



The Jewish  
Education  
of Jewish  
Children:

Formal schooling, early  
childhood programs and  
informal experiences

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## INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

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**JEWISH EDUCATION, BOTH FORMAL AND INFORMAL**, is a critical element in Jewish continuity. Simply put, the more Jewish education Jews receive when they are growing up, the stronger are their Jewish connections when they are adults. More intensive forms of formal Jewish education for longer periods of time, as well as informal Jewish educational experiences, help produce Jews who are more communally involved, connected to other Jews, religiously active, and attached to Israel. This is true even after accounting for many other factors, like the Jewish denomination in which adults were raised, that partially explain the Jewish characteristics of adults.<sup>2</sup>

As a result, the Jewish education of today's Jewish children is a particularly crucial issue for Jewish organizations and the Jewish communal system. This report uses data from the National Jewish Population Survey 2000-01 (NJPS) to examine who among today's Jewish children are receiving various forms of formal, early childhood and informal Jewish education. More specifically, the report analyzes how the demographic and Jewish characteristics of parents are associated with their children's Jewish educational experiences. The report's findings indicate that parents' Jewish characteristics have a much more substantial association with children's Jewish education than parents' demographic characteristics do. In fact, the findings strongly suggest that barring more extensive Jewish communal interventions, differences in the adult population with respect to Jewish connections will be reproduced, and possibly accelerated, in the next generation because Jewish educational experiences are concentrated among children whose parents already have strong Jewish connections.

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1. This report benefited from the careful reading and comments of Jonathon Ament, Lorraine Blass, Steven M. Cohen, Danyelle Neuman, Andrea Fram Plotkin, Susan Sherr, Barry Swartz and Jonathan Woocher.
  2. See Steven M. Cohen and Laurence Kotler-Berkowitz, *The Impact of Childhood Jewish Education on Adults' Jewish Identity*, Report 3 in the UJC Report Series on the National Jewish Population Survey 2000-01, available at [www.ujc.org/njpsreports](http://www.ujc.org/njpsreports).

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## THE SAMPLE

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**PARENTS RATHER THAN OTHER ADULTS** usually have the most direct and important influence on children, and from a policy perspective we want to know how parents' characteristics and behaviors affect their children. Therefore, this report excludes about 10% of children in the NJPS data file for whom respondents are not their parents.<sup>3</sup> In many of these cases, children are the siblings of young adult respondents who are living in the parental home. In that situation, NJPS collected a great deal of information about the older siblings as the survey respondents, but the survey has little data about the parent or parents who also reside in the home. Since we cannot then link parents' characteristics and behaviors to children, these cases have been removed from the analysis.

For interested readers, the Appendix (pp. 36-37) presents three additional tables that provide information on all Jewish children in the NJPS data file, including those where respondents are not the parents of the children being analyzed.

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## JEWISH CHILDREN

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**THIS REPORT ANALYZES JEWISH CHILDREN AGES 17 AND YOUNGER.** Through a series of three questions, the NJPS questionnaire defined Jewish children as those whose religion is Judaism, who are being raised Jewish, or who are considered Jewish. While all households in NJPS are defined as Jewish because they have at least one Jewish adult, not all children in these households are Jewish. For example, many children of intermarried Jews are not Jewish under the criteria above. In fact, the NJPS data show that just under two-thirds (66%) of children in Jewish households are Jewish, projecting to an estimated population of 782,000 Jewish children out of 1,177,000 children in Jewish households.<sup>4</sup>

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3. When all children, Jewish and non-Jewish, are analyzed (Table 1), 11% of them are removed from the analysis because respondents are not their parents. When Jewish children only are analyzed (Tables 2-11), 9% of them are removed from the analysis because respondents are not their parents.

4. When all children are analyzed, including those where respondents are not the parents of children, there are an estimated 861,000 Jewish children out of 1,328,000 total children (65%) in Jewish households. See the Appendix of this report, pp. 36-37.

Who are these Jewish children? This is an important question because NJPS asked a series of questions about the formal and informal Jewish educational experiences only of these Jewish children. The education questions were not asked about non-Jewish children in Jewish households, under the assumption that non-Jewish children would not be receiving any Jewish education.

Table 1 provides some insights by showing how parents' demographic and Jewish characteristics are associated with the likelihood of their children being Jewish. The total row shows the overall average, 66%, among the cases being examined and can be used as a benchmark against other categories of parents' demographic and Jewish characteristics listed in the table.

Turning first to parents' age, for example, the table shows that children who have older Jewish parents (age 35 and older) are more likely to be Jewish than children whose parents are younger (age 18-34). Children whose parents have higher levels of secular education and income at the \$100,000 or more level are also more likely than other children to be Jewish, as are children in the Northeast relative to other regions. However, the children of married parents are only slightly more likely than the children of single parents to be Jewish.

Not surprisingly, the Jewish connections of parents are strongly associated with children being Jewish. The likelihood of children being Jewish rises substantially when parents identify as Orthodox, Conservative or Reform,<sup>5</sup> attend Jewish religious services at all,<sup>6</sup> belong to one or more Jewish organizations,<sup>7</sup> received either Jewish day school or supplemental education<sup>8</sup> when growing up, and are married to another Jew. In contrast,

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5. Statistics on Reconstructionist Jews are not presented due to small sample size. The question on adult respondents' Jewish denomination was restricted to respondents representing the more strongly-connected population of 4.3 million Jews. See the Methodological Note, pp. 38-39 for further details.

6. The question on adult respondents' religious service attendance was restricted to respondents representing the more strongly-connected population of 4.3 million Jews.

7. The question on adult respondents' Jewish organizational memberships was restricted to respondents representing the more strongly-connected population of 4.3 million Jews.

8. Supplemental Jewish education refers to programs that meet 1 or more times per week.

**TABLE I.**

Factors associated with children being Jewish, among all children in Jewish households.<sup>1</sup>

Children are Jewish (%)		Children are Jewish (%)	
<b>Total</b>	66	<b>Total</b>	66
<b>Parents' age<sup>2</sup></b>		<b>Parents' religious service attendance in past year<sup>3</sup></b>	
18-34	48	About 1/month or more	98
35-49	74	A few times (3-9 times)	92
50-64	70	Special occasions, High Holidays only, or less than 3 times	89
<b>Parents' education</b>		None	23
Some college or below	52	<b>Parents' Jewish organizational memberships<sup>3</sup></b>	
College degree	70	2+ memberships	99
Graduate degree	82	1 membership	95
<b>Household income</b>		0 memberships	35
Less than \$50,000	56	<b>Parents' formal Jewish education<sup>4</sup></b>	
\$50,000-99,999	57	Jewish day school	98
\$100,000 or more	78	2+/week program	86
<b>Region</b>		1/week program	72
Northeast	75	None	32
Midwest	61	<b>Parents' in-marriage /intermarriage status (among married parents)</b>	
South	62	In-married	96
West	56	Intermarried	39
<b>Household composition</b>			
Single parent	61		
Married couple	67		
<b>Parents' denomination<sup>3</sup></b>			
Orthodox	97		
Conservative	93		
Reform	87		
Just Jewish/secular/ no denomination	61		

<sup>1</sup> Jewish households are defined as households with at least one Jewish adult.

