMERY MAIN LINE/ K. OF P.	3	7	11	8	11	9
NW SUBURBS	2	7	6	7	8	6
NORTHERN SUBURBS	4	11	10	11	17	12
PHILADELPHIA CENTER CITY	10	13	11	6	15	11
NEAR NORTHEAST	25	21	12	8	3	11
FAR NORTHEAST	40	16	14	7	6	14
WYNNEFIELD & NW PHILA***	9	10	5	9	4	7
OTHER PHILA.	**	**	**	**	**	4
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Note: Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

\* Less than 1%

\*\*Sample size is not adequate for this level of detail.

\*\*\*Wynnefield & Northwest Philadelphia combined because of small sample size in each area.

INCOME AND HOUSEHOLD SIZE

As indicated above, household size, along with income, is the critical variable in defining economic stress. The modal or typical household in Philadelphia's Jewish community today is a two person household earning between \$25,000 and \$50,000 a year (see figure in bold in Exhibit 5).

Exhibit 5 Household Income by Household Size, Jewish Households, Philadelphia Area, 1996/97

INCOME	HOUSEHOLD SIZE					TOTAL
	ONE PERSON	TWO PERSONS	THREE PERSONS	FOUR PERSONS	FIVE OR MORE PERSONS	
LESS THAN \$15,000	6%	4%	2%	*	*	12%
\$15,000 TO \$24,999	6	4	1	1	*	12%
\$25,000 TO \$49,999	7	<b>12</b>	3	3	1	26%
\$50,000 TO \$74,999	3	8	4	4	2	21%
\$75,000 AND OVER	3	8	6	8	4	29%
TOTAL	24%	36%	17%	15%	8%	100%

Note: Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

\* Less than 1%

## POOR JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS

There are an estimated 15,200 poor Jews living in 6,800 households -- 7% of the Jewish households in the Philadelphia Area<sup>9</sup> (See Exhibit 6). In the context of the widespread myth that there are no poor Jews, this is a substantial number of people. Most of these *households* are relatively small, consisting of three or fewer persons. Most poor *people* live in two or three person households.

Exhibit 6 Estimated Number of Poor Jewish Households and People, by Household Size, Philadelphia Area, 1996/97

	HOUSEHOLDS	PEOPLE
1 PERSON	1,900	1,900
2 PERSONS	2,300	4,600
3 PERSON	1,900	5,700
4 PERSON	400	1,600
5 OR MORE PERSONS	300	1,500
TOTAL	6,800	15,200

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<sup>9</sup>This estimate is derived by applying Federal poverty guidelines to the information collected in the Survey. Since the income categories used in the Survey are much broader than the distinctions in the poverty guidelines, it is necessary to interpolate -- that is, to assume that income is evenly distributed within a category. In the under \$15,000 category it was assumed that 2/3 of the households were in the upper half of the category (i.e. between \$7,500 and \$15,000), and 1/3 below \$7,500. Because older poor persons are more likely to refuse to answer the income question, these figures could involve an under-estimate of about 10%, concentrated in one and two person households.



## **II. LOWER INCOME HOUSEHOLDS**

Exhibit 7 relates the distribution of Jewish households by income and household size to the definitions of lower income included in Exhibit 2 above. The household size-income distribution included 25 categories of household defined by income and household size. The eleven categories below the line in Exhibit 7 include the households defined as lower income.

This includes all households with less than \$15,000 income per year; households with two or more persons earning less than \$25,000; and households with four or more persons earning less than \$50,000 a year. These cells are shaded in Exhibit 7.

Together, the shaded cells account for 22% of those surveyed, including the 7% previously defined as "poor." Over 22,000 Jewish households in the Philadelphia Area can be considered lower income. Over 54,000 people live in these households, including the 15,200 people living in households previously defined as "poor". More people live in lower income households in the Philadelphia Area than in the entire Jewish community of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Exhibit 7 Lower Income, Jewish Households, Philadelphia Area, 1996/97

INCOME	HOUSEHOLD SIZE					TOTAL
	ONE PERSON	TWO PERSONS	THREE PERSONS	FOUR PERSONS	FIVE OR MORE PERSONS	
less than \$15,000	6%	4%	2%	*	*	12%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	6	4	1	1	*	12%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	7	12	3	3	1	26%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	3	8	4	4	2	21%
\$75,000 and over	3	8	6	8	4	49%
TOTAL	24%	36%	17%	15%	8%	100%

Note: Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

\* Less than 1%

## CRITICAL FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH LOWER INCOME

There are three factors that are associated with lower income:

