



## LESSONS LEARNED: INTRODUCTION

Compiled by Lauren Dworkin, Dr. Leora Isaacs and Devorah Silverman

Thoughtful communal leaders and youth professionals constantly try to learn from the experience of others, and seek to avoid “reinventing the wheel” as they strive to expand and enhance programs and services for Jewish youth. They often ask, “What can we learn from the experiences of others?” They often seek empirical evidence to guide their planning and decision-making.

Evaluation is a powerful tool for gathering such information, and for understanding not only “what works” -- but “why it works.” What are the factors contributing to success? What are the obstacles that should be avoided?

This section of the Youth Initiatives Portfolio contains preliminary “lessons learned” from evaluations conducted primarily by professional staff at the Mandell L. Berman Center for Research & Evaluation in Jewish Education at JESNA (The Jewish Education Service of North America), and JESNA’s Task Force on Youth Initiatives. The lessons in this first edition of the Youth Initiatives Portfolio focus in particular on how to reach out to youth, to program with and for them, and to connect them to the Jewish community. As the Youth Initiatives Portfolio expands and is revised over time, we invite your recommendations about other “lessons learned” supported by evidence from other evaluations.

Readers should understand these lessons for what they are – and what they are not – and should use them accordingly! They are derived from empirical findings from studies in one or more communities that appear to have generalizability and validity across settings. They do not represent the results of systematic research designed to test particular theories or models. With this understanding, volunteers and professionals working to further community-wide youth efforts locally may benefit from the lessons learned and cite them as they engage in their own planning and decision-making.

Our vision for this section of the Youth Initiatives Portfolio is to gather much more information based on empirical evidence from research and evaluation studies. This will enable us to address a challenge facing the field of community-based youth initiatives: to move from episodic snapshots to more comprehensive understandings.

We have adapted the traditional Jewish constructs of *pshat* and *drash* as an organizing framework for the Lessons Learned section of the Youth Initiatives Portfolio. *Pshat* refers to the simple, direct, unexplicated text in Jewish Biblical study. Our *Pshat* is a simple description of the lesson learned. *Drash* is commentary in Biblical exegesis. It includes extrapolations from the text and parallels to other comparable situations. Our *Drash* includes citations of programs from which the lessons were learned.

PLEASE NOTE: Cited evaluations have been referenced for learning purposes only. Descriptions of the programs evaluated are provided in Appendix A and reflect the status of the program at the time the evaluation was conducted. In addition to the evaluations referenced in the Lessons Learned section, a listing of other relevant research, evaluations and resources is included in Appendix B.

## 1. What We Know About Recruiting Teens:

- PSHAT A** TARGET ALREADY INVOLVED TEENS TO ENSURE PARTICIPATION IN PROGRAMS.
- DRASH A** Most Jewishly involved youth are highly involved in Jewish life, and they are likely, probably more likely than their as-yet uninvolved counterparts, to be amenable to trying additional programs. However, it is also important to keep in mind that many teens feel that even though they might want to participate, they cannot make additional commitments, and still others are satisfied with their current involvements.
- PSHAT B** USE ACTIVE YOUTH TO RECRUIT OTHER YOUTH GROUPS, PEERS AND FRIENDS BY WORD-OF-MOUTH.
- DRASH B** Far more effective than other, more expensive recruitment mechanisms, using program alumni to reach out to their friends usually results in new recruits.
- PSHAT C** TEENS ENJOY MEETING PEERS FROM OTHER COMMUNITIES, ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO SHARE SIMILAR EXPERIENCES AND VALUES.
- DRASH C** Meeting other youth is often a motivation for teens to participate in programs. It is important that all programs incorporate some social time.
- PSHAT D** AS-YET UNINVOLVED TEENS WORRY ABOUT FITTING INTO PROGRAMS WITH INVOLVED TEENS.
- DRASH D** Mechanisms should be developed to avoid the formation of cliques wherever possible. It should be noted that teens often do not want to participate in programs when their own friends are not also participating. Furthermore, ice-breakers and group building activities should be regularly incorporated in programs to ensure integration.
- PSHAT E** TEENS MAY FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE WITH THE RELIGIOUS COMPONENTS OF PROGRAMS.
- DRASH E** When there is not enough, or too much, or the religious components are different from what participants are accustomed to, teens are likely to feel uncomfortable. Therefore, efforts should be made to find ways to increase the comfort level of participants, without compromising the integrity of the program. For example, notifying prospective participants of the religious aspects of programs prior to their participation would enable them to make informed decisions about whether or not they want to participate in the program.
- PSHAT F** TEENS ARE ATTRACTED TO PROGRAMS WITH TRAVEL COMPONENTS.
- DRASH F** However, these can be prohibitive because of the required financial and time commitments.

**REFERENCES:**

- Day School Jewish Civics Initiative (JCI)
- Diller Teen Fellows Program, San Francisco
- High School Havurah, San Francisco
- Jewish Civics Initiative (JCI)
- Panim el Panim: High School in Washington

## 2. Teens Have Full Dance Cards

**PSHAT** MINIMIZE SCHEDULING CONFLICTS. MORE THAN EVER BEFORE, TEENS' "FREE TIME" ISN'T REALLY FREE, AND MOST INVOLVED YOUTH ARE AT "MAXIMUM CAPACITY".

**DRASH** A similar problem exists among Jewish organizations competing for the same target audience. Youth professionals should work with their local colleagues to limit scheduling conflicts so that all programs can garner maximum participation. School calendars and other academic commitments (e.g., SAT test-taking dates) should also be taken into consideration when planning programs.

This notion that teens are overextended would seem to contradict with the idea that they want to be involved in the development and implementation of certain programs. Efforts should be made to utilize times when teens are already gathered to engage them in the kinds of "work" that they want to do (e.g., build add-ons following programs for those interested in planning next steps rather than convening the group at a different time).