<sup>2</sup> Excludes parents age 65 and older due to small sample size.

<sup>3</sup> Restricted to respondents representing parents in the more Jewishly-connected population of 4.3 million Jews. See Methodological Note, pp. 38-39, for details.

<sup>4</sup> Excludes those who received other types of Jewish education, e.g., tutoring, due to small sample size.

when parents identify as “just Jewish,” secular or no denomination, do not attend Jewish religious services, are unaffiliated with Jewish organizations, received no Jewish education when growing up, or are married to a non-Jew, the likelihood that their children are Jewish drops significantly.<sup>9</sup>

FORMAL JEWISH EDUCATION AMONG JEWISH CHILDREN AGES 6-17

WE TURN NOW TO EXAMINING the formal Jewish education of Jewish children who are 6-17 years old, the standard age group for enrollment in Jewish schooling.<sup>10</sup> By formal Jewish education we generally mean one of three types of schooling: day school/yeshiva, supplemental programs that meet two or more days per week, and supplemental programs that meet one day a week. In some cases, formal education may also refer to private tutoring or other regular modes of learning.

Table 2 presents population estimates and proportions for current enrollments, as well as for whether children have ever received any type of Jewish education. The table shows that an estimated 359,000 children ages 6-17 are currently enrolled in a formal Jewish education program, comprising 72% of the total 500,000 children ages 6-17 being analyzed here. The type of program with the largest current enrollments is day school/yeshiva, in which 135,000 children are enrolled (27% of the total),<sup>11</sup> followed by programs that meet two or more times a week (22%) and one time a week (20%). A very small percentage of children (3%)

9. Further analysis shows that most of the demographic variation in children being raised Jewish occurs among children of intermarried parents, not among children of in-married parents. Among children of intermarried parents, the likelihood of being Jewish is associated with having parents who are age 35-64, have higher education and income levels, and reside in the Northeast and Midwest. Among children of in-married parents, the likelihood of being raised Jewish changes very little, if at all, across their parents' demographic characteristics.

10. Ages for 97% of the Jewish children under analysis are known, but respondents refused to provide ages for 3% of the children. Because these children's ages were unknown, they could not be asked education questions that were directed to particular age groups, like formal Jewish education for 6-17 year-olds, and they are not part of the report's analysis from here forward.

11. When all children are analyzed, including those for whom respondents are not their parents, there are an estimated 161,000 Jewish children enrolled in day schools. This figure is very similar to the estimate of 152,000 Jewish day school students provided by

**TABLE 2.**

Formal Jewish education, current and ever, among Jewish children ages 6-17.

	Population estimate	Percent
<b>Current Jewish education</b>		
Enrolled in any type of Jewish education	359,000 <sup>1</sup>	72
Day school/yeshiva	135,000	27
2+ /week program	111,000	22
1 /week program	100,000	20
Other (e.g., tutoring)	14,000	3
Not enrolled in any type of Jewish education	141,000	28
Total	500,000 <sup>2</sup>	100
<b>Ever Received Jewish Education</b>		
Yes	396,000	79
No	104,000	21
Total	500,000	100

<sup>1</sup> Individual categories of Jewish education sum to 360,000 due to rounding.

<sup>2</sup> Individual categories sum to 501,000 due to rounding.

receive an alternative form of Jewish education (for example, private tutoring). More than a quarter (28%) of children ages 6-17 who are defined as Jewish are not currently receiving any kind of formal Jewish education.

Continuity in overall levels of formal Jewish schooling between adults and children is evident in the data. The bottom of the table reports that 79% of Jewish children 6-17 have received some kind of formal Jewish education during their lives.<sup>12</sup> Among the conceptually equivalent group of Jewish adults,<sup>13</sup> 76% report they received some kind of Jewish schooling when they were growing up.

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the Avi Chai Foundation in its 1998-99 census of Jewish day schools. For further details, see “Enrollment Estimates in Selected Types of Jewish Education: NJPS and the Avi Chai Foundation,” by going to [www.ujc.org/njps](http://www.ujc.org/njps) and clicking on NJPS Methodology Series Index.

12. Due to an error during the interviewing phase, the distribution of types of formal Jewish education ever obtained cannot be accurately computed. Only the distribution of types of current formal Jewish education is available.

13. Adults in the more strongly-connected Jewish population of 4.3 million Jews. See the Methodological Note, pp. 38-39.

What factors, especially parental characteristics, are associated with children currently receiving any type of Jewish education, and with specific kinds of formal Jewish schooling?<sup>14</sup> To answer this question, we turn to Table 3. To read the table, we begin with the first row labeled “Total,” which repeats the percentages in the text above and in Table 2: 27% are currently enrolled in day school or yeshiva, 22% in a 2+ /week program, 20% in a 1 /week program, and 3% in another type of program, for a total current enrollment in some kind of program of 72%. The next column provides the percentage that is not enrolled in any kind of program – in the total row, 28% are not currently enrolled. The columns headed “total current enrollment” and “not currently enrolled,” which are placed side-by-side for easy reference, sum to the grand total of 100%.<sup>15</sup>

Looking first at parents’ age, Table 3 shows almost no variation in children’s Jewish education according to whether parents are 35-49 or 50-64. Other data on younger parents, ages 18-34, are suggestive but must be interpreted very cautiously due to small sample size, and hence are not displayed in the table. Nonetheless, these data indicate that parents ages 18-34 are especially likely to send their children to Jewish day school or yeshiva, with the reported rate at 60%. The high enrollments in day school/yeshiva among the children of younger parents appear to be due to the over-representation of Orthodox parents in the youngest parent age group. Close to half (46%) of the parents in the 18-34 age group are Orthodox – a significant over-representation relative to their 18% of all parents – and almost all of them send their children to day school or yeshiva. When only non-Orthodox parents are included in the analysis, parents ages 18-34 are less likely than parents 35 and older to send their children to every kind of formal program.

Looking again at Table 3, an effect of Orthodoxy on children’s education is seen more reliably in the case of parents’ education. Parents with some college education or below are equally or just slightly less likely to send

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14. Because nearly all parents (99.8%) of Jewish children are themselves part of the more strongly-connected population of 4.3 million Jews, questions that were restricted to respondents in the 4.3 million population are not further distinguished in this report. See Methodological Note, pp. 38-39.

15. They may not sum to precisely 100% due to rounding.

**TABLE 3.**

Factors associated with current enrollment in formal Jewish education, among Jewish children ages 6-17.

	Currently enrolled in formal Jewish education						
	Day school/ yeshiva	2+/ week program	1/ week program	Other	Total current enrollment	Not currently enrolled	Grand total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Total</b>	27	22	20	3	72	28	100
<b>Parents' age<sup>1</sup></b>							
35-49	25	23	21	3	72	28	100
50-64	24	25	19	3	71	29	100
<b>Parents' education</b>							
Some college or below	38	16	12	3	69	31	100
College degree	28	20	18	3	69	31	100
Graduate degree	17	29	28	2	76	24	100
<b>Household income</b>							
Less than \$50,000	31	8	22	<1	61	39	100
\$50,000-99,999	24	22	19	5	70	31	101 <sup>2</sup>
\$100,000 or more	26	27	22	<1	75	25	100
<b>Region</b>							
Northeast	38	16	16	2	72	29	101
Midwest	14	31	31	<1	76	24	100
South	18	26	29	4	77	24	101
West	13	32	13	5	63	36	99
<b>Household composition</b>							
Single parent	16	16	16	3	51	49	100
Married parents	29	23	21	3	76	24	100
<b>Parents' denomination</b>							
Orthodox	93	<1	2	<1	95	5	100
Conservative	14	37	17	4	72	28	100
Reform	4	29	37	2	72	28	100
Just Jewish/ secular/no denomination	10	8	12	5	35	65	100

**TABLE 3. CONTINUED**

Factors associated with current enrollment in formal Jewish education, among Jewish children ages 6-17.

