



The Hard Work Behind the Magic of Camp

*Results & Learnings from the
FJC Specialty Camps Incubator II*

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*Prepared for
The Jim Joseph
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Introduction

Over 80,000 youth gathered at campfires and Shabbat services at Jewish camps in Summer 2016, continuing a pattern of growing enrollment at Jewish overnight camps since 2009.¹ One way the Foundation for Jewish Camp (FJC) has contributed to this growth is by establishing four new Jewish specialty camps in the second iteration of its Specialty Camps Incubator. With a \$10.2 million combined investment from the AVI CHAI Foundation and the Jim Joseph Foundation (the funders), FJC supported four camps from October 2012 through November 2016 to turn ideas into actual, functioning camps. These new camps innovatively combine traditional Jewish camp values with specialty programs in science, business, healthy living, and sports, with the intention of drawing more youth into the world of Jewish camp.

The funders engaged Informing Change in October of 2012 to design and implement a five-year evaluation (2012–17) of the FJC Specialty Camps Incubator II (the Incubator). We evaluated the extent to which the new camps developed the capacities needed to run strong summer programs, deliver intended camper outcomes, become sustainable nonprofit entities, and expand the number of Jewish youth attending camp.

This investment builds on FCJ's Specialty Camps Incubator I (2008–12), which the Jim Joseph Foundation funded to launch five new Jewish specialty camps. Incubator I demonstrated the potential of specialty camps to successfully engage Jewish youth who were not already part of the camping world. Full results of the multi-year evaluation of the first cohort of Incubator camps can be found in the evaluation report [New Jewish Specialty Camps: From Idea to Reality, Foundation for Jewish Camp Specialty Camps Incubator Evaluation Report](#).

The FJC Specialty Camps Incubator II

The purpose of Incubator II was to replicate the results from Incubator I of using a business-style incubator approach for developing new camps to increase the number of teens attending Jewish overnight camp. Through a competitive application process in 2012, four new camps were selected to participate in Incubator II:

- 6 Points Sci-Tech Academy
- Camp Inc.
- Camp Zeke
- JCC Maccabi Sports Camp

¹ Cohen, S. (2016). Jewish Overnight Camps in North America: Highlights from Foundation for Jewish Camp 2016 Camp Census.

Each camp was eligible to receive up to \$1.16 million of startup and operational funding, in addition to support from FJC that included training, mentoring, a learning community, and specialized consultants (Exhibit 1). Each camp was allocated a fixed amount of funding from which they could draw funds for start-up expenses in the years prior to the first summer of camp operations, and to reduce operating deficits for a few years after they were generating income from camper fees.

During the first two years in the Incubator, the new camps worked with Incubator staff led by Michele Friedman and Jay Frankel along with expert mentors to develop the basic building blocks needed to launch their inaugural summer camp season in 2014. After the first summer, the camps continued working with Incubator staff and mentors to grow their camp enrollments, improve their programs and operations, and develop an organizational plan for achieving sustainability.

This culminating evaluation report presents the final findings of Informing Change’s multi-year evaluation of Specialty Camps Incubator II. We report key findings drawn from the evaluation’s cumulative data and elevate essential lessons and insights learned over the course of both Incubators I and II.

The Incubator provided a menu of supports designed to create a safety net for the new camps to augment the funders’ financial investments.

Exhibit 1

Incubator II Goals

1. More Jewish teens will be attending Jewish camp
2. A wider range of Jewish camp options will be available for currently non-attending Jewish teens
3. Campers will demonstrate significant, positive changes in attitudes, knowledge, and behaviors related to Jewish life and Judaism
4. Incubator camps will be competitive in the Jewish camp marketplace and will be enrolling the number of new and returning campers needed for ongoing sustainability
5. Incubator camps will have exited the startup stage of organizational development, and will be able to function without Incubator startup funding

Workshops

Camp directors were required to attend the Incubator’s four to six workshops each year, which ranged from three to five days in length. At these workshops, camp directors received information, met with experts, spent time with their mentors and other consultants, visited camps, and worked as a cohort to explore and reflect on each camp’s successes and challenges. Through the workshops, directors honed their camps’ mission and goals, marketing messages, approach to Jewish education, and staff training.