### REFERENCES:

- Diller Teen Fellows Program, San Francisco
- Strengthening Connections of the Heart: An Inquiry into Ways to Reinforce and Extend the Impact of Israel Experiences for Teens, New York

### **3. For Members Only: How Restrictive Should Teen Programming Be?**

**PSHAT**      ENABLE TEENS TO PARTICIPATE IN A VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES WITHOUT JOINING OR AFFILIATING IN ORDER TO HAVE A “TASTE”. TEENS’ NEEDS AND INTERESTS CHANGE OFTEN, AND THEY WANT TO PURSUE THOSE INTERESTS EXPEDITIOUSLY.

**DRASH**      In keeping with the probability that some teens’ families will be affiliated with certain Jewish organizations while others’ will not, JESNA’s Task Force on Jewish Youth Initiatives suggests that Jewish institutions or organizations be welcoming and encourage participation of teens in their programs, even among non-members. This would allow for full participation of youth without the boundaries (financial, social or membership-related) that traditionally restrict them.

As JESNA’s Task Force on Jewish Youth Initiatives recommends, institutions should foster climates and develop policies that encourage youth participation, recognizing that not all participants will become members.

Also, communities should consider facilitating community-wide efforts that could provide adolescents with opportunities to do away with the traditional boundaries that separate them.

#### **REFERENCES:**

- SHEMA: Listening to Jewish Youth, Minneapolis
- “The Teen Connection: Linking Jewish Youth in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,” JESNA's Task Force on Jewish Youth Initiatives

## **4. While Often Critical to a Program’s Success, Collaborative Efforts Are Highly Complex**

**PSHAT** BUILD A STRONG ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE TO ENSURE EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION.

**DRASH** Effective collaboration requires a strong organizational structure, including: consensus about goals, clearly delineated tasks, the acknowledgment of the different cultures of the collaborating organizations, attention to issues of supervision and accountability, realistic time commitments, and the constitution of an oversight body. Systems should be developed and put in place to help facilitate cooperation of all organizations involved, lest any one organization dominate of the program. Truly collaborative efforts have significant potential for longevity, particularly because there are many involved constituencies that can advocate for the necessary human and financial resources.

Collaboration can involve multiple institutions and their leadership, lay and professional representatives within communities, and/or national programs and local participants in those programs. Programs based on collaborative relationships in which open lines of communication are developed and respected have taught the valuable lesson of laying a foundation before implementing a program.

When creating “umbrella” organizations (e.g., community-wide ventures), it is important that all “stakeholders” are represented from the outset, to ensure full buy-in.

Sometimes, important program collaborations involve different cultures (e.g., youth in North America, Israel, Europe and the Former Soviet Union). In these cases, special attention should be paid to making sure that all participants share an understanding of what each partner will be contributing to the collaboration.

### **REFERENCES:**

- Day School Jewish Civics Initiative (JCI)
- Diller Teen Fellows Program, San Francisco
- High School Havurah, San Francisco
- Jewish Civics Initiative (JCI)
- Teen Advisory Council, San Francisco

## 5. Different Strokes for Different Folks

**PSHAT** KNOW YOUR YOUTH. STAY ON TOP OF THEIR LIKES AND DISLIKES, AND IN TOUCH WITH CURRENT TRENDS THAT AFFECT THEM.

**DRASH** Cohorts of teens vary, as do interests of individual teens and groups of teens. Therefore, it is important that program providers know their participants, and their participants' interests, likes and dislikes. Furthermore, contemporary society and culture changes so rapidly that it is especially important for program planners and providers to work with youth to stay on top of trends. Program content and modes of presentation should be reviewed to ensure that they are compatible with the interests of the participants. One thing seems sure, however – youth of all ages want to share experiences with their friends.

Whenever appropriate, programs should accommodate students' preferences. Parents and students in San Francisco's High School Havurah Program attribute its appeal in part to the variety of courses offered, and especially to efforts to meet the needs of a very diverse student population.

### REFERENCES:

- High School Havurah, San Francisco
- Panim el Panim: High School in Washington
- “The Teen Connection: Linking Jewish Youth in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,” JESNA’s Task Force on Jewish Youth Initiatives

## 6. “Doing” is “Learning”

**PSHAT** OFFER EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES TO ENGAGE YOUTH ACTIVELY IN THEIR LEARNING PROCESSES.

**DRASH** Feedback from multiple evaluations has reinforced the fact that teens overwhelmingly prefer experiential learning to frontal presentations. Furthermore, linking informal educational experiences to traditional, formal experiences may contribute to program effectiveness by solidifying students' understanding of material covered in the classroom.

As the Panim el Panim and Koret HFLA Teen Fellowship Program evaluations teach, teens seek opportunities to become active learners and to put into action what they are taught in the classroom setting. Opportunities to develop peer leadership skills and allowing teens to be more involved in the planning and implementation of various program elements can better engage teens in their learning process

### **REFERENCES:**

- Day School Jewish Civics Initiative (JCI)
- Hebrew Free Loan Association/Koret Foundation Teen Fellowship Program, San Francisco
- Jewish Civics Initiative (JCI)
- Panim el Panim: High School in Washington



## **7. Utilize/Encourage Electronic Programming**

**PSHAT** USE TRAVEL AND TOURING OPPORTUNITIES (VIRTUAL ONES TOO!) TO ALLOW YOUTH TO EXPERIENCE OTHER CULTURES.

**DRASH** It is well documented that teens enjoy meeting other teens through travel and touring opportunities that offer chances to experience other cultures. However, when time and/or money limit the number of prospective participants in these important programs, using virtual programs designed with similar goals and objectives should be considered. Such electronic efforts can be particularly effective for follow-up to face-to-face programs.