1. **Employment & Occupation**
2. **Age & Household Structure**
3. **Immigration Status**

An analysis of these three factors indicates that seven groups account for virtually all of the lower income in the Philadelphia Area:

- **The unemployed or underemployed**
- **People in low-wage occupations**
- **People with a disability**
- **Older persons (over 65)**
- **Single-parent families**
- **New Americans from the FSU**
- **Students**

EMPLOYMENT, OCCUPATION AND LOWER INCOME

While only 11% of the people working full-time have lower incomes, the percentage goes up for other employment categories (see Exhibit 8). Part-time workers are only somewhat more likely to have lower incomes (15%). But three out of five of the people who are unemployed and **nearly eight out of ten of the people with a disability have lower incomes**. The latter group includes people both over and under 65. While nearly half of the students have lower incomes, for most in this group their economic difficulties are temporary, not permanent, and so they are in a qualitatively different position than the other groups, particularly as it relates to communal policy.

Beyond low-income, unemployment carries with it a host of other individual and family stresses and strains. The overall unemployment rate in the Jewish community is low -- only 3,200 individual adults or 2.8 % of the work force report being unemployed. This compares with 4.9% in the Philadelphia, PA-NJ SMSA as reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics for November 1996.<sup>10</sup>

Exhibit 8 Employment and Low Income, Respondent, Philadelphia Area, 1996/97

EMPLOYMENT STATUS	LOWER INCOME	MIDDLE & UPPER INCOME	TOTAL
FULL-TIME	11%	89%	100%
PART-TIME	16	84	100%
STUDENT	47	53	100%
UNEMPLOYED	59	41	100%
DISABLED	78	22	100%

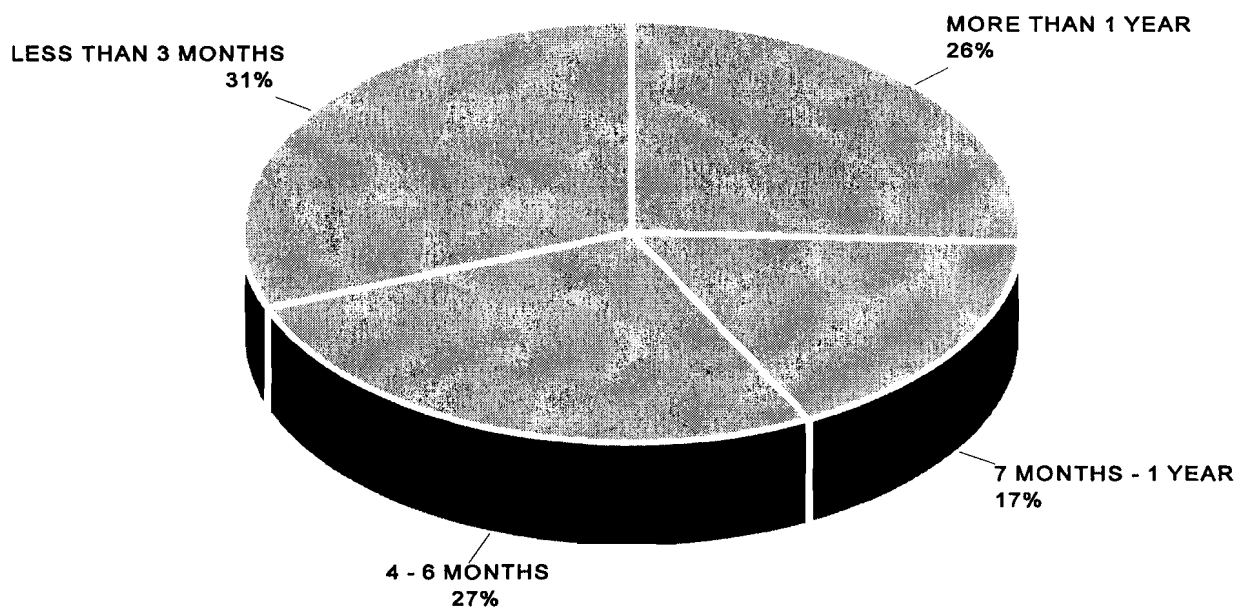
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<sup>10</sup>The two measures are roughly comparable. The base for the BLS calculation is the number of people seeking employment or employed. The base for the calculation of the Jewish unemployment rate is the number of unemployed divided by the total number of individuals working full-time or part-time and those unemployed -- excluding students, retired people, homemakers, full-time volunteers and disabled. Given improvements in the regional economy, it is likely that if the survey were done today, these unemployment rates would be even lower.