Mentors

The Incubator assembled a team of experienced camp professionals to serve as mentors to the new directors. The wealth of experience in this group was a key support for the new directors. Camp directors and their mentors conferred almost weekly in the years prior to the first camp season. Camp directors say they value the mentors’ advice because it is framed by an understanding of their camp’s business model, the context of the camp’s operations, and the current issues affecting the broader camp industry. Mentors also understood the talents of each individual director as well as their gaps as novices in this position.

Peer/Cohort Learning

Camp directors and assistant directors gained knowledge and insight by hearing one another discuss their challenges and solutions. These camp leaders also consider their cohort to include the Incubator staff and mentors, reflecting a strong sense of belonging to a larger community of Jewish camp professionals.

Evaluation & Reflection

Incubator camps actively participated in the evaluation conducted by Informing Change, which examined camper outcomes and the camp development progress, and in the annual CSI satisfaction research conducted by Summation Research Group, Inc. Directors learned about the value of evaluation data collected by Summation Research Group and Informing Change and appreciated this support provided by the Incubator. Directors used the evaluation findings to improve their programs, raise funds, and market their camps to parents.

Networking Opportunities

Incubator camp directors and assistant directors were required to attend regional conferences of the American Camp Association (which features training and resources about camp program, leadership, facilities, and administration); FJC's Leaders Assembly (a convening of Jewish camp leaders); and the JCamp 180 Annual Conference (fundraising training tailored for Jewish camps). In addition, the camp directors had access to other consultants with specialized knowledge of Jewish camp and the camp industry. These networking opportunities built camp leaders' comfort within the Jewish camp industry and gave them access to a broad range of experienced camp professionals.

Evaluation Approach

Informing Change designed this evaluation to assess the camps' progress toward their intended outcomes using a multi-year, mixed-method approach. Our team monitored and evaluated each camp's early growth, their ability to expand opportunities for Jewish youth to attend camp, and the results of their efforts to support campers on their Jewish journeys. Four evaluation questions guided the evaluation:

1. To what extent have the new Incubator camps created **opportunities that attract and retain the target market** of campers?
2. To what extent have the Incubator camps been successful in **supporting campers on their Jewish journeys** and **broadening campers' networks of Jewish peers**?
3. To what extent are the Incubator camps developing into **sustainable and effective nonprofit camp organizations**?
4. To what extent are the different specialty camp models more or less successful at **attracting the target market, reaching Jewish outcomes, and creating effective, sustainable organizations**?

We used the following data collection approaches:

- **Interviews** with camp directors, Incubator staff, mentors, AVI CHAI Foundation staff, and Jim Joseph Foundation staff. The interviews gathered information about the camps' development, their program and operational successes and challenges, and the professional development of the camp directors.
- **Surveys** of new campers within the first two days of camp, which provided baseline information about campers' Jewish attitudes, knowledge, and behaviors. Following the first two summers, we also surveyed returning campers (at camp) and their parents (via an online survey) to evaluate the long-term (i.e., approximately 9–12 months later) influence from the previous summer. We conducted a final online survey of both campers and parents in Spring 2017 focused on campers' experience at camp in Summer 2016.
- **Observations** of camps in operation during the summer and of camp leader trainings and discussions at Incubator workshops. Both types of observation provided insider perspectives on camp operations and growth.

- **Organizational Capacity Assessments** completed by camp directors, assistant directors, members of the camps' Boards of Directors (or equivalent bodies), mentors, and Incubator staff. These semi-annual assessments helped track organizational development needs and progress.
- **Review of Secondary Data and Documentation**, including CSI survey results and JData. Camp and Incubator documentation and relevant articles about Jewish youth and camping provided further contextual information.

For a more detailed look at the evaluation framework used, as well as our approach to data collection and analysis, please see Appendix A and Appendix B.

Creating New Jewish Summer Camp Experiences

Incubator II launched in October 2012 with the announcement of four new camp ideas. In less than two years, the camps embarked on their inaugural summer seasons in 2014. Since opening, each Incubator camp has operated approximately 24 weeks of camp—three summer seasons with about eight weeks of camp each year. In this relatively short lifespan, each camp has already provided hundreds of young Jewish campers with new memories and left an enduring imprint on their lives. Parents are happy with the new camp options, and families that had previously not participated in Jewish camps are now among their most loyal and vocal customers.