	Currently enrolled in formal Jewish education						
	Day school/ yeshiva	2+/ week program	1/ week program	Other	Total current enrollment	Not currently enrolled	Grand total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Total</b>	27	22	20	3	72	28	100
<b>Parents' religious service attendance in past year</b>							
About 1/month or more	40	29	21	2	92	9	101
A few times (3-9 times)	17	23	22	3	65	35	100
Special occasions, High Holidays only, or less than 3 times	10	13	23	5	51	49	100
None	14	3	6	4	27	73	100
<b>Parents' Jewish organizational memberships</b>							
2+ memberships	38	26	23	3	90	10	100
1 membership	23	27	27	2	79	21	100
0 memberships	8	6	4	4	22	79	101
<b>Parents' formal Jewish education</b>							
Jewish day school	81	6	5	<1	92	9	101
2+/week program	17	28	23	4	72	28	100
1/week program	10	20	29	6	65	35	100
None	14	17	19	1	51	50	101
<b>Parents' in-marriage/ intermarriage status (among married parents)</b>							
In-married	38	26	19	3	86	14	100
Intermarried	4	16	27	2	49	51	100

<sup>1</sup> Excludes parents 18-34 and 65 and older due to small sample size.

<sup>2</sup> Grand totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

their children to some kind of formal Jewish schooling than parents with a college or graduate degree, but they are much more likely to send their children to day school or yeshiva than other parents are. However, 29% of parents with some college education or below are Orthodox, again above their overall representation of 18% among parents of children 6-17. When Orthodox parents are removed from the analysis and only non-Orthodox parents are examined (see Table 4), a clear relationship emerges: the greater the level of parents' education, the more likely are their children to receive some kind of Jewish schooling. How parents' education is associated with specific type of Jewish education still varies among non-Orthodox Jews, but in general supplementary forms of Jewish schooling (2+ /week and 1/week programs) rise as parents' education increases, while children's day school enrollments are most common among those parents who have a college degree but have not earned a graduate degree.

Household income is positively associated with overall Jewish education for children. In both Table 3 (all parents) and Table 4 (non-Orthodox parents only), higher household incomes yield higher rates of participation in some kind of formal Jewish education for children. The strongest relationship between household income and children's Jewish schooling is seen for the 2+ /week program, while the 1/week program appears to be unresponsive to income levels.

The relationship between income and rates of day school attendance is somewhat more complicated. In Table 3 (all parents), it appears that day school enrollment is more common at lower income levels, but again, this is due to the fact that Orthodox parents are more likely than other parents to be in lower income categories and much more likely to send their children to day school. Among non-Orthodox parents only (Table 4), day school education for children increases slightly at the upper end of the household income scale. Among children with Orthodox parents, there is also a small increase (roughly 10 percentage points) in day school attendance when household income rises to \$100,000 or more (data not displayed), but the number of cases for analysis is small and results need to be interpreted cautiously.

**TABLE 4.**

Factors associated with current enrollment in formal Jewish education, among Jewish children ages 6-17 in non-Orthodox households.

	Currently enrolled in formal Jewish education						Grand total
	Day school/ yeshiva	2+ /week program	1/ week program	Other	Total current enrollment	Not currently enrolled	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Total</b>	9	28	25	4	66	34	100
<b>Parents' age<sup>1</sup></b>							
35-49	10	29	25	4	68	32	100
50-64	7	30	23	4	64	36	100
<b>Parents' education</b>							
Some college or below	9	25	16	5	55	45	100
College degree	15	24	23	4	66	34	100
Graduate degree	5	34	32	3	74	26	100
<b>Household income</b>							
Less than \$50,000	8	11	28	1	48	52	100
\$50,000-99,999	8	28	24	6	66	34	100
\$100,000 or more	12	32	26	<1	70	29	99 <sup>2</sup>
<b>Region</b>							
Northeast	10	23	23	4	60	40	100
Midwest	3	37	37	<1	77	24	101
South	12	28	31	4	75	25	100
West	9	34	14	6	63	38	101
<b>Household composition</b>							
Single parent	9	19	17	4	49	52	101
Married couple	9	31	27	4	71	30	101

<sup>1</sup> Excludes parents age 18-34 and 65 and older due to small sample size.

<sup>2</sup> Grand totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Turning to region, Table 3 shows that when all parents are included, total enrollments in any kind of formal Jewish educational program are steady across the Northeast, Midwest<sup>16</sup> and South, but are appreciably lower in the West. In contrast, both forms of supplementary programs are relatively more common in the Midwest and South than the Northeast, as are 2+ /week programs in the West relative to the Northeast. The dramatically elevated level of day school enrollments in the Northeast again appears due to the over-representation of Orthodox parents in that region. Table 4 shows that non-Orthodox parents in the Northeast are only as likely as non-Orthodox parents in the South and West to send their children to day schools. In addition, non-Orthodox parents in the Northeast are actually less likely to send their children to supplementary Jewish education than non-Orthodox parents elsewhere, with the exception of 1/week programs when compared to non-Orthodox parents in the West.

The final demographic variable examined is whether parents are single or married. Married parents are more likely to send their children to all forms of formal Jewish education than single parents are. This may reflect the fact that married parents typically have higher incomes than single parents, and income as we have seen is modestly associated with enrollment in formal Jewish education. Higher day school enrollments among children of married parents, in particular, may also reflect the fact that Orthodox parents, whose children are especially likely to attend day schools, are more likely than other parents to be married rather than single. When only non-Orthodox parents are examined (Table 4), the children of married parents are no more likely to be in day schools than the children of single parents (9% each), but they are much more likely to attend supplemental programs.

The remainder of Table 3 examines the association between the Jewish connections of parents – denomination, religious service attendance, organizational affiliations, Jewish education when growing up, and in-marriage/intermarriage status – and the current Jewish schooling of their children. As a general rule, the Jewish connections of parents are much

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16. Findings for the Midwest should be interpreted cautiously due to small sample size (N=53 for all parents, N=44 for non-Orthodox parents).

better predictors of the Jewish education of children than are the parents' demographic characteristics. The children of parents with more robust and traditional types of Jewish connections are more likely – often much more likely – to be receiving some kind of formal Jewish education than other children are.

Looking first at parents' denomination, the table shows that day school/yeshiva attendance is nearly universal (93%) among the children of Orthodox parents, but only small minorities of other children are enrolled in day schools. More than half the children whose parents identify as Conservative or Reform attend a supplementary program, with the children of Conservative parents more likely to attend 2+ /week programs and the children of Reform parents more likely to attend 1/week programs. Strikingly, nearly two-thirds of the children of parents who identify as “just Jewish,” secular or no denomination are not receiving any Jewish education.