Respondents were asked about their recent unemployment experience.

The results are summarized in Exhibit 9. Over 15,000 households included one or more persons who were unemployed at some point within the last three years. While 30% of this group were unemployed for a relatively short period of time -- 3 months or less -- 26% experienced serious long-term unemployment -- for a year or more.

**Exhibit 9** Households with Unemployment Experience Within the Past Three Years, Philadelphia Area, 1996/97



Note: Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

When this pattern is analyzed by place of birth, it appears that **New Americans from the FSU were very much more likely to experience long-term unemployment than those born in the U.S. -- 42% compared with 22%**. People with unemployment experience who were born outside the FSU (primarily from the USA) were much more likely to experience short-term unemployment than people from the FSU -- 31% vs 14% (see Exhibit 10).

Exhibit 10 Households with Unemployment Experience Within the Past Three Years, by Place of Birth, Philadelphia Area, 1996/97

NUMBER OF MONTHS UNEMPLOYED	NEW AMERICANS FROM THE FSU	OTHER
3 MONTHS OR LESS	14%	34%
4 TO 6 MONTHS	33%	25%
7 TO 12 MONTHS	10%	19%
MORE THAN 12 MONTHS	42%	22%
TOTAL	100%	100%

Note: Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

People who experienced unemployment within the last three years were very much more likely to have lower incomes -- 32% vs 19% (see Exhibit 11).

The third dimension of employment explored in the survey was the extent to which people have experienced the need for career counseling or guidance within the past three years. The study found that over 16,000 individuals living in almost 15,000 households had the need for such services. This need was experienced by persons from the FSU at a somewhat higher rate -- 21% of the households from the FSU as opposed to 14% of those not from the FSU.

It is interesting that households with unemployment experience within the last three years and households feeling the need for career guidance within the last three years, are not necessarily the same households. While about 6,600 households have experienced unemployment **and** feel the need for career counseling, another 6,700 households have felt the need for career counseling, but have not experienced unemployment. The largest number -- 9,600 households -- have experienced unemployment but do not see themselves as needing career guidance or assistance! If one adds these three groups together, the basic universe of need for employment services approaches 23,000, or nearly 1/4 of the Jewish households in the Philadelphia Area. And, if one excludes retirees from the base, the percentage is much higher.

Lower income is also characteristic of people working in relatively low-skill, low-pay occupations. Whereas only 9% of people working in professional, managerial or executive positions have lower incomes, all other categories are substantially higher. Over 20% of those who are self-employed or those in clerical, service, retail, or craft positions have lower incomes. And 80% of those who are in unskilled occupations have lower incomes.

Exhibit 11 Recent Unemployment and Lower Income, Respondent, Philadelphia Area, 1996/97

UNEMPLOYED LAST THREE YEARS?	LOWER INCOME	MIDDLE & UPPER INCOME	TOTAL
YES	32%	68%	100%
NO	19%	81%	100%

All of the younger heads of households in the focus group were pessimistic about the future -- job layoffs, diminishing benefits. "There's definitely job instability ... can't stay in a job like you used to, the company doesn't keep you like they used to, the skills that you need are different"... "We're the first generation that's not surpassing our parents."

Exhibit 12 Occupation and Lower Income, Respondent, Philadelphia Area, 1996/97

OCCUPATION	LOWER INCOME	MIDDLE & UPPER INCOME	TOTAL
UNSKILLED	79%	21%	100%
OWNER/ SELF-EMPLOYED	23	77	100%
CLERICAL, RETAIL SERVICE, CRAFTSMAN	21	79	100%
PROFESSIONAL, MANAGERIAL, EXECUTIVE	9	91	100%
OTHER	*	*	100%

\* Sample size is not adequate for this level of detail.



## AGE AND HOUSEHOLD STRUCTURE

People over 65 are much more likely to have lower incomes, as are people under 28 because of the student effect (see Exhibit 13). One out of three households with a respondent over 65 has lower income, compared with only 16% of those between 28 and 49.

Most people in their 70's and 80's are still vigorous and able to manage on their own but some are not. Other factors affect vulnerability in older people, especially the isolation of living alone. Exhibit 14 demonstrates that low income is associated with other kinds of vulnerability among older people. Age, gender, living arrangements and marital status interact with low income. Single women, living alone, who are 75 years old and over have the lowest incomes -- **three out of four have incomes of under \$25,000**, compared with only one out of four couples in their late 60's or early 70's. There are a large number of such people, too -- an estimated 5,700 in the Philadelphia Area. Those that have a network of friends and family may do fine, but for the others, life can be lonely as well as full of anxiety and deprivation.