As noted in the report of JESNA's Task Force on Youth Initiatives, opportunities should be developed to effectively utilize electronic communication among North American Jewish youth and also between North American Jewish youth and their peers in other countries, including Israel.

Not surprisingly, when asked how they were maintaining contact with other participants in face-to-face programs and/or the program representatives, most youth reported that they relied on electronic modes of communication.

### **REFERENCES:**

- The Alexander Muss High School in Israel
- Jewish Civics Initiative (JCI)
- Panim el Panim: High School in Washington
- “The Teen Connection: Linking Jewish Youth in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,” JESNA's Task Force on Jewish Youth Initiatives

## **8. Teens Want to Make a Difference**

**PSHAT** YOUTH THINK VOLUNTEERING IS WORTH THEIR TIME, ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY ARE INVOLVED IN PLANNING THE PROJECTS IN WHICH THEY THEN PARTICIPATE.

**DRASH** Participating in the development of volunteer opportunities can itself be a form of leadership development for teens. Providing youth the chance to develop a concept for a program and then to run it allows them to learn first-hand about the various aspects of facilitating a program. Further, such opportunities can encourage them to apply knowledge they have gleaned elsewhere. Youth indicate that these are the types of programs in which they prefer to participate.

### **REFERENCES:**

- Day School Jewish Civics Initiative (JCI)
- Diller Teen Fellows Program, San Francisco
- Jewish Civics Initiative (JCI)

## **9. According to Teens, It's Never Too Early to Begin Building A Resume**

**PSHAT** TEENS PARTICIPATE IN ACTIVITIES THAT THEY BELIEVE MIGHT HELP THEM GET INTO A BETTER SCHOOL.

**DRASH** The college selection process occupies the minds of teens, especially in eleventh and twelfth grades. The evaluation of the Israel Experience Center of the UJA Federation of New York indicates that teens are highly programmed between school and other extra-curricular activities. They are, therefore reluctant or unable to take on additional programmatic involvements. Thus, programs that meet their needs should be offered within a Jewish context (e.g., programs on choosing a college, resume building, SAT preparation, driver's education).

### **REFERENCES:**

- Strengthening Connections of the Heart: An Inquiry into Ways to Reinforce and Extend the Impact of Israel Experiences for Teens, New York

## **10. Yesterday's News Won't Sell**

**PSHAT** INCORPORATE CURRENT POP CULTURE AND CURRENT EVENTS INTO PROGRAMMING.

**DRASH** The Jewish Civics Initiative's (JCI) focus on current issues is integral to the program. JCI's use of up-to-date materials was not lost on the teen participants. In fact, participants cited the currency and relevance of the program's issues and resource materials as key elements of its effectiveness.

### **REFERENCES:**

- Jewish Civics Initiative (JCI)

## **11. Contextualize Israel Experience and Other Travel Programs**

**PSHAT** OFFER AN ISRAEL EXPERIENCE AS ONE PIECE OF A BROAD SPECTRUM OF INVOLVEMENTS AND EXPERIENCES.

**DRASH** Israel Experience programs are a means of strengthening Jewish identity and fostering stronger connections between teens and the larger Jewish community. Furthermore, the Israel Experience is most effective when it is part of a continuum of experiences throughout the lifespan. Ideally, such programs should be one piece of a broad spectrum of involvements and experiences.

In order to realize the full potential of travel programs, participants should be prepared prior to the trip. Pre-trip programs should describe the nature of the program and expectations for the participants, as well as provide opportunities for participants to get to know one another. Also, participants should be provided with a good and up-to-date understanding of the issues and facts related to their trip.

Returnees are more likely to get involved in Jewish life when plans for programs to take place upon their return are put into place prior to their departure. A schedule of “reunion” and other post-trip activities should be made available in anticipation of the participants’ return. Involving local youth workers to create meaningful follow-up programs that will build on the experiences of the trip is important.

### **REFERENCES:**

- Israel Experience Program, Cincinnati
- Diller Teen Fellows Program, San Francisco
- Panim el Panim: High School in Washington

## **12. Teens Seek Opportunities to Become Leaders**

**PSHAT**      OFFER OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH TO BECOME LEADERS.

**DRASH**      Teens tend to maintain connections with programs and organizations that are meaningful to them. However, as they mature, they begin to seek different rewards from their affiliations. While it is true that some want to diversify their extra-curricular activities, many look for opportunities to become leaders, especially within those same programs and organizations that have meaning to them. Therefore, efforts should be made to ensure that those interested can develop their leadership potential through programs of which they are already involved.

JESNA's Task Force on Jewish Youth Initiatives found that teens will remain affiliated with programs longer if those programs offer opportunities for them to first become active participants (and some teens need to be taught how to become active participants), and then to develop into leaders.

### **REFERENCES:**

- "The Teen Connection: Linking Jewish Youth in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century," JESNA's Task Force on Jewish Youth Initiatives

## 13. Using Program Goals to Ensure Effective Program Implementation

**PSHAT** DEVELOP A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF PROGRAM GOALS, AND USE THAT UNDERSTANDING TO INFORM DECISIONS YOU MAKE ABOUT THE PROGRAM MID-PROCESS.

**DRASH** It is critical that all stakeholders share an understanding of a program's goals and objectives. For example, if the goal of a program is to develop the leadership skills of participants, stakeholders should have a consensus as to what is meant by "leadership skills," and how success will be measured.

Educational programs can often benefit from written goals and objectives. Well-developed curricula can insure that all aspects of the program relate to each other and to the overall goals of the program.

Occasionally, programs target participants from one audience and attract participants from another. When this occurs, having an understanding of program goals can help determine whether or not to continue with the program. For example, if the goal of a program is to address the identified needs of unaffiliated youth, yet primarily affiliated teens participate in the program, youth professionals should discuss the benefits of continuing with a program in the context of the program's goals. This might necessitate redesigning the program to suit the needs of the actual participants (affiliated youth) versus the program's target population (unaffiliated youth).

