

New Roles For Youth in the School and the Community by the National Commission on Resources for Youth. Citation Press, New York, 1974. 245 pp. \$4.25

The New Morality: A Profile of American Youth in the 70's, by Daniel Yankelovich. McGraw Hill Company, New York, 1974. 166 pp. \$2.95.

One of our major concerns as Jewish communal workers manifests itself in the questions "Where are our Jewish youth?", and "How can we best serve them?" This column has carried reviews of task forces and study groups which have reported out over the years in attempt to answer this question. These two publications offer much insight into the youth population of the 70's which can be helpful to those in pursuit of the answers to these questions.

The National Commission on Resources for Youth, Inc., is a nine year old non-profit organization engaged in research for promoting and developing "models of programs in which youth assume rewarding and responsible roles". To accomplish this, NCRY has developed a means of identifying promising programs, and then conducting impartial external appraisals of their effectiveness and potential usefulness for duplication.

The book is a collection of such programs, describing seven different program areas which call for "new roles" for teenagers. While many of the descriptions are of a "community-wide" nature, and pose certain problems for duplication in terms of service to Jewish youth; nearly everyone contains basic programming components, of which Jewish Communal Service Agencies could do well in examining and adapting to local conditions. Citing one example, the various components which make "Earth-The Ecology Movement", a successful youth program in California, can be identified and translated into our own agencies' work where appropriate. The section on peer to peer programs describes the successful "Friend to Friend" program sponsored by the Jewish Social Service Agency of Rockville, Maryland.

These projects are gleaned from the hundreds that the Commission has been involved in since its inception, and remind us all once again, that when we allow teenagers to become involved at their own level, with full capacity for decision making, a plethora of successful programs is possible, facilitating their "transition to adulthood".

The programs outlined by the NCRY reflect youth involvement in a constructive manner, making contributions to family, school and community. This seriousness of purpose, exhibited by the young people described, is reflective of the overall tone in the Yankelovich study. His fifth study of the youth population since 1967, offers a set of statistics which ushers in an "abrupt new era" of American youth.

The study discusses a complete turnabout of our youth population, citing huge increases, rising unabated, of youth who accept the "new values". The comparisons are made in each category between the "late 60's" and the "early 70's".

It was in 1969 in which the Jewish community experienced the epitome of its youth rebellion, with Jewish college youth organized in full strength to demand change. While the nature of this "campus rebellion" is different from that referred to in the study, the point is well taken that radical activity, and in fact most political activity, on campus is moribund.

The percentage of students who would welcome greater social acceptance of sexual freedom rose from 43% in 1969 to 61% in 1974, these figures being indicative of the variety of specific questions polled in this area. The general trend indicates that youth in the 70's considers sexual behavior as an individual decision, and not a moral one.

One of the more interesting findings of this study is the current interest in alternative options after high school. This is particularly relevant to the Jewish community, concerned about the rapidly declining statistic of 85% - 90% of all of our high school graduates go on to college. The study relates interest in options such as Start-Your-Own-Business Programs, new types of technical schools, new types of apprenticeship programs, and a career planning year, which exposes a person to many different fields and

opportunities with emphasis on career counseling. Jewish families need to understand that there are a variety of options open to our high school graduates.

The reader is referred to the main body of the study for the specifics of the changes reflected in some twenty areas covered by the research, each offering additional understanding of this complex population.

Both the NCRY and Yankelovich reports provide a thoughtful framework within which to plan Jewish communal services for youth in the middle of the decade.

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