Similar discrepancies are seen when examining parents' religious service attendance and organizational affiliations. Forty percent of children whose parents attend religious services once a month or more are attending day school, and 50% are attending a supplementary program. Likewise, among children whose parents have two or more Jewish organizational memberships, nearly 40% are enrolled in day school and half go to a supplementary program. In contrast, close to three-quarters of the Jewish children of parents who do not attend religious services and almost 80% of the Jewish children of parents who are organizationally unaffiliated are not receiving any kind of formal Jewish schooling.

Children's current Jewish education frequently mirrors their parents' Jewish education when the parents were growing up. More than 80% of children whose parents attended day school are themselves enrolled in day school. When parents attended supplementary programs, the most common form of Jewish schooling for their children is also supplementary education.<sup>17</sup> Half the children whose parents received no Jewish education

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17. More specifically, when parents attended supplementary programs that met two or more times a week, their children are most likely to attend supplementary programs that meet at least twice a week. When parents attended supplementary programs that met once a week, their children are most likely to attend once-a-week supplementary programs.

are likewise not receiving any Jewish education. Importantly, though, more than a third of the children with parents who did not receive any Jewish education are themselves enrolled in a supplementary program, and a significant minority (14%) is attending day schools. This runs directly counter to the general pattern of the Jewish education of children replicating that of their parents.

Finally, parents' in-marriage/intermarriage status (among those who are currently married) is also associated with Jewish education for children. When parents are in-married (i.e., married to another Jew), children are highly likely (86%) to be receiving some kind of Jewish education, including nearly 40% at day schools and more than a quarter in 2+ /week supplementary programs. When parents are intermarried, only half of the children are receiving any kind of Jewish education, with the most common form being a supplementary program that meets once a week.

In sum, this section has shown that the Jewish connections of parents are powerful predictors of the formal Jewish education of children, certainly more powerful than parents' demographic characteristics. Children whose parents have strong Jewish connections are significantly more likely to be receiving formal Jewish education, especially more intensive forms like day school and supplementary programs that meet twice a week, than are children whose parents have weaker Jewish connections.

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#### PROFILES OF CHILDREN AGES 6-17 ENROLLED IN FORMAL JEWISH EDUCATION

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**THE PREVIOUS SECTION OF THIS REPORT EXAMINED THE FACTORS** that predict the likelihood of formal Jewish education among children. This section analyzes children from another perspective, comparing the parental (or household) characteristics of children who are enrolled in different types of formal Jewish education with each other and with those who are not receiving any Jewish schooling. We focus on parents' Jewish characteristics because they have already been shown to be much

more strongly associated with children's Jewish education than parents' demographic characteristics.

Table 5 provides the profiles, dividing the children's population according to the type of formal Jewish education they are receiving and presenting selected Jewish connections of their parents (or households). To begin, we look at the denominational identity of parents. The table clearly shows that the overwhelming majority (74%) of day school/yeshiva students ages 6-17 are the children of Orthodox parents, while much smaller minorities are the children of parents who identify themselves as Conservative (15%), Reform (6%) and "just Jewish" or secular (6%). Children in programs that meet two or more times per week tend to come from homes where parents are either Conservative or Reform, while children in 1/week programs are most likely to have parents who identify as Reform. Among Jewish children who are not enrolled in Jewish education, very few have Orthodox parents, and the rest are closely divided among the other denominational options.

The strong Jewish connections of the parents of day school students are seen throughout the table. Three-quarters of the parents of day school students attend Jewish religious services once a month or more, two-thirds belong to two or more Jewish organizations, and nearly all are married to another Jew. Day school students, in other words, tend to come from Jewish parents and households that have multiple connections to Jewish life.

The parents of students in supplemental forms of Jewish education are also more likely than not to attend religious services once a month or more and to belong to two or more Jewish organizations. In part this probably reflects the fact that most supplemental programs are synagogue-based, which serves to bring parents to religious services and to account for one of the parents' organizational affiliations. In addition, most children in supplemental program have parents who are in-married, though the in-married proportion declines as the children's form of Jewish schooling becomes less intensive.

**TABLE 5.**

Profile of Jewish children, ages 6-17, according to their formal Jewish education.

	Currently enrolled in formal Jewish education			Not currently enrolled
	Day school/ yeshiva	2+/ week program	1/ week program	
	%	%	%	%
<b>Parents' denomination</b>				
Orthodox	74	<1	2	4
Conservative	15	47	23	27
Reform	6	48	67	36
Just Jewish/secular/no denomination	6	5	9	33
Total	101 <sup>1</sup>	100	101	100
<b>Parents' religious service attendance in past year</b>				
About 1/month or more	75	66	53	17
A few times (3-9 times)	13	22	23	26
Special occasions, High Holidays only, or less than 3 times	7	11	21	32
None	5	2	3	25
Total	100	101	100	100
<b>Parents' Jewish organizational memberships</b>				
2+ memberships	67	56	54	17
1 membership	27	38	42	23
0 memberships	6	5	4	60
Total	100	99	100	100
<b>Parents' in-marriage/intermarriage status (among married parents)</b>				
In-married	96	82	65	43
Intermarried	4	18	35	57
Total	100	100	100	100

<sup>1</sup>Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Finally, children who are not currently enrolled in Jewish education come from households with the weakest Jewish connections. Over half of these children have parents who attend synagogue irregularly or not at all, have no organizational affiliations, and are married to someone who is not Jewish.

**FORMAL JEWISH EDUCATION AMONG CHILDREN AGES 14-17**

IT IS COMMONLY BELIEVED THAT MANY JEWISH CHILDREN stop their formal Jewish education following their becoming a *bar* or *bat mitzvah*, at about age 13 or 14. NJPS data allow us to examine this issue by analyzing Jewish children ages 14-17. The data show, not unexpectedly, that there is a drop-off in formal Jewish education among these children. While 82% of all children in this age group have ever received some kind of Jewish schooling, 66% are currently enrolled in a formal program<sup>18</sup> (data in this section are not displayed in tables). While this represents a decline of 16 percentage points, conventional wisdom about higher attrition rates in post-*bar* and *bat mitzvah* years may no longer be true among children who are being raised as Jews.

Moreover, attrition in post *bar* or *bat mitzvah* years is only part of the story among older Jewish children. The data show that having never been enrolled in Jewish schooling is more common than having stopped attending a formal program. Specifically, among children 14-17 who are not currently enrolled in formal Jewish education, over half (52%) have never received any kind of Jewish schooling, and just under half (48%) were once enrolled but have stopped.<sup>19</sup>

Furthermore, there is little evidence to suggest that children ages 14-17 who have not received any formal Jewish education will do so before turning 18. More than three-quarters of these children have parents who are unaffiliated with Jewish organizations, 58% have parents who are intermarried, 41% have parents who do not attend religious services, 41% have parents who identify as “just Jewish” or secular, and 39% have

18. Among 14-17 year olds, about one-fifth are enrolled in day schools (22%), supplementary programs that meet two or more times a week (20%) and supplementary programs that meet once a week (19%). An additional 5% are enrolled in some other kind of program, and 34% are not receiving formal Jewish education.