### REFERENCES:

- Diller Teen Fellows Program, San Francisco
- Hebrew Free Loan Association/Koret Foundation Teen Fellowship Program, San Francisco

## **14. Teens Prefer to Interact with Adults Who Understand Them**

**PSHAT** USE ROLE MODELS EFFECTIVELY IN PROGRAMMING FOR YOUTH. HIRE YOUTH WORKERS WHO RELATE WELL TO, AND UNDERSTAND, JEWISH YOUTH TODAY.

**DRASH** Developmentally speaking, teens actively seek role models during the stage of adolescence. Role models can be used with great effectiveness in programming for adolescents. When they participate in programs or affiliate with organizations, youth want to interact with advisors who can relate to them, and who understand them.

It is important to remember, when recruiting and hiring youth workers, that not all people can relate successfully to teens. Further, many of the most effective youth workers are not necessarily equally effective in working with parents or other adults, or may not have administrative training or experience. Some may, therefore, need additional support or training in these areas.

### **REFERENCES:**

- Hebrew Free Loan Association/Koret Foundation Teen Fellowship Program, San Francisco
- “The Teen Connection: Linking Jewish Youth in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,” JESNA’s Task Force on Jewish Youth Initiatives



## **15. Professional Development: One Size Does Not Fit All**

**PSHAT** OFFER A WIDE RANGE OF OPTIONS FOR YOUTH WORKERS AT ALL POINTS ALONG THE “TRAINING” AND “EXPERIENCE” SPECTRUM.

**DRASH** There are different types of youth workers. Some are full-time professionals with undergraduate or graduate degrees, while others are part-time workers, some of whom have no related formal training. Additionally, some have been in the field (and in their positions) for years, while other positions experience regular turnover. Therefore, when planning professional development opportunities for youth workers, it is important to remember that a wide range of options should be provided for people at all points along the “training” and “experience” spectrums. Appropriate incentives for participation should be considered.

Evaluation of San Francisco’s Teen Initiative Professional Development Program and Youth on Board programs indicate that youth workers appreciate opportunities to get to know their colleagues in the field, and to become more familiar with programs and agendas. At the same time, professionals at different stages of their careers, with different forms of preparation and with different types of responsibilities seek and need different professional development experiences. (Of course, it is well documented that feedback about the design of professional development programs should be solicited from prospective participants in order to insure maximum buy-in to the sessions.)

However, getting the workers to participate in professional development opportunities is sometimes difficult. Scheduling challenges, conflicting demands, and sometimes, lack of support for release-time from employers pose significant challenges. For these reasons, it can be beneficial to create incentives for participation. It is necessary to create a “learning culture” to promote participation in professional development opportunities as well as to consider a release-time policy. Some organizations and communities have begun to offer financial subsidies for participants who complete certain requirements in professional development programs.

### **REFERENCES:**

- Professional Development Program for Teen Youth Workers, San Francisco
- Youth on Board Workshop, San Francisco

## **16. Evaluation is More than “Counting Noses”**

**PSHAT** MEASURE SUCCESS THROUGH NUMBERS AND BY ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROGRAM IN ACHIEVING ITS PROGRAMMATIC GOALS. TO WHAT EXTENT IS IT AFFECTING THE ATTITUDES, KNOWLEDGE AND BEHAVIORS OF THE PARTICIPANTS?

**DRASH** Enumerating the number of participants in a program is necessary – but is not a sufficient measure of the success of a program. Tracking the number of participants is necessary to ensure that the program is reaching its target audience. However, it is also important to assess the effectiveness of the program in achieving its programmatic goals and the extent to which it is affecting the attitudes, knowledge and behaviors of the participants.

Many of JESNA’s program evaluations go beyond documenting participation rates and feedback about the programs. They include a variety of methodologies to assess the impact of the programs on participants’ attitudes, knowledge and behaviors, including attitude scales, interviews, observations, participants’ activity reports, etc.

### **REFERENCES:**

- AVODAH: JVS Community Youth Employment Program, San Francisco
- Panim el Panim: High School in Washington
- Strengthening Connections of the Heart: An Inquiry into Ways to Reinforce and Extend the Impact of Israel Experiences for Teens, New York

## 17. Evaluation: A Way to Refine Programming

**PSHAT** CONTINUOUSLY USE EVALUATION TO HELP RECOGNIZE ACCOMPLISHMENTS, IDENTIFY ISSUES AND CHALLENGES AND RECOMMEND MID-COURSE CORRECTIONS.

**DRASH** Evaluation can help program planners recognize accomplishments, identify issues and challenges facing the program, and recommend mid-course corrections to improve effectiveness. Ideally, such evaluation findings should be utilized continuously to revise and improve programs as well as to document their success.

The Washington Institute for Jewish Leadership and Values commissioned a study to assess the impact of the Panim el Panim program. (Panim el Panim brings high school youth, grades 10-12, to Washington, DC for a 4-day seminar designed to present current social policy issues and to establish the link between public policy and Jewish text and values.) Results of the evaluation indicated that the program was an effective short-term program that achieved its goals. Based on positive findings, the evaluators suggested that the impact and effectiveness of the program could be enhanced if it was embedded in a longer more comprehensive experience including preparatory course work, and meaningful follow-up activities for students to implement what they had learned, in addition to the Washington experience.

The Jewish Civics Initiative (JCI), another program of the Washington Institute for Jewish Leadership and Values, was a direct outgrowth of these recommendations. JCI is comprised of a course with a written curriculum, and a special Washington experience, followed by a service-learning component, which allows students to apply what they have learned through JCI. Initially, JCI was piloted in four communities with both congregational and day school versions. Ongoing evaluation of the JCI and Day School JCI pilot projects provided systematic feedback to inform further revision and improvement, especially with regard to curriculum revision, training of teachers and service learning facilitators, and factors needed to establish such programs in communities.