Women between the ages of 65 and 74 living alone have the next lowest incomes -- 60% have incomes of under \$25,000. Single men who live alone have the next lowest incomes, followed by those who live with others but are not married. The largest group and the lowest percentage with lower income are married couples over the age of 65. Of these 14,000 households, only about 1/4 have incomes of under \$25,000 -- a smaller percentage but a very large number of households.

Exhibit 13 Age and Lower Income, Respondent, Philadelphia Area, 1996/97

AGE	LOWER INCOME	MIDDLE & UPPER INCOME	TOTAL
18 TO 27	33%	67%	100%
28 TO 49	16	84	100%
50 TO 64	23	77	100%
65 AND over	33	67	100%

The focus group with older persons (including persons from the FSU and others) who were economically stressed were very pessimistic in their outlook. “Well, I hope I don’t live too long because I want to have money to do the things that I like to do, so I guess I would say I’m pessimistic with the way the situation with Clinton, and that budget thing that they’re doing with the money, and with Federation housing, because of HUD is cracking down on it. We pay 30% of our income and they’ll maybe make it to 50% or maybe HUD getting out of it altogether so I’m concerned about that”... “It’s not cheap to live anymore anyplace, that’s why I want to die quick. I can’t die fast enough. I go to bed at night praying that the next morning I won’t wake up”... “You have to make it on your own ... that’s why I’m becoming very pessimistic if you’re going to make it if you’re all alone. I worked until I took so ill ... I more or less rely on that besides my pension. I was so sick, now I’m not getting that [salary] and I wonder sometimes if I’m going to make it but that’s it, I know I’m going to have to make it and that’s it “... “I am not as pessimistic as you. God provides. I truly believe that - that God provides. It may not be what you’re accustomed to but there will be something there for you, a place to live.” Some know their children will help if necessary, although they prefer to be on their own. Others feel their children are too far away (one, actually only fifteen minutes away?!). “I don’t like to depend on my children for help but if I needed it they would help.”... “I don’t have that security of my children helping.”... “I can’t depend on my children. They’re all running too fast and living too high.”... “I have to be autonomous. I have to live by myself and do my thing.”

Exhibit 14 Older Persons by Age, Gender, Living Arrangements and Marital Status, Philadelphia Area, 1996/97

	INCOME				TOTAL
	UNDER \$15,000	\$15,000 TO \$24,999	\$25,000 TO \$49,999	\$50,000+	
WOMEN LIVING ALONE, 75+	40%	33%	17%	8%	100%
WOMEN LIVING ALONE, 65 TO 74	36	24	30	10	100%
MEN LIVING ALONE, 65+	28	15	22	35	100%
OTHER LIVING ARRANGEMENTS, 65+	26	15	35	24	100%
MARRIED COUPLES, 65+	13	14	37	35	100%
TOTAL, ALL 65+ HOUSEHOLDS	25%	20%	31%	25%	100%

Note: Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

It has been argued that the degree of poverty among older persons is overstated, in that many people over 65 have lower income but substantial assets. Exhibit 15 does not support this argument. Virtually all of the lower-income older persons either rent their homes or report home values of \$100,000 or less. The relatively few older persons with higher incomes, are much more likely to own homes and their homes have substantially higher values.

Exhibit 15 Older Households by Income and Home Value, Philadelphia Area, 1996/97

INCOME	RENT	OWN, VALUE <\$100,000	OWN, VALUE \$100,000 TO \$249,999	OWN, VALUE >\$250,000	TOTAL
UNDER \$15,000	76%	19%	5%	*	100%
\$15,000 TO \$24,999	30	54	15	1	100%
\$25,000 TO \$49,999	21	59	20	*	100%
\$50,000 AND OVER	16	9	55	20	100%

Note: Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.  
\* Less than 1%

Another group with many lower income households includes single parent families. Two out of five of the single parent families in the Jewish community have lower incomes (see Exhibit 16). These families also merit attention because they are under pressure on a number of fronts. Single-parents are twice as likely to report personal problems within the last three years than were two-parent families. Single parents have a greater child-rearing burden. They often feel isolated -- they are twice as likely to answer "strongly disagree" when questioned as to whether they "felt part of the Jewish community" as are two-parent families, and they are three times as likely to call the JIRS when experiencing personal problems as are two-parent families.