19. In other words, there is a significantly minority, 18%, of Jewish children ages 14-17 who have not received any formal Jewish education during their lives. Eighteen percent is arrived at by multiplying the 34% of Jewish children ages 14-17 who are not currently enrolled in formal Jewish education by the 52% of such children who have never received any formal Jewish education (34% x 52% = 18%).

parents who themselves did not receive any Jewish education when they were growing up. In terms of Jewish connections, this profile is similar to or weaker than the profile of all children 6-17 who are not currently receiving Jewish education (see Table 5), suggesting that these 14-17 year-olds are highly unlikely to ever receive any formal Jewish schooling during their childhoods.

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#### EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

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**WHILE FORMAL JEWISH SCHOOLING TYPICALLY STARTS AT ABOUT AGE 6**, opportunities for early childhood education under Jewish auspices exist for younger children. By early childhood education we mean childcare, pre-school/nursery school or kindergarten. Early childhood education under Jewish auspices is important because it acts as a gateway to further Jewish education, specifically increasing the likelihood that children will later be enrolled in formal Jewish education. To see that this is the case, Table 6 divides today's 6-17 year-old children into those who were enrolled in an early childhood program under Jewish auspices<sup>20</sup> when they were age 5 or younger and those who were not, and examines their current enrollments in formal Jewish education. Among those who had an early childhood experience under Jewish auspices, half are now enrolled in day schools, another quarter are in supplemental programs that meet two or more times a week, and only 8% are not receiving any formal Jewish education. In contrast, 45% of those who did not experience an early childhood program under Jewish sponsorship are today receiving no formal Jewish education and only 5% are in day schools. When young children are enrolled in an early childhood program that has Jewish sponsorship, they are more likely to be enrolled at a later time in a formal Jewish educational program, especially more intensive types of formal education.

Having established the strong linkage between early childhood education and formal Jewish education at later ages, this section now turns to

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20. For today's Jewish children 6-17, NJPS did not probe the specific Jewish sponsor of early childhood programs when the children were 5 or younger.

**TABLE 6.**

Early childhood education and formal Jewish education, among Jewish children ages 6-17.

	<b>Enrolled in early childhood education under Jewish auspices when age 5 or younger?</b>	
	Yes	No
	%	%
<b>Current formal Jewish education</b>		
Day school/yeshiva	50	5
2+/week program	26	20
1/week program	13	28
Other	3	3
None	8	45
Total	100	101 <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Total does not sum to 100% due to rounding.

examining participation in early childhood education among today's Jewish children ages 0-5. To begin, Table 7 presents population estimates and percentages for the child population ages 0-5. Of the 227,000 total children, 60,000 take part in an early childhood program under Jewish auspices,<sup>21</sup> another 62,000 take part in an early childhood program under non-Jewish sponsorship, and the balance are not currently participating in an early childhood program.<sup>22</sup>

What parental and household characteristics are associated with children's participation in early childhood education programs under Jewish auspices? Table 8 examines this issue, providing percentages for participation in Jewish and non-Jewish sponsored programs, total current participation, and the total percentage not participating. The first row, labeled "Total," repeats the percentages from Table 7. The rest of the table examines several demographic and Jewish characteristics of children's parents where sample size permits. When restricting cases to parents of children ages 0-5, analysis of all regional categories outside the Northeast and of single parents are not reliable due to small sample size, so those variables are not included here.

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21. Among the estimated 60,000 children enrolled in an early childhood program under Jewish auspices, 36% are in programs sponsored by synagogues, 32% by JCCs, and 32% by another Jewish organization. There are not enough cases within each type of sponsorship to conduct further analysis of the sponsorship categories.

**TABLE 7.**

Current participation in early childhood education (daycare, pre-school/nursery school or kindergarten) among Jewish children ages 0-5.

	Population estimate	Percent
<b>Currently participating</b>	122,000	53
Jewish program	60,000	26
Non-Jewish program	62,000	27
<b>Not currently participating</b>	106,000	46
<b>Total</b>	227,000 <sup>1</sup>	99 <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Individual categories of participation status sum to 228,000 due to rounding.

<sup>2</sup> Percentages sum to 99% due to rounding.

The demographic variables show that the children of older parents (ages 35-49) are more likely than those of younger parents (age 18-34) to be enrolled in both Jewish and non-Jewish early childhood programs, as are the children of parents with college and graduate degrees relative to children whose parents did not complete or attend college. Children in homes with income levels of \$100,000 or above are more likely than children in homes with lower incomes to be in Jewish-sponsored programs, but not in programs under non-Jewish auspices.

As with the formal Jewish education of older children, participation in Jewish-sponsored early childhood education among younger children is strongly associated with the Jewish characteristics of parents. The children of Orthodox and Conservative parents are the most likely to be in an early childhood program under Jewish auspices, followed by a modest drop among the children of Reform parents and an even steeper decline among the children of parents who identify as “just Jewish,” secular or no denomination.<sup>23</sup> Substantial differences in children’s participation in

22. The 227,000 in Table 7 do not include more than 27,000 children ages 0-5 who are enrolled in some kind of early education program but for whom the sponsor of the program – Jewish or non-Jewish – is unknown because respondents did not answer that question. If these 27,000 are included, then 149,000 out of 255,000 children ages 0-5, or 58%, are enrolled in some kind of early education program.

23. Findings for children of parents who are “just Jewish,” secular or no denomination should be interpreted cautiously due to small sample size.

Jewish-sponsored programs are also seen for parents’ religious service attendance and organizational affiliations,<sup>24</sup> as well as for the type of Jewish education parents themselves received when they were growing up. Lastly, the children of in-married parents are more likely to be in Jewish-sponsored early childhood programs than the children of intermarried parents. Taken together, these findings suggest that the transmission of Jewish connections from adults to children starts very early in children’s lives, with the children of more strongly-connected Jewish parents having a much greater likelihood of experiencing early childhood education under Jewish auspices than other children do.

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## INFORMAL JEWISH EDUCATION

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**AS WITH FORMAL EDUCATION, INFORMAL JEWISH EDUCATION** when experienced in youth has important effects on adult Jewish identity and behavior, though the impact of informal education is somewhat more modest than that of formal education.<sup>25</sup> Consequently, understanding patterns of informal educational experiences among today’s Jewish children is also essential for the communal system.

NJPS questions on the informal Jewish education of today’s children focused on three areas: regular participation in Jewish activities and/or Jewish youth groups for children ages 12-17, in the year before the survey was taken; attendance or work at a Jewish summer camp<sup>26</sup> for children ages 8-17, also in the year before the survey was taken; and travel to Israel for children ages 6-17, at any point in their lives.<sup>27</sup>

Table 9 presents population estimates and percentages for informal education. Half of children ages 12-17 regularly participated in Jewish

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24. Jewish institutions that sponsor early education programs may account for one of the parents’ organizational affiliations, as is often the case with formal supplemental programs based in synagogues.

25. Cohen and Kotler-Berkowitz, op. cit., *The Impact of Childhood Jewish Education on Adults’ Jewish Identity*.

26. The NJPS questions on Jewish sleep-away camps for children required respondents to decide if the camps had “Jewish religious services or other Jewish content.” The NJPS question on day camps asked if children attended “a Jewish day camp.” Neither question specified a Jewish educational mission, a criteria commonly utilized in Jewish communal circles, especially by Jewish camping advocates.