The Incubator successfully launched four new Jewish camps

The four camps participating in the Incubator offered Jewish families strong Jewish camp experiences embedded within exciting specialties. Early in the Incubator process, with expert guidance from the Incubator’s Jewish educator consultant, camps select Jewish values that align with their own camp’s mission and specialty options. The four Incubator II camps offered a diverse set of programs across the US.

Operated by the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) and located at the Governor’s Academy in Byfield, MA, [6 Points Sci-Tech Academy](#) is a blended Jewish and science/technology camp. 6 Points Sci-Tech Academy offers campers entering 5th to 10th grades an opportunity to enjoy a range of science and technology options, including robotics, video game design, environmental science, and digital media. The camp overall, as well as its science curricula, are built around five core Jewish values:



- *Kavod* (respect)
- *Kesher* (connection)
- *Sakranut* (curiosity)
- *Taglit* (discovery)
- *Savlanut* (patience)



[Camp Inc.](#)² inspires youth to turn their ideas into reality as they learn how to develop the skills of entrepreneurs and innovators in business, philanthropy, and the Jewish community. The camp, operated by the Boulder JCC, was located at the Steamboat Mountain School in Steamboat Springs, CO in 2015 and 2016, and previously at the Wondervu Conference and Retreat Center in Golden, CO in 2014. Camp Inc. serves youth entering 4th to 12th grades. Campers learn about marketing and design, finance and investing, and business startups. These skills are coupled with the Jewish values of:

² As described later, Camp Inc. shifted to day camp model starting in Summer 2017 and will no longer operate as an overnight Jewish camp.

- *Tikkun olam* (A responsibility to structure our lives, families, and our businesses in a way that allows us to give back to the world, financially or physically)
- *Tikkun middot* (An obligation to treat yourself with respect and have a moral and ethical approach to the world around you personally and professionally)
- *Shabbat shalom* (An opportunity to cease doing business, slow down, reflect on what was accomplished, and evaluate what is important)
- *Eretz yisrael* (Israel is a global leader in technological advancements and shaping entrepreneurship as we know it today, and is itself an example of a successful startup)
- *K'lal yisrael* (Jewish people have a built-in connection to each other and an obligation to support each other's goals and needs)

An independent camp in Lakewood, PA, [Camp Zeke](#) gives 7 to 17 year olds a chance to engage in healthy, active living. Campers can learn to cook healthy gourmet dishes and improve their physical fitness through soccer, yoga, running, dance, basketball, and the Israeli martial art *krav maga*. The program helps campers choose electives based on individual personal fitness and health goals, such as increasing their strength, building endurance, or becoming a better cook. Camp Zeke is firmly rooted in Jewish values of:



- *Gemillut hassadim* (kindness to others)
- *Tikkun middot* (developing character)
- *Shmirat ha'guh* (taking care of health)
- *Klal yisrael* (celebrating the community)
- *Hachnasat orchim* (welcoming new members to the family)
- *Ve'ahavta lere'acha kamocha/b'tzelem elohim* (loving all members of the community)



[JCC Maccabi Sports Camp](#) offers boys and girls entering grades 3 through 11 the opportunity to develop skills in a sport of their choice. The camp offers baseball, basketball, soccer, tennis, volleyball, softball, and girls lacrosse. Using the facilities of Menlo College in Atherton, CA, JCC Maccabi Sports Camp bases its curriculum in the Jewish values of:

- *Tikkun middot* (building character)
- *K'lal yisrael* (welcoming Jewish people and friends)
- *Shmirat haguf* (guarding the body)
- *Shabbat shalom* (time of rest and gratitude)

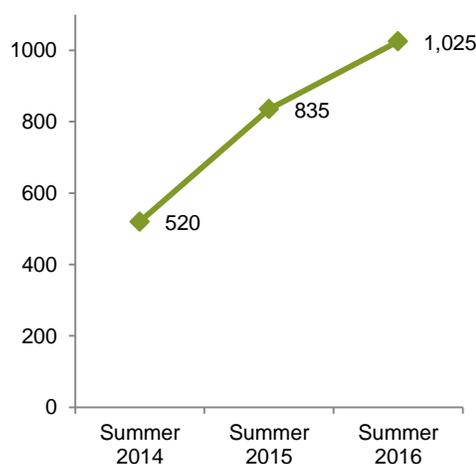
Camps enrolled growing numbers of campers each year

In Summer 2014, their opening year, the four camps together served a total of 520 campers. **By Summer 2016 the camps as a group nearly doubled their initial enrollment** (Exhibit 2).