Exhibit 16 Single-Parent Families & Low Income, Philadelphia Area, 1996/97

	LOWER INCOME	MIDDLE & UPPER INCOME	TOTAL
1-PARENT FAMILY	41%	59%	100%
OTHER	22%	78%	100%

One mother with children in a focus group said, "I was absolutely shocked to find out that unless I was over 65 I wasn't eligible for anything. They sent me here and there ... and charged me for it too. I was in shock that the agency that I dealt with really geared up to the elderly in the city and I think there are tremendous resources available. They need it. I met all their income eligibilities and certainly the need was there, but I was so surprised to hear that in terms of the younger population there's very little out there in terms of help, in terms of homemaking, there's nothing here."

## IMMIGRATION: NEW AMERICANS FROM THE FORMER SOVIET UNION (FSU)

New Americans from the FSU are experiencing economic difficulty -- even those who are in income-earning age and capacity. While a substantial number have entered the economic mainstream of the community, a surprisingly large proportion, including some who have been in the United States for a decade or more, are lagging behind (see Exhibit 17). **Over 60% of the Jewish households originating in the Former Soviet Union have lower incomes.** Unfortunately a large number of these households are not able to work. In addition to the significant number over 65, a large number of those in their late fifties and early sixties are disabled -- probably a function of the relatively low level of health care in the FSU.

Exhibit 18 includes a comparison of the geographic distribution of Jewish households earning less than \$25,000 from the FSU with those who are not from the FSU. As a group, Jewish low-income households from the FSU are very concentrated geographically. **Over 60% of the Jewish households from the FSU with incomes under \$25,000 per year live in the Far Northeast; another 27% live in the Near Northeast.**

For low-income Jewish households that are not from the FSU the pattern is dramatically different. These households are much more spread out. The largest percentage (21%) of the low-income households not born in FSU is found in the Near Northeast. This is a predominantly older population. Significant percentages of the non-FSU low income population are found not only in Center City (14%), and the Far Northeast (13%), but in virtually every other part of the City of Philadelphia and Montgomery County.

Exhibit 17 New Americans from the FSU and Lower Income, Philadelphia Area, 1996/97

	LOWER INCOME	MIDDLE & UPPER INCOME	TOTAL
BORN IN THE FSU	62%	38%	100%
OTHER	18%	82%	100%

Exhibit 18 Households with Incomes of Under \$25,000, from the FSU and from Elsewhere, by Geographic Sub-Area, Philadelphia Area, 1996-97

SUB-AREAS	PLACE OF BIRTH			
	FSU	OTHER	TOTAL	ALL JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS
Bucks	2%	3%	3%	16%
Chester	**	**	**	4
Delaware	*	2	1	6
<i>Montgomery</i> Main Line/ K. of P.	*	7	5	9
NW Suburbs	*	7	5	6
Northern Suburbs	4	9	7	12
<i>Philadelphia</i> Center City	5	14	12	11
Near Northeast	27	21	23	11
Far Northeast	61	13	28	14
Wynnefield & Northwest Phila	*	7	5	7
Other	**	**	**	4
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%

Note: Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

\* Less than 1%

\*\* Sample size is not adequate for this level of detail.

The group with the severest problem of poverty are older New Americans from the FSU. **Over 80% of this group have low incomes** (see Exhibit 19). **In fact, all of these lower income households report incomes of under \$15,000 per year.** It is likely that many of them are dependent on public support to survive. To the extent that they are not yet citizens and have difficulty in preparing for citizenship, their ability to survive is at issue. One focus group participant said, “Jewish people they came from Russia. They need help with citizenship. These people, they cannot speak English. They need help but they cannot remember, head is old. What should they do? When they become citizens a lot of what they get now will be taken away. What should they do?”

Exhibit 19 Household Income by Household Size, **Older Immigrants from the FSU,** Philadelphia Area, 1996/97

	ONE PERSON	TWO PERSONS	THREE PERSONS	FOUR PERSONS	FIVE OR MORE PERSONS	TOTAL
LESS THAN \$15,000	46%	29%	7%	*	*	82%
\$15,000 TO \$24,999	8	*	*	*	*	8%
\$25,000 TO \$49,999	5	2	*	*	*	7%
\$50,000 AND OVER	*	2	*	*	*	2%
TOTAL	59%	34%	7	*	*	100%

Note: Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

\* Less than 1%



There are two ways to summarize this analysis:

- Of the 23,000 Jewish households who have lower incomes, what proportion are New Americans, older persons, or other types of households?
- What proportion of the New Americans, older persons, or other types of households etc. have lower incomes?

Exhibit 20 summarizes both ways of looking at this problem.