27. These age restrictions reflect assumptions by the survey designers about the likelihood of children’s involvement in a particular activity or the potential for experiences to have effects on children.

**TABLE 8.**

Factors associated with current participation in early childhood education, among Jewish children ages 0-5.

	Currently participating			Not participating	Grand total
	Jewish program	Non-Jewish program	Total current participation		
	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Total</b>	26	27	53	46	99 <sup>1</sup>
<b>Parents' age<sup>2</sup></b>					
18-34	18	23	41	59	100
35-49	33	32	65	35	100
<b>Parents' education</b>					
Some college or below	17	23	40	59	99
College degree	27	32	59	41	100
Graduate degree	31	27	58	42	100
<b>Household income</b>					
Less than \$50,000	21	34	55	45	100
\$50,000-99,999	21	31	52	48	100
\$100,000 or more	37	27	64	36	100
<b>Parents' denomination</b>					
Orthodox	35	16	51	50	101
Conservative	37	27	64	37	101
Reform	24	30	54	45	99
Just Jewish/secular/ no denomination	9	38	47	54	101
<b>Parents' religious service attendance in past year</b>					
About 1/month or more	42	15	57	43	100
A few times (3-9 times)	31	30	61	39	100
Special occasions, less than 3 times, High Holidays only	13	30	43	57	100
None	6	46	52	48	100
<b>Parents' Jewish organizational memberships</b>					
2+ memberships	45	20	65	36	101
1 membership	32	20	52	48	100
0 memberships	8	39	47	54	101

**TABLE 8. CONTINUED**

Factors associated with current participation in early childhood education, among Jewish children ages 0-5.

	Currently participating			Not participating	Grand total
	Jewish program	Non-Jewish program	Total current participation		
	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Total</b>	26	27	53	46	99
<b>Parents' formal Jewish education</b>					
Jewish day school	51	7	58	42	100
2+ / week program	29	29	58	42	100
1/week program	6	46	52	48	100
None	16	22	38	62	100
<b>Parents' in-marriage/inter-marriage status (among married parents)</b>					
In-married	36	22	58	42	100
Intermarried	9	36	45	55	100

<sup>1</sup> Grand totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

<sup>2</sup> Excludes parents age 50 and older due to small sample size.

activities or youth groups, more than a third ages 8-17 attended or worked at a Jewish summer camp, and one-fifth of those ages 6-17 have traveled to Israel. Looking at children ages 12-17, who are the common age group across the three types of informal experiences, the table shows that 56% of them had at least one of these three informal experiences.

As with formal and early childhood education, we look at how parents' demographic and Jewish characteristics are associated with children's participation in informal Jewish education. Table 10 presents data for all children, while Table 11 presents the demographic information for children whose parents are not Orthodox (because Orthodox parents tend to be over-represented in certain demographic categories). To begin, including or excluding Orthodox parents makes little difference in terms of parents' ages, though there is some marginal evidence that the children

**TABLE 9.**

Participation in informal Jewish education, among Jewish children of various ages.

	Population estimate	Percent
<b>Type of informal Jewish educational experience</b>		
Organized Jewish activity or youth group, in year prior to survey (ages 12-17)	113,000	49
Attended/worked at Jewish summer camp, in year prior to survey (ages 8-17)	145,000	36
Ever visited Israel (ages 6-17)	91,000	20
Any one of three (ages 12-17)	136,000	56

of parents 35-49 may be slightly more likely than the children of parents 50-64 to have worked at or attended a Jewish summer camp and traveled to Israel.

Turning to parents' education, Tables 10 and 11 both show that the children of parents who have college degrees—but not graduate degrees—are more likely than other children to participate in youth groups. When Orthodox parents are included, parents' education is inversely related to summer camp participation, because Orthodox parents are over-represented in the category of "some college or below"<sup>28</sup> and are more likely than others to send their children to Jewish summer camps. When only children of non-Orthodox parents are analyzed (Table 11), the relationship between parents' education and Jewish summer camp for children is eliminated for the most part. Parents' education is modestly associated with the likelihood of children having been to Israel, in both tables, with a college or graduate education for parents apparently boosting the chance of their children having visited the Jewish state.

The association between income and children's informal education is also modest and generally consistent: children are more likely to participate in informal Jewish education as their parents' income rises. The one exception occurs when Orthodox parents are included in the analysis of

28. Twenty-eight percent of parents with some college or below are Orthodox, while 18% of all parents are Orthodox.

Jewish summer camps (Table 10), a result that is due, again, to the over-representation of Orthodox parents in the lowest income category<sup>29</sup> and the exceptionally high percentage of Orthodox children who attend or work at Jewish summer camps. When only children of non-Orthodox parents are included (Table 11), children show slightly higher participation rates in summer camps when their parents earn \$100,000 or more.

Turning to region, findings for the Midwest should be interpreted cautiously due to small sample size. In general, when Jewish connections are analyzed by region, Jews in the Northeast tend to have the strongest Jewish ties and Jews in the West tend to have the weakest Jewish ties.<sup>30</sup> This is true for informal education as well when all children are analyzed (Table 10), primarily a reflection of the over-representation of Orthodox Jews in the Northeast. When only non-Orthodox children are included (Table 11), differences among children in the Northeast, South and Midwest largely disappear, but children in the West remain less likely than other children to participate in each kind of informal Jewish educational experience.<sup>31</sup>

Returning to Table 10 and examining household composition, the findings show that the children of married parents are consistently more likely to participate in informal Jewish educational experiences than the children of single parents, but the differences are small. This difference does not change for youth group participation and Israel travel when examining only children of non-Orthodox parents in Table 11, but it apparently flips for Jewish summer camp participation among children of non-Orthodox parents.

As with formal Jewish schooling, much greater differences in children's informal Jewish education are seen when examining parents' Jewish

29. Twenty-nine percent of parents with annual income less than \$50,000 are Orthodox. Eighteen percent of all parents are Orthodox.

30. See Ira M. Sheskin, *Geographic Differences among American Jews*, Report 8 in the UJC Report Series on the National Jewish Population Survey 2000-01, available at [www.ujc.org/njpsreports](http://www.ujc.org/njpsreports).

31. Except for Jewish summer camp participation when compared to children in the Midwest, but as noted in the text, findings on Midwestern children need to be interpreted cautiously due to small sample size.

**TABLE 10.**

Factors associated with informal Jewish education, among Jewish children of various ages.

	Organized Jewish activity/youth group (ages 12-17)	Jewish summer camp (ages 8-17)	Ever been to Israel (ages 6-17)
	%	%	%
<b>Total</b>	49	36	20
<b>Parents' age<sup>1</sup></b>			
35-49	48	37	21
50-64	50	35	15
<b>Parents' education</b>			
Some college or below	49	43	15
College degree	55	38	24
Graduate degree	45	29	21
<b>Household income</b>			
Less than \$50,000	38	40	16
\$50,000-99,999	46	28	20
\$100,000 or more	49	34	22
<b>Region</b>			
Northeast	55	47	24
Midwest <sup>2</sup>	42	18	23
South	54	32	18
West	32	26	10
<b>Household composition</b>			
Single parent	47	33	16
Married couple	50	37	21
<b>Parents' denomination</b>			
Orthodox	89	83	41
Conservative	43	33	25
Reform	43	22	8
Just Jewish/secular/no denomination	22	11	13

**TABLE 10. CONTINUED**

Factors associated with informal Jewish education, among Jewish children of various ages.