### REFERENCES:

- Day School Jewish Civics Initiative (JCI)
- Jewish Civics Initiative (JCI)
- Panim el Panim: High School in Washington

## **APPENDIX A: PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS**

### **EVALUATIONS CONDUCTED BY JESNA:**

THE ALEXANDER MUSS HIGH SCHOOL IN ISRAEL (AMHSI) was established in 1972 to provide an intensive, high-quality academic experience in Israel for American high school juniors and seniors. Participants receive high school and/or college credit for the eight-week academic and travel experience. Five eight-week sessions are conducted throughout the year. More than 12,000 students have enrolled in the program since its inception. In 1996 AMHSI commissioned JESNA to assess the program's impact by surveying its alumni. JESNA submitted the report in June 1997.

AVODAH: JVS COMMUNITY YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM was created in February 1999 in San Francisco to provide college counseling, career development and employment services to Jewish community high school students. The program has two components: a six-week, paid summer internship program (in a Jewish communal organization) for a select group of Jewish teens entering 12<sup>th</sup> grade; and a school year drop-in workshop series for Jewish high school students (grades 9-12) that focuses on developing job readiness skills, gaining summer and part-time employment, and exploring college and career choices. JESNA submitted the executive memo in November 2000.

DAY SCHOOL JEWISH CIVICS INITIATIVE (JCI) was designed to: foster a heightened sense of civic awareness and responsibility among students in Orthodox Jewish day schools and *yeshivot*; further their commitment to fully participate in the American public arena and in the institutions that work on behalf of the Jewish people and the state of Israel; and help them see this commitment as a natural outgrowth of their Jewish learning. Similar to JCI, the Day School JCI is comprised of a course curriculum, the Washington retreat, and community service projects. Program participants come from all over North America. JESNA submitted the report in September 1999.

HEBREW FREE LOAN ASSOCIATION/KORET FOUNDATION TEEN FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM grew out of the Hebrew Free Loan Association's work with the Russian émigré community in San Francisco's South Bay. The leadership of the New American community had a strong desire to have their children be more integrated into the American Jewish community. The TFP was created out of this motivation. The Teen Fellowship Program began as a relatively small, and geographically limited program targeting a specific population, yet in the five years since its inception, it has expanded its geographic reach and constituency to include teens from beyond Russian émigré and South Bay populations to include more affiliated, involved teens. The TFP involves a three-year commitment, focusing on leadership training for teens and cultivating an appreciation for the importance of Jewish unity. Entering fellows are selected in the spring of their 9<sup>th</sup> grade year and complete the program in the fall of the 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The program includes three consecutive summer experiences: six weeks at Camp Tel Yehuda, Young Judaea's teen leadership camp; a four to six week summer camp internship, mostly at local JCC's; and the KORET Israel summer trip. During each of the two intervening school years, fellows participate in three to four one-day workshops and a two-day retreat. The program is funded by the Hebrew Free Loan Association and the KORET Foundation. JESNA prepared the evaluation report.

**ISRAEL EXPERIENCE PROGRAM** was created by The Jewish Foundation of Cincinnati in December 1999 to set aside nearly \$4 million to provide significant subsidies to support Israel Experience participation of up to 650 Jewish teens and 365 Jewish college students from the greater Cincinnati area, over a five-year period. The subsidy program is administered by the Jewish Federation of Cincinnati and aims to: maintain and increase the involvement of Jewish young people in Jewish life; increase the 'connectedness' that Jewish youth have with Jewish life and culture; improve the attitudes Jewish youth have toward being Jewish; improve the knowledge Jewish youth have about Israel and its culture; increase the identification Jewish youth have with Jewish institutions; and increase the opportunities Jewish youth have to interact with other Jews. JESNA submitted the evaluation in December 2000.

**JEWISH CIVICS INITIATIVE (JCI)** is a program for 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade high school students from all over North America. JCI teaches participants to apply Jewish values to public policy and social justice issues. The program is comprised of three parts: Jewish Civics: A Tikkun Olam World Repair Manual (a year-long curriculum on public policy issues and Jewish values); the JCI retreat in Washington, D.C. (a four-day seminar on social issues, Jewish values, community service and political advocacy); and Community Service Learning (a community-based service project with local agencies devoted to social change or direct service). JCI was underwritten by a consortium of four foundations: The Covenant Foundation, the Dorot Foundation, the Nathan Cummings Foundation and the Richard and Rhoda Goldman Foundation. The program was also supported by the Jim Joseph Foundation. JESNA submitted the report in March 1999.

**PANIM EL PANIM: HIGH SCHOOL IN WASHINGTON** brings over 1,000 Jewish high school students in grades 10-12 per year from all over North America to Washington, D.C. for four-day seminars during the course of each school year. The program was designed to confront current social policy issues "face to face" and to establish the link between public policy and Jewish perspectives. The program was established in 1988 under the auspices of The Washington Institute for Jewish Leadership and Values. JESNA submitted the impact evaluation in June 1993.

**STRENGTHENING CONNECTIONS OF THE HEART: AN INQUIRY INTO WAYS TO REINFORCE AND EXTEND THE IMPACT OF ISRAEL EXPERIENCES FOR TEENS** was prepared for the Israel Experience Center of The Jewish Continuity Commission of UJA-Federation of New York. Engaging teens upon their return from an Israel Experience has been a difficult challenge for Jewish educators and communal professionals throughout North America. The purpose of the study was to collect information that would assist the Israel Experience Center in creating and supporting "post-trip" programs and events that are aligned with the needs and interests of Israel Experience returnees and to capitalize on their positive experiences there. JESNA submitted the report in August 1999.