In Exhibit 20a, the groups are ranked by the number of lower income households who are in each group. In Exhibit 20b, the groups are ranked by the proportion of each group who have lower incomes. The largest **number** of lower income households are older persons who are not from the FSU -- over 6,000. The severest **concentration** of poverty is among older New Americans from the FSU. Over 80% of this group have lower incomes.

Exhibit 20a. Number of Lower Income Households Who Are in Each Group of Households, by Type, Philadelphia Area, 1996/97

TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD	NUMBER OF LOWER INCOME HOUSEHOLDS WHO ARE IN EACH "GROUP"
Persons Under 65, not from the FSU <sup>11</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Unemployed -- currently and/or during last three years (2,300)</li> <li>● Clerical service, craft or unskilled jobs or self-employed (2,300)</li> <li>● Retired, homemakers or full-time volunteers (1,500)</li> <li>● Single-Parent families (1,000)</li> <li>● Working part-time (800)</li> <li>● People with a Disability (300)</li> <li>● Students (1,600)</li> <li>● Other (?)</li> </ul>	10,000
Persons 65 and over, not from the FSU	6,700
New Americans from the FSU, 65 and over	2,000
New Americans from the FSU, under 65 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● With a disability (1,400)</li> <li>● Unemployed during last three years (1,000)</li> </ul>	3,400
Total	22,100

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<sup>11</sup>The sub-categories inside the cells are not mutually exclusive; the "groups" in the right hand column are mutually exclusive.

Exhibit 20b. Proportion of Each Group Who Have Lower Incomes, Philadelphia Area, 1996/97

TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD	PROPORTION OF EACH GROUP WHO HAVE LOWER INCOMES		
	NUMBER WHO HAVE LOWER INCOMES	NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS IN THE GROUP	PERCENT OF THE GROUP WHO HAVE LOWER INCOMES
OLDER NEW AMERICANS FROM THE FSU (65+)	2,000	2,500	81%
OTHER NEW AMERICANS FROM THE FSU (65 OR YOUNGER)	3,400	5,900	58%
OLDER PERSONS (NOT FROM THE FSU)	6,700	26,800	25%
PERSONS UNDER 65 (NOT FROM THE FSU)	10,000	64,000	16%
TOTAL	22,100	99,300	22%

Note: Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

### III. MAKING ENDS MEET

Having analyzed "poverty" and "lower-income", the study illuminates the third question of economic difficulty by the subjective measure: "Are you having difficulty making ends meet?"

At the beginning of this report, three levels of economic stress were identified:

- Poverty
- Lower Income
- Making Ends Meet

Exhibit 21 reveals that while only 3.5% say they are having difficulty making ends meet, over 34% said they are just managing. The very large number of people who believe that they are "just managing" has implications for community policy in a variety of areas from fund-raising to participation in Jewish communal life.

It is interesting to examine perceptions of economic adequacy in relation to reported income (Exhibit 22). While there is a strong relationship between the two variables, the correlation is not 100%. Very few households with incomes over \$75,000 indicate financial difficulties, but some do -- these tend to be larger households. Most households with an income of under \$25,000 indicate that they are having difficulty making ends meet or are just managing. Those that "have enough" on under \$25,000 tend to be older, single person households.

Again, household size is an important factor in examining income. Exhibit 23 includes information on households that cannot make ends meet or are just managing, broken down by income and household size. Only 41% of the households that indicated they cannot make ends meet or are just managing have lower income as defined in this report -- below the solid line in Exhibit 23. However, another 34% are just above the line -- between the solid line and the dotted line in Exhibit 23. Only 25% of the households expressing a sense of financial pressure earn above these levels, and of these, only 4% earn over \$100,000.

"Just managing" for many households means managing without Jewish content in their lives or the lives of their children. Families that cannot make ends meet or that are "just managing" are less likely to belong to a synagogue, to give their children a Jewish education, or to belong to a JCC (Exhibit 24). One focus group participant said, "Most kids are in Hebrew school and the mothers can't pay, we don't turn them away. And Jewish Day schools - why should we have to pay ... we're at the like middle income level and Shechter happens to be wonderful but my husband is partially disabled and when he can't work we pay it out, they don't say no ... but I shouldn't have to pay over \$8,000 a year for my child to have a Jewish education."... "I think Federation should try and get youngsters to be more Jewish. Federation should get synagogues to accept people for less money. A lot of young Jewish families can't afford six or eight hundred dollars a year to send their children to school and if you don't belong to the synagogue and pay dues then your children cannot go to school."