A total of 1,614 unique campers have attended the new camps since they opened.³ Many of these campers are new to Jewish overnight camping, not transferring from another Jewish camp; this will be described in more detail later in this

Incubator camp enrollment nearly doubled from the 1st to the 3rd summer.

Exhibit 2



³ Incubator camps served 520 new campers in 2014, 580 new campers in 2015, and 514 new campers in 2016.

report. Many parents say the Incubator camps provide new options that align well with their family’s needs and interests.

Campers enjoy their time at Incubator camps

From their first summer, the Incubator camps demonstrated high levels of operational functioning and fun experiences for campers. When surveyed nearly a year after camp, **over 80% of parents and campers report high levels of satisfaction with their camp experience**, which shows that the positive experiences consistently stay with campers long after a camp session’s closing ceremonies. This is an impressive level of satisfaction for brand new camps, which can often be prone to problems as they work out the kinks in their relatively new systems.

Following the 2016 camp season, 81% of parents are very satisfied with their children’s experiences and 92% of campers are happy with their experience. Most (86%) parents of 2016 campers have already recommended the camp to a family member or friend. Campers themselves, in their survey comments, say they recommend the camp to their friends after they get back home.

“I had a really good time both times I’ve been. The community is kind and fun. I’d definitely recommend this camp to people.”
– JCC Maccabi Sports Camp Camper

Campers say they “find their tribes” and meet other kids who are “just like me” at the Incubator camps. Each Incubator camp creates a sense of belonging—**90% of campers say they felt like they belonged at camp** in 2016.⁴ When campers think back about the things that most stood out from their Summer 2016 experience, they name the people and community at camp as frequently as the programming (Exhibit 3). Comments from campers and their parents indicate that campers enjoy feeling part of a big camp family and look forward to returning each year as a camper and, for some, eventually as a staff member.

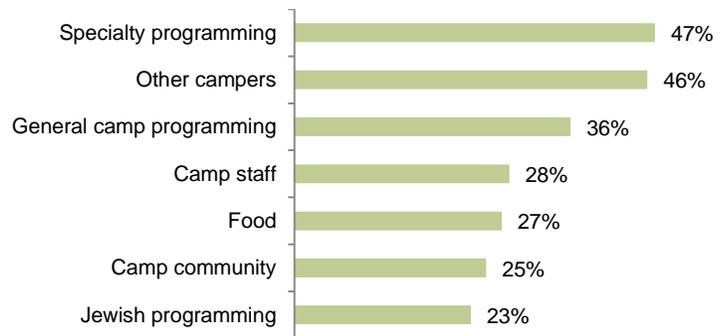
“My son is a pioneer camper, and he wants to ride the Sci-Tech rocket to become a counselor!”
– 6 Points Sci-Tech Academy Parent

Even campers not returning in Summer 2017 enjoyed their Summer 2016 experience.

- 80% of parents of non-returning campers are very satisfied with the 2016 Summer (n=60).
- 90% of parents of non-returning campers have recommended the camp to a friend (n=60).
- 87% of non-returning campers felt they belonged with the campers and staff in Summer 2016 (n=55).
- 88% of non-returning campers were happy with their 2016 Summer experience (n=56).

Campers reminisce about the people at camp as much as the activities.

Exhibit 3 | n=389



Percentage naming this aspect of camp when asked, “What stood out for you about camp last summer?”

⁴ Similar percentages of campers felt like they belonged after the 2014 and 2015 camp seasons.