	Organized Jewish activity/youth group (ages 12-17)	Jewish summer camp (ages 8-17)	Ever been to Israel (ages 6-17)
	%	%	%
<b>Total</b>	49	36	20
<b>Parents' religious service attendance in past year</b>			
1/month or more	70	47	24
A few times (3-9 times)	46	32	21
Special occasions, High Holidays only, or less than 3 times	23	20	17
None	14 <sup>2</sup>	17	5
<b>Parents' Jewish organizational memberships</b>			
2+ memberships	70	49	29
1 membership	47	36	17
0 memberships	9	9	6
<b>Parents' formal Jewish education</b>			
Jewish day school	80	77	42
2+/week program	49	34	20
1/week program	35	22	12
None	44	17	8
<b>Parents' in-marriage/intermarriage status (among married parents)</b>			
In-married	58	46	28
Intermarried	28	8	2

<sup>1</sup> Excludes parents age 18-34 and 65 and older due to small sample size.

<sup>2</sup> Findings should be interpreted cautiously due to small sample size.

**TABLE 11.**

Factors associated with informal Jewish education, among Jewish children of various ages in non-Orthodox households.

	<b>Organized Jewish activity/youth group (ages 12-17)</b>	<b>Jewish summer camp (ages 8-17)</b>	<b>Ever been to Israel (ages 6-17)</b>
	%	%	%
<b>Total</b>	41	23	14
<b>Parents' age<sup>1</sup></b>			
35-49	41	25	15
50-64	42	20	11
<b>Parents' education</b>			
Some college or below	34	26	6
College degree	48	22	17
Graduate degree	39	23	18
<b>Household income</b>			
Less than \$50,000	34 <sup>2</sup>	21	7
\$50,000-99,999	42	19	12
\$100,000 or more	41	26	19
<b>Region</b>			
Northeast	40	27	16
Midwest <sup>2</sup>	41	12	16
South	52	26	16
West	28	21	7
<b>Household composition</b>			
Single parent	38	28	10
Married couple	41	23	15

<sup>1</sup> Excludes parents age 18-34 and 65 and older due to small sample size.

<sup>2</sup> Findings should be interpreted cautiously due to small sample size.

connections (Table 10 only). Denomination is a clear example. Children of Orthodox parents are much more likely than those of Conservative and Reform parents to participate in all three kinds of informal education, with a further decline in participation among children of parents who

identify as “just Jewish,” secular or no denomination.<sup>32</sup> Similarly dramatic patterns are seen with respect to parents’ religious service attendance and Jewish organizational memberships, parents’ own Jewish education when they were growing up, and parents’ in-married/intermarried status. In all cases, the children of parents with stronger Jewish connections – more frequent attendance at religious services, more organizational memberships, stronger Jewish educational backgrounds, and marriage to another Jew – are substantially more likely to participate in informal Jewish educational experiences than the children of parents with weaker Jewish ties.

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## CONCLUSIONS

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**THIS REPORT CONTAINS A CONSISTENT THEME:** through the vehicle of Jewish education, differences in the Jewish connections and identity of today’s adults are likely being reproduced in today’s children. When parents have strong Jewish connections, their children are much more likely to receive Jewish education – formal, informal and early childhood – than when parents have weaker Jewish connections. With respect especially to formal schooling, strong Jewish connections among parents are associated with more intensive forms of education for their children, like day schools and supplementary programs that meet two or more times per week. Because childhood Jewish education affects Jewish identity in adulthood, today’s children who are receiving Jewish education are likely to have stronger Jewish identities than the children who are not being exposed to Jewish education in its multiple forms.

The report has also shown that certain demographic factors are associated with Jewish education, especially among children whose parents are not Orthodox. For example, as parents’ secular education and income rises, so too does the likelihood that children (of various ages) will be receiving some kind of formal Jewish education, enrolled in an early childhood

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<sup>32</sup> Except for Israel travel, which does not decline further among the children of parents who are “just Jewish,” secular or no denomination.

program under Jewish auspices, and participating in informal educational experiences. The association between parents' income and children's participation in Jewish schools and other Jewish educational programs raises important questions about the affordability of Jewish education, especially for families in lower income categories. In general, though, associations between parents' demographic characteristics and the Jewish education of their children are rather modest, and they are not always consistent. Significantly more powerful and systematic connections exist between the Jewish characteristics of parents and the Jewish education of their children.

As a general goal, the organized Jewish community seeks to maximize, in both intensity and duration, the Jewish education of Jewish children. In addition, the organized community has an interest in countering a growing polarization between those American Jews who are more engaged in Jewish life and those who are less engaged. Given these two objectives, what are some of the broad and the specific policy implications of the findings on children's Jewish education for the communal system? In other words, how can the communal system intervene to strengthen the Jewish educational experiences of Jewish children?

In a broad context, Jewish education – like most areas in Jewish life – can be viewed through the strategic contexts of in-reach and outreach. In-reach consists of communal support for those already committed to active Jewish engagement, however defined, and outreach refers to efforts to incorporate and integrate currently unaffiliated and disengaged Jews into the community's institutions. In the case of Jewish education for children, there are challenges and opportunities for advocates of both positions.

In-reach supporters start with the advantage that their prime constituency has already demonstrated a certain level of commitment to living Jewishly. Their main objectives, therefore, will focus on strengthening and serving these already-existent commitments, for example by working with parents to maximize the duration and intensity of Jewish education for their children, or equally important, by securing the human and financial

resources for the institutions – Jewish schools as well as informal and early childhood programs – that serve this population.

Outreach advocates face a different and possibly more difficult task, because their focus is on a population that is not currently engaged in the communal educational enterprise. Despite the challenges, mobilizing those with weaker Jewish connections into the communal system is a frequent objective of communal leadership, a primary component of their efforts to add to the vitality and vigor of American Jewish life. Given the positive, long-term effects of childhood Jewish education on adult Jewish identity, education is a crucial area of outreach for those who advocate this strategic position and seek ways to implement it.

More narrowly, the data point to several specific policy implications for the communal system:

- ▶ The Jewish community should encourage and facilitate early childhood education under Jewish auspices. The data show that children who participated in an early childhood program under Jewish sponsorship are much more likely later to be enrolled in formal Jewish education, especially more intensive forms of Jewish education like day schools and two-or-more times per week supplementary programs. Early childhood education in Jewish programs is a key gateway for further Jewish education.
- ▶ The organized community should encourage day school education – after all, day school education has very powerful effects on Jewish identity, especially for children who attend into secondary education levels.<sup>33</sup>
- ▶ Simultaneously, the community needs to acknowledge that most Jewish children are not currently enrolled in day schools. In many cases, supplemental programs will be the most intensive form of Jewish schooling the community can realistically expect children to experience, thus placing a premium on supporting high-quality supplemental

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33. Cohen and Kotler-Berkowitz, op. cit., *The Impact of Childhood Jewish Education on Adults' Jewish Identity*.

programs and encouraging extensive participation in them.