## THE TEEN INITIATIVE (SAN FRANCISCO, CA)

**DILLER TEEN FELLOWS PROGRAM** was initiated in the 1997-98 academic school year. The program was designed to address the gap in Jewish leadership programming for 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders. DTF draws its potential applicant pool from the Summer in Israel Youth Program (the Israel leadership teen tour) rosters, the San Francisco High School Havurah and the Peninsula Havurah High, community-wide area synagogues and national youth organizations with membership rosters in the local region, as well as word of mouth, educator's recommendations, etc. The program focuses on four major themes: leadership, Jewish learning, community service and Israel. DTF is comprised of two major programs: a series of local activities aimed at teen leadership development; and an intensive Israel experience for teen leaders. JESNA submitted the evaluation report in November 1999.

**HIGH SCHOOL HAVURAH** was established in 1996-1997 as collaboration between three congregations, the Bureau of Jewish Education and the Jewish Community Federation. The Havurah has multiple goals including: providing a place for serious Jewish education, integrating formal and informal programming for Jewish teens, and creating a Jewish youth community which encourages socializing among Jewish teens. The program meets one night per week for two hours. Students attend two elective courses each evening, and socialize before classes and during a between-class break. No core curriculum requirements were established. However, text, Hebrew, history and literature classes were concentrated on during the first session each evening, with a wider variety of classes offered during the second session. JESNA submitted the formative evaluation in June 1999.

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS FOR TEEN YOUTH WORKERS** is a series created to build a "community of committed, intellectually engaged, creative, diverse, caring, and vibrant youth professionals who know each other, learn from each other, and work together on community-wide programs." The three primary objectives in the area of staff development are to: increase the number of knowledgeable and skilled Jewish youth professionals; increase the number of Jewish youth professionals engaged in continuing education; and expand and publicize consultation services provided by the Teen Resource and Program Consultant. The programs being supported by the Teen Initiative include:

- ✧ *Networking and In-Service Education*: Monthly meetings of program providers and youth advisors to share organizational information, engage in cooperative or collaborative projects, learn from experts and build a supportive community.
- ✧ *Continuing Education/LAATID*: Stipends for completion of 16 units in professional development opportunities including workshops, seminars, conferences and network gatherings offered for Jewish educators in the greater San Francisco area.
- ✧ *Professional Development Subsidies*: Scholarships to subsidize participation in conferences and workshops other than those offered through LAATID.
- ✧ *Professional Development Support and Consultation*: Ongoing consultation by the Teen Resource and Program Consultant including: on-site visits, curriculum development, support in creating or changing organizational structures, facilitating inter-group coordination and collaboration, and assisting with placements.

- ✧ *Centralized Resources*: Publication of a resource guide for Jewish youth professionals and youth leaders which details local resources including retreat sites, leadership curricula, local educators on various topics, relevant websites and a database of regional youth professionals.
- ✧ *Israel Experience for Youth Professionals*: Israel program and four workshops for ten professionals designed to increase their knowledge and deepen their relationship to Israel. In return for a generous subsidy, participants committed to 1-2 years of work in the field of Jewish youth work, taking active roles in Israel education in their particular youth organizations and in community-wide Israel events, and working with the Israel Experience to promote youth trips to Israel.
- ✧ *Professional Training to Incorporate Youth on Governing Boards*: A community-wide training session for youth, youth professionals, lay people and funders, facilitated by a nationally recognized organization, to explore the benefits and barriers to youth governance, to develop skills and steps for including youth on governing boards, and to design action plans specific to the structures and characteristics of each participating organization.
- ✧ *JEWbilation Celebration*: Participation in collaborative planning and implementation of the annual day-long community teen conference emphasizing the positive aspects of Judaism.

JESNA submitted the formative evaluation in June 1999.

**TEEN ADVISORY COUNCIL** was a direct outgrowth of the San Francisco Federation's Teen Task Force on Programs and Services for Teenagers, established in 1994. The Teen Advisory Council is the governing body created to oversee implementation of the recommendations of the Teen Task Force. In essence, it is an interagency committee comprised of lay advocates of teen programs and teen professionals. The Teen Advisory Council meets five times per year to serve as the planning body and clearinghouse for teen programs and services. The Director of the Teen Initiative staffs the Council. JESNA submitted the formative evaluation in June 1999.

**YOUTH ON BOARD WORKSHOP** was a one-day seminar held in November 1998 for youth program providers as part of the Professional Development Imperative of the Teen Initiative. Based out of Boston, Youth on Board is a national organization that assists youth and youth serving organizations in developing closer relationships, involving youth in decision making, and facilitating better communication between youth and adults. JESNA submitted the evaluation report in September 1999.

## **OTHER EVALUATIONS:**

**SHEMA: LISTENING TO JEWISH YOUTH** is a report prepared for the Commission on Identity and Continuity of the Minneapolis Jewish Federation. The long-standing tradition and commitment to youth in the Minneapolis Jewish community, has guided and influenced this study. In 1995 the Minneapolis Jewish Federation created the Adolescent Task Force through its Department of Identity and Continuity conducted a study to determine what Jewish youth in Minneapolis were feeling, thinking, and doing with respect to participation, or lack of participation, in Jewish-sponsored activities. The purpose of the undertaking the study was to enable the community to be responsive to the needs of its young people and to encourage commitment and continuity for the future. The study and report were prepared by Dr. Nancy Leffert and Rabbi Hayim Herring, Ph.D., and were published by the Search Institute in 1998.