Exhibit 21 Adequacy of Present Financial Situation, Philadelphia Area, 1996/97

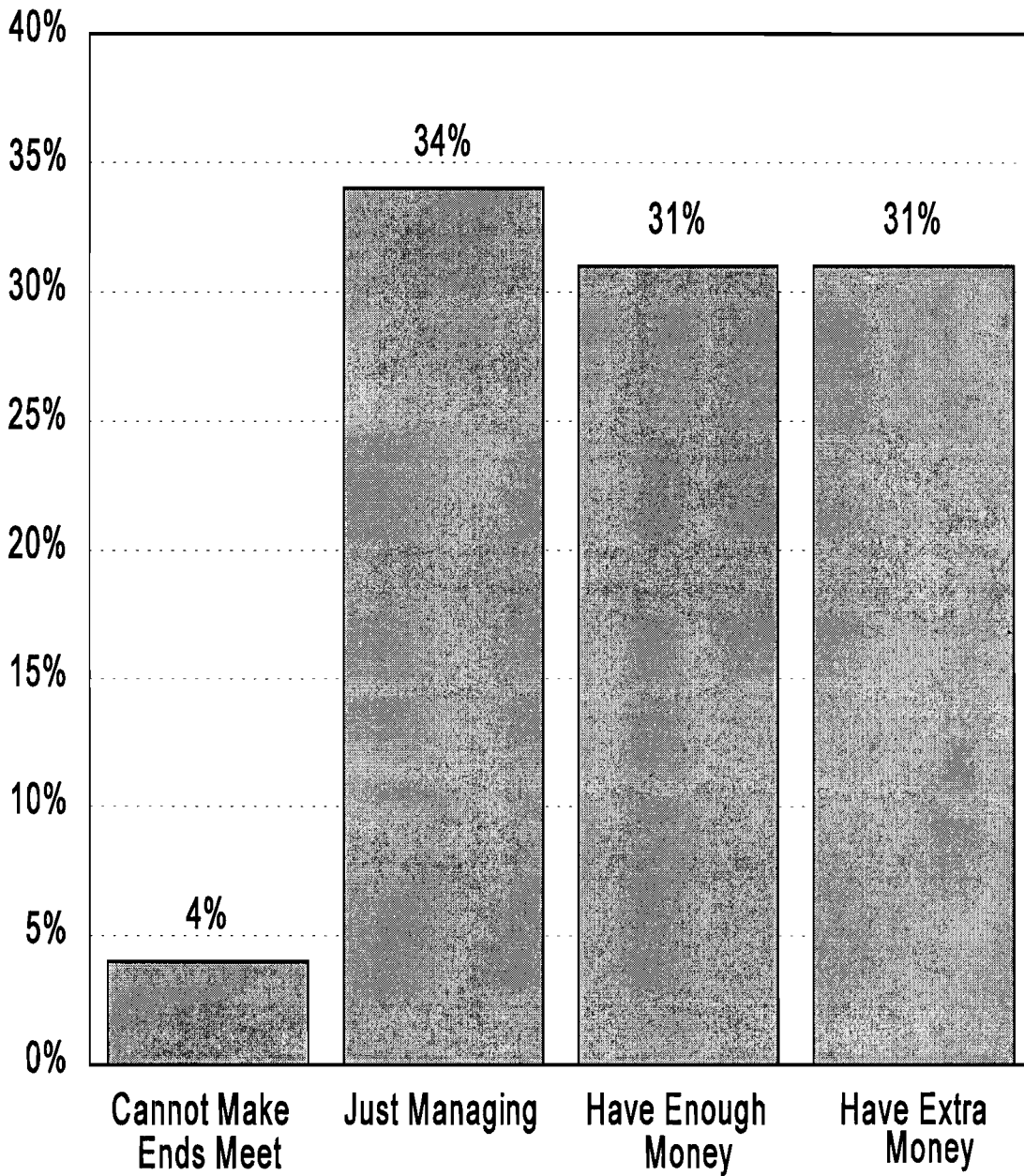


Exhibit 22 Adequacy of Present Financial Situation by Household Income, Philadelphia Area, 1996/97

INCOME	CANNOT MAKE ENDS MEET	JUST MANAGING TO MAKE ENDS MEET	HAVE ENOUGH MONEY	HAVE SOME EXTRA MONEY/ MONEY NO PROBLEM	TOTAL
UNDER \$15,000	10%	71%	15%	3%	100%
\$15,000 TO \$24,999	9	52	24	15	100%
\$25,000 TO \$49,999	3	43	34	20	100%
\$50,000 TO \$74,999	2	29	34	34	100%
\$75,000 TO \$99,999	2	15	38	44	100%
\$100,000 TO \$149,999	*	12	38	50	100%
\$150,000 AND OVER	*	2	24	74	100%