- Informal education is also an important component of strengthening Jewish identity.<sup>34</sup> Both in-reach and outreach advocates have reason to support informal experiences: as in-reach it reinforces the effects of formal schooling, and as outreach it may introduce Jewish educational experiences to children who have not received them in a formal setting.

In sum, in-reach and outreach set the strategic contexts for shaping a Jewish children's population that, within realistic expectations, can be maximally exposed to Jewish education. A Jewish community that has multiple forms of high-quality Jewish education – day schools and supplementary programs, informal experiences and early childhood programs – will be able to cater to the diversity of needs in the Jewish population and allow Jewish parents to make meaningful and effective Jewish educational choices for their children.

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34. Ibid.

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## APPENDIX

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As stated in footnote 3 (p. 4), Tables 2-11 of this report analyze Jewish children in the NJPS data file when respondents are the children's parents. These children represent an estimated 782,000 Jewish children in the United States, as Jewish children are defined in this report (see p. 4 for the definition of Jewish children). These 782,000 Jewish children comprise 66% of 1,177,000 total children in Jewish households.

Tables 2-11 exclude 9% of Jewish children in the NJPS data file where respondents are someone other than the children's parents (in most of these cases, respondents are adult siblings of the children). When all Jewish children are analyzed, including those where respondents are not the parents of children, there are an estimated 861,000 Jewish children in the United States. These 861,000 Jewish children comprise 65% of 1,328,000 total children in Jewish households (for further details on the remaining 35% of children in Jewish households, see the Methodological Note of this report, pp. 38-39).

Tables A1–A3 below present population estimates based on all Jewish children in the NJPS data file, including those for whom respondents are not their parents. More specifically, tables A1-A3 modify Tables 2, 7 and 9 on formal schooling, early childhood programs and informal educational experiences, respectively.

**TABLE A-1.**

Formal Jewish education, current and ever, among Jewish children ages 6-17 (all Jewish children in NJPS data file).

	Population estimate	Percent
<b>Current Jewish education</b>		
Enrolled in any type of Jewish education	401,000	72
Day school/yeshiva	161,000	29
2+/week program	119,000	21
1/week program	106,000	19
Other (e.g., tutoring)	15,000	3
Not enrolled in any type of Jewish education	159,000	28
Total	560,000	100
<b>Ever Received Jewish Education</b>		
Yes	446,000	80
No	14,000	20
Total	560,000	100

**TABLE A-2.**

Current participation in early childhood education (daycare, pre-school/nursery school or kindergarten) among Jewish children ages 0-5 (all Jewish children in NJPS data file).

	Population estimate	Percent
<b>Currently participating</b>	127,000	54
Jewish program	61,000	26
Non-Jewish program	66,000	28
<b>Not currently participating</b>	112,000	47
<b>Total</b>	238,000 <sup>1</sup>	101 <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Individual categories of participation status sum to 239,000 due to rounding. Total excludes 27,000 Jewish children ages 0-5 who are enrolled in some kind of early education program but for whom the program sponsor – Jewish or non-Jewish – is unknown because respondents did not answer that question. If these 27,000 Jewish children are included, then 154,000 out of 266,000 Jewish children ages 0-5, or 58%, are enrolled in some kind of early education program.

<sup>2</sup> Percentages sum to 101% due to rounding.

**TABLE A-3.**

Participation in informal Jewish education, among Jewish children of various ages (all Jewish children in NJPS data file).

	Population estimate	Percent
<b>Type of informal Jewish educational experience</b>		
Organized Jewish activity or youth group, in year prior to survey (ages 12-17)	133,000	49
Attended/worked at Jewish summer camp, in year prior to survey (ages 8-17)	168,000	37
Ever visited Israel (ages 6-17)	108,000	21
Any one of three (ages 12-17)	165,000	57

## METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

The National Jewish Population Survey 2000-01 is a nationally representative survey of the Jewish population living in the U.S. The survey was administered to a random sample of approximately 4500 Jews. Interviewing for NJPS took place from August 21, 2000 to August 30, 2001 and was conducted by telephone. The sample of telephone numbers called was selected by a computer through a Random Digit Dialing (RDD) procedure, thus permitting access to both listed and unlisted numbers in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The margin of error when the entire sample is used for analysis is +/- 2%. The margin of error for subsamples is larger.

The NJPS questionnaire included over 300 questions on a wide variety of topics, including household characteristics, demographic subjects, health and social service needs, economic characteristics, and Jewish background, behavior and attitudes.

The NJPS questionnaire was divided into long-form and short-form versions. The long-form version was administered to respondents whose responses to selected early questions indicated stronger Jewish connections; these respondents represent 4.3 million Jews, or over 80% of all U.S. Jews. The short-form version, which omitted many questions on Jewish topics and social services, was given to respondents whose answers on the same selected early questions indicated Jewish connections that are not as strong; they represent an additional 800,000 Jews. Therefore, the total Jewish household population is estimated at 5.1 million people (an additional 100,000 Jews are estimated to live in institutional settings that were not sampled for NJPS).

The most important implication of this design decision is related to findings on Jewish connections. Descriptions of Jewish involvement and identity that are restricted to the more engaged part of the Jewish population (4.3 million Jews) would, in many cases, be somewhat less strong if they had been collected from all respondents representing the entire Jewish population.

In this report, data in the section entitled “Jewish Children” (pp. 4-7) include all children of respondents representing the Jewish population of 5.1 million people,

with the exception of data on parents’ denomination, religious service attendance and organizational memberships, which are restricted to all children of respondents representing the more strongly-connected population of 4.3 million Jews.

Data in the remainder of the report are restricted to children who are in the Jewish population of 4.3 million Jews and whose parents are the respondents to NJPS (for 91% of these children in the data file, respondents are children’s parents). The children in the population of 4.3 million Jews are defined as Jewish according to the same criteria used to define “Jewish children” in this report: their religion is Judaism (or Judaism and something else); they are being raised Jewish, without reference to religion; or 3) they are considered Jewish. In all but a few cases, their parents are also part of the population of 4.3 million Jews.

As noted in the Appendix (pp. 36-37), just under two-thirds (65%) of all children in Jewish households are part of the more strongly-connected population of 4.3 million Jews (i.e., they are defined as Jewish by the definition used in this report). These children are estimated to comprise a population of 861,000 children out of 1,328,000 total children in Jewish households.

UJC defines an additional 7% of all children in Jewish households as Jewish-connected under a broader sociological and communal definition, even though they were not specifically identified as being Jewish by religion, raised Jewish or considered Jewish by the respondent during the NJPS interview. These children are part of the total Jewish population of 5.2 million people, but they are not part of the more strongly connected population of 4.3 million Jews. They are estimated to comprise a population of 90,000.

Lastly, 28% of all children in Jewish households, projecting to a population of 378,000, are non-Jewish. In almost all cases, they are being raised in a Christian religious tradition, and the majority are the children of current, intact intermarriages.

For further methodological information, see the Methodological Appendix in *The National Jewish Population Survey 2000-01: Strength, Challenge and Diversity in the American Jewish Population*, A United Jewish Communities Report (available at [www.ujc.org/njps](http://www.ujc.org/njps).)

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