## **APPENDIX B: ADDITIONAL EVALUATIONS AND RESOURCES**

### **AT A GLANCE: TEEN LIFE**

Teenage Marketing & Lifestyle Study, Fall 1998 Wave 32  
Teenage Research Unlimited, Inc.  
Fall, 1998

*Contact Information:*

Teenage Research Unlimited, Inc.  
707 Skokie Blvd., 7<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Northbrook, IL 60062  
Telephone: 847/564-3340  
E-mail: info@teenresearch.com

### **BEING A JEWISH TEENAGER IN AMERICA: TRYING TO MAKE IT**

Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University  
Charles Kadushin, Shaul Kelner, Leonard Saxe, with Archie Brodsky, Amy Adamczyk and  
Rebecca Stern  
December 2000

“The Jewish Adolescent Study (JAS) is a large-scale investigation designed to develop a comprehensive picture of the attitudes and behavior of contemporary young Jews—in particular, to understand how they view themselves both as Jews and as teenagers in the American environment. The study is a systematic inquiry into the contexts, Jewish and American alike, that shape Jewish identity and affiliation among contemporary Jewish teenagers.” Furthermore, the findings of the JAS demonstrate the transition for bar and bat mitzvah to the end of high school and show how Jewish adolescents are grounded in American environments and contexts. The study documents overall Jewish involvement, school, extracurricular activities, paid employment, summer activities, parental influence, endogamy and Jewish continuity, regional variations and peer networks, risky behaviors and the search for meaning and the meaning of being Jewish.

*Contact Information:*

Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies  
Brandeis University, Mail Stop 014  
415 South Street  
Waltham, MA 02454-9110  
Telephone: 781/736-2060 • Fax: 781/736-3929

### **B'NAI B'RITH PARENT TEEN DIALOGUES**

B'nai B'rith International Center for Jewish Identity and B'nai B'rith Youth Organization  
Ofra Fisher and Ellen Singer

*Contact Information:*

Ofra Fisher  
Telephone: 202/857-6577

## BUILDING JEWISH IDENTITY: A STUDY OF YOUNG JUDAEA ALUMNI

Conducted for Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America, Inc.

The Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel and Marketquest, Inc.

Steven M. Cohen and Alan Ganapol

This study seeks to assess the long-range impact of Young Judaea upon the Jewish identity of its alumni. The study was to highlight how Young Judaea alumni differ from their counterparts in areas such as in-marriage, ritual practice, communal affiliation, attachment to Israel, and a commitment to raising Jewishly involved children. The findings from the report consist of information gathered from alumni living in the United States and from those who made aliyah to Israel. The findings suggest that the Young Judaea experience – be it through participation in clubs, Israel experiences, camps, national conventions, or other programs – brought about the high rates of Jewish involvement in the adults decades later.

### *Contact Information:*

Young Judaea

Telephone: 212/303-8014 • Email: [info@youngjudaea.org](mailto:info@youngjudaea.org)

## FAITHFUL YOUTH: A STUDY OF THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF SYNAGOGUE YOUTH (NCSY)

Funded by the Lilly Endowment

Nathalie Friedman, Ph.D.

November 1998

“The primary goal of the NCSY study, through an extensive survey of alumni/alumnae, current participants, leaders and programming was to derive applicable lessons that could improve [the] youth organization in two major areas: organizational operations and activities that enhance the faith and religious practices of its members and that enhance members’ progression into adulthood, both as responsible citizens of the United States and as Jews.” The report provides findings on demographic characteristics, indicators of Jewish identity, attitudes and beliefs, the NCSY experience in retrospect and the influence of NCSY of those former members of the youth group.

### *Contact Information:*

NCSY/Lilly Report

National Conference of Synagogue Youth (NCSY)

333 Seventh Avenue, New York, NY 10001

Telephone: 212/563-4000 • Fax: 212/613-8333

E-Mail: [ncsy.org](http://ncsy.org) • Website: [www.ou.org/ncsy](http://www.ou.org/ncsy)

**“FOUR UP:” THE HIGH SCHOOL YEARS, 1995-1999: THE JEWISH IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT OF THE B'NAI MITZVAH CLASS OF 5755**

Funded by the Avi Chai Foundation and a project of the Ratner Center for the Study of Conservative Judaism, Jewish Theological Society (JTS)

Ariela Keysar, Ph.D., and Barry A. Kosmin, Ph.D.

2000

This study focuses on how young people live as Jews, specifically teenagers who celebrated their bar or bat mitzvah in a Conservative synagogue during the mid-1990s. The findings represent the second phase of longitudinal research “designed to monitor the Jewish behavior and attitudes of a cohort of youngsters at different developmental stages in the formation of their religious and ethnic identities.” Student participants were interviewed the year following their bar and bat mitzvah celebrations and then re-interviewed four years later. “The report is based on a portion of the questions from the two surveys. It focuses on the religious observance and Jewish identity of this large representative sample of an annual cohort of Conservative youth.”

*Contact Information:*

Publications Office

The Jewish Theological Seminary of America

3080 Broadway

New York, NY 10027

Phone: 212/678-8842 • Fax: 212/678-8947

E-mail: [idash@uahc.org](mailto:idash@uahc.org) • Website: <http://uahc.org>

**“I HAD THE TIME OF MY...LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE FOR EXCELLENCE (LIFE)...AND I NEVER FELT THIS WAY BEFORE...” A REVIEW OF THE LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE FOR EXCELLENCE (1996-1999) OF THE IVRY PROZDOR OF THE JEWISH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY (unpublished)**

Jewish Theological Seminary

Judd Kruger Levingston and Ivy Dash

*Contact Information:*

Ivy Dash

Union of American Hebrew Congregations

633 Third Avenue

New York, NY 10017

Telephone: 212/650-4206

## ISRAEL EXPERIENCE: IS LENGTH OF TIME A CRITICAL FACTOR?

Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University

Amy L. Sales, Ph.D.

December 1998

This report presents the findings of a study to testing whether or not a four-week trip to Israel would be a desirable option for participants in the success of the Israel summer experience. The analysis of the study was based on teens who participated in a four-, five-, or eight-week trip to Israel during the summer of 1997.