Note: Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.  
 \* Less than 1%

Exhibit 23 Household Income by Household Size, Households That Cannot Make Ends Meet or Are Just Managing, Philadelphia Area, 1996/97

	ONE PERSON	TWO PERSONS	THREE PERSONS	FOUR PERSONS	FIVE OR MORE PERSONS	TOTAL
LESS THAN \$15,000	12%	8%	4%	*	*	25%
\$15,000 TO \$24,999	9	6	2	2	*	19%
\$25,000 TO \$49,999	5	13	5	4	2	30%
\$50,000 TO \$74,999	2	3	5	5	2	17%
\$75,000 TO \$99,999	*	*	1	3	*	5%
\$100,000 AND OVER	*	*	*	1	2	4%
TOTAL	28%	31%	18%	15%	8%	100%

Note: Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.  
 \* Less than 1%

Exhibit 24 Level of Jewish Activity (Synagogue, JCC & Jewish Education), by Ability to Make Ends Meet, Philadelphia Area, 1996/97

	BELONGS TO A SYNAGOGUE	BELONGS TO A JCC	OLDEST CHILD RECEIVING JEWISH EDUCATION
CANNOT MAKE ENDS MEET	17%	3%	29%
JUST MANAGING	25%	6%	51%
HAVE ENOUGH	36%	8%	59%
HAVE EXTRA \$	38%	10%	67%



## CONCLUSIONS: POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This report underlines the urgency of putting the economic condition of Jews in Philadelphia on the Jewish communal agenda.

The data highlight three important policy issues for the Jewish community:

1) How can the community best mobilize its limited resources to respond to the needs of the 7,000 poor Jewish households in the community?

In large measure, poverty in the Jewish community is not different from poverty in any other sector of the community at-large. The Jewish community has three major responsibilities:

- to play an active role in the public policy arena to insure that the public and general voluntary sector safety net is strong and effective.
- to insure that individuals within the Jewish community receive the support that they are legally entitled to. This is particularly urgent with regard to older immigrants from the FSU. It is likely that many of them are dependent on public support. To the extent that they are not yet citizens and have difficulty in preparing for citizenship, their ability to survive is at issue.
- to act where the public and general communal safety net does not work.

2) How can the Jewish community best mobilize scarce resources to serve lower income Jews who are above the poverty level? While some public services are available for this group, to a significant extent, the Jewish community needs to mobilize its own resources<sup>12</sup>:

- The data suggest the Jewish community needs to help Jews in the area of jobs and job training. As in most communities, the volunteer leadership of the Jewish community in Philadelphia has the capacity to engage actively in job development for lower income Jews whose economic difficulties are job-related.
- The major concentration of lower income populations in the Northeast, suggests the need for a geographic concentration of programs and services aimed at helping meet economic needs. The concentration of low-income households from the FSU in the Far Northeast suggests that an analysis of resettlement policies in relation to job location may be in order.
- A special focus on the economic condition of immigrants from the FSU is needed. It

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<sup>12</sup>These implications follow from 1996/97 data. Subsequent improvements in the Philadelphia Area's economy need to be factored into any actions to be taken.

would be the height of irony if the community which helped to rescue Jews from the Former Soviet Union, was unable to respond to their economic plight now that they live in Philadelphia.

3) How can the Jewish community best meet the needs of the many thousands of households who are just making ends meet? Community leadership may wish to experiment with new ways to reduce the cost of participating in the community, especially for families with children with lower incomes.

- One way that many communities help individuals and families that are just managing, is through interest-free loans. Surprisingly, the Philadelphia Jewish community's diverse and strong service system does not have a community-wide Hebrew Free Loan Program.<sup>13</sup> A serious investigation of the feasibility and cost of developing such a program would be appropriate.
- Another way to help families in the "just managing" category that a number of other communities are considering is a "community membership" whereby a low or moderate income family can pay a single reduced fee to join a congregation and a JCC, and to access other services at a reduced rate.
- Opportunities to purchase specific services on a more selective basis may be more useful to families that are "just managing" than the membership programs that are currently the norm.

The organized Jewish community faces a significant challenge in responding to the information presented in this report. From Biblical times, Jews have been urged to take care of those in need: "Defend the poor and orphan, do justice to the weak and needy; help the pauper."<sup>14</sup> The challenge in Philadelphia today is the same as those faced by Jewish communities from time immemorial.

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<sup>13</sup>There are a number of small interest-free loan programs in the community, but none receive a Federation grant, nor are they widely known in the community.

<sup>14</sup>Psalm 82:3.