### *Contact Information:*

Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies

Brandeis University, Mail Stop 014

415 South Street

Waltham, MA 02454-9110

Telephone: 781/736-2060 • Fax: 781/736-3929

## JEWISH YOUTH DATABOOK: RESEARCH ON ADOLESCENCE & ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR JEWISH TEEN PROGRAMS

Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies/Institute for Community and Religion, Brandeis University

Co-Sponsored by Hadassah, Jewish Education Service of North America (JESNA), Jewish Community Centers Association of North America (JCCA) and Combined Jewish Philanthropies, Boston

Amy L. Sales, Ph.D.

1996

“This report is a comprehensive compilation and analysis of current research and writing on adolescence and on Jewish youth services. It outlines the realities and challenges faced by all adolescents as well as those of particular concern to Jewish youth. It also explores the unique opportunities and sources of strength available to Jewish teens through their religion and their community.” The Databook incorporates materials produced from 1989-1996. The information stems from diverse sources, representing multiple disciplines and perspectives: psychological journals, marketing publications, popular magazines, government reports, Jewish publications, and research reports from Jewish organizations and research institutes. The report is divided into three chapters: Planning for the Future, Research on Teens Today, and Jewish Youth Services Today.

### *Contact Information:*

Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies

Brandeis University, Mail Stop 014

415 South Street

Waltham, MA 02454-9110

Telephone: 781/736-2060 • Fax: 781/736-3929

## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND PROFESSIONAL TRAINING OF JEWISH YOUTH PROFESSIONALS

The Institute of Jewish and Community Research and the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University

A Project of the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation

Dr. Gary A. Tobin and Maryle Weinstein

### *Contact Information:*

Institute for Jewish Community Research

Telephone: 415/386-2604 • Fax: 415/386-2060

E-mail: gatobin@jewishreaserach.org

## THE MEYERHOFF TEEN INITIATIVE

The Meyerhoff Teen Initiative (MTI) is a non-profit organization which supports Jewish life in Baltimore by providing resources and funding for programs serving Jewish teens. The MTI objectives include professionalizing teen workers; providing opportunities for training and professional development of teen workers; increasing the number of creative programming opportunities; and expanding community collaboration. The MTI is funded by a grant from the Joseph and Rebecca Meyerhoff Awards Committee.

### *Contact Information:*

Alice Kolman, Director

Joseph and Rebecca Meyerhoff Awards Committee

177 Reisterstown Road, Suite 270 B

Baltimore, MD 21208

Telephone: 410/486-2525 ext. 10 • Fax: 410/486-9781

E-mail: alice@mteeni.com

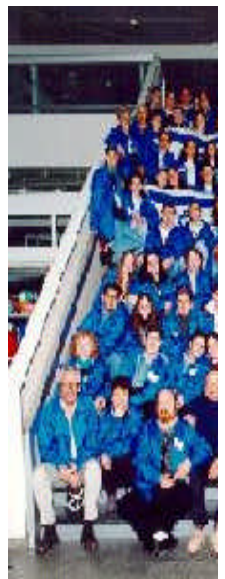
## NORTH AMERICAN CONSERVATIVE JEWISH TEENAGERS' ATTACHMENT TO ISRAEL

Institute for Jewish Policy Research

Ariela Keysar and Barry A. Kosmin

July 1999

This study related to a survey of Bar and Bat Mitzvah students from the class of 5755 (1994-95) interviewed in the year after their celebration of this profound and formative Jewish experience. It is an event, which links the generations and begins a new stage in the educational and socializing process. The main goal of the research was to test the following hypotheses: parental behavior can positively influence teenagers' outlook and attitudes toward Israel; family visits to Israel make young people more attached to the country; attending a Jewish day school can make young people more attached to Israel; and attachment to Israel is strongly correlated with participation in Jewish summer camps and youth groups. The research also assessed the similarities and differences in attitudes toward Israel by teenagers' gender, geography and religious background.



*Contact Information:*

79 Wimpole Street

London, W1M 7DD England

Telephone: +44 (0) 171/935-8266 • Fax: +44 (0) 171/935-3252

E-mail: [jpr@jpr.org.uk](mailto:jpr@jpr.org.uk) • Website: [www.jpr.org.uk](http://www.jpr.org.uk)

## YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

A Collaboration between the Jewish Community Centers Association of North America (JCCA) and the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University

*Contact Information:*

Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies

Brandeis University, Mail Stop 014

415 South Street

Waltham, MA 02454-9110

Telephone: 781/736-2060 • Fax: 781/736-3929

## MOVING TOWARD THE FUTURE: ACTION STEPS FOR REVITALIZING JCC YOUTH SERVICES

Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies/Institute for Community and Religion, Brandeis University

Amy L. Sales, Ph.D. and Gary A. Tobin, Ph.D.

April 1995

The report provides Jewish Community Center professionals with practical recommendations working with youth. It addresses the current realities and then provides recommendations focusing on three areas: departmental, agency and national. Highlights include information on human resources, departmental planning, programming, space, marketing, collaborative approaches (even within the agency itself), Jewish identity, financial resources and national leadership.

## JEWISH YOUTH SOURCE BOOK: A PLANNING GUIDE FOR YOUTH PROGRAMS

Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University

Simon Klarfeld and Amy L. Sales, Ph.D.

May 1996

## VALUES AND CONCERNS OF AMERICAN JEWISH YOUTH: JCC MACCABI TEEN SURVEY

Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University

Amy L. Sales, Ph.D.

May 1994

At the time of this study, very little was available and known about Jewish youth. The purpose of the study was to open a door into the attitudes and concerns of American Jewish teenagers—who they are, how they spend their time, what they value, and what their concerns are. The survey was administered to the participants of the 1993 JCC Maccabi Youth Games. The regional games were held in Boston, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, and Sarasota drawing teen participants from across America. The survey was designed to gather data on teen demographics, values, social action interests, concerns, connections to the Jewish community, and Jewish identity.