Immediately following each summer, parents are invited to participate in Summation Research’s CSI satisfaction survey that asks for their feedback on several specific areas of camp as well as overall ratings. Similar surveys are sent to parents of campers from other Jewish camps in North America, many of which have long operating histories. Despite being brand new, the **Incubator II camps scored as well as—or higher than—North American Jewish camps** in many dimensions. This is similar to the Incubator I camps’ scores during their first three summers.

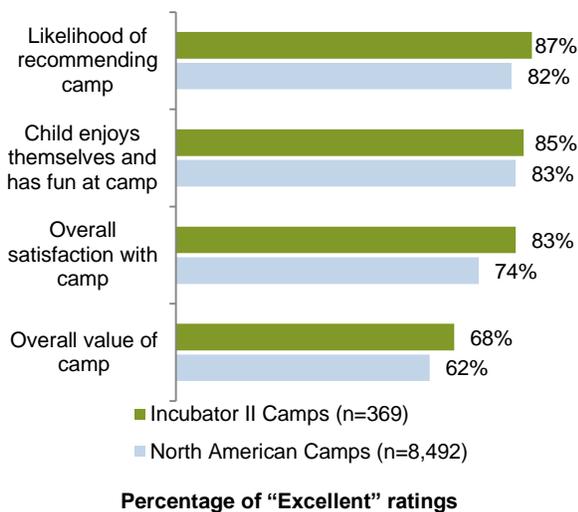
In the CSI survey following the 2016 camp season, over 8 of 10 Incubator II parents had very high levels of overall satisfaction, of reporting that their children had an excellent time at the camp, and of being likely to recommend the camp to others (Exhibit 4). Over 90% of Incubator II parents felt the camps had excellent overall leadership and were safe places for their children (Exhibit 5).

“If it isn't clear, Camp Zeke is my heaven on earth. To be completely honest, I had fun my first year but not a WOW experience. Still, I signed up for camp last year and I am so glad I did! I came home with so much camp sickness and missing everything about Zeke!”

– Camp Zeke Camper

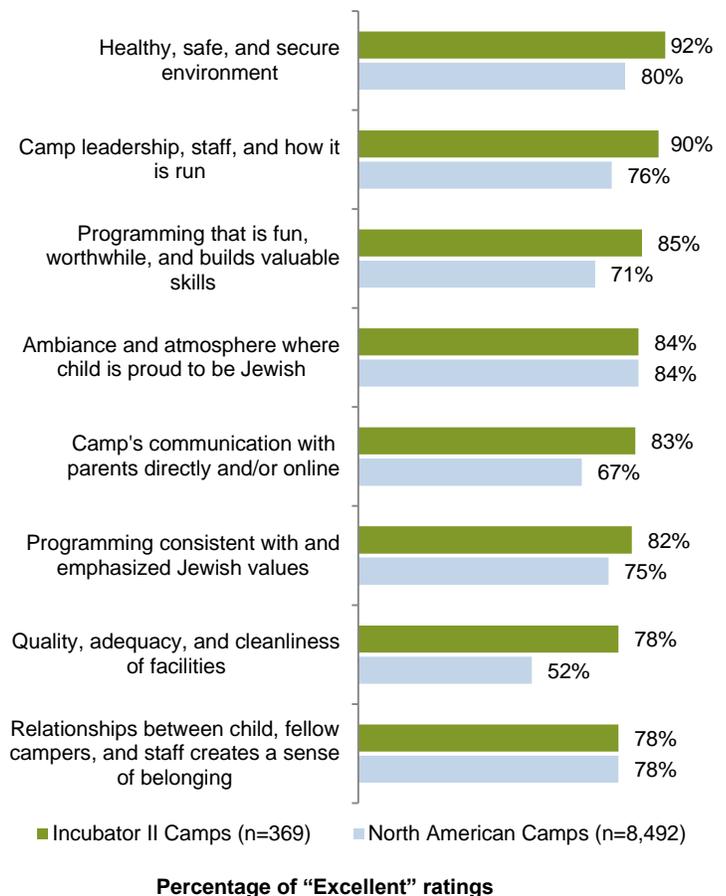
Incubator II families are very satisfied with their overall camp experience.

Exhibit 4



Incubator II camps outscore established Jewish camps in family satisfaction in eight areas, from leadership to facilities to programming.

Exhibit 5



“Incredibly positive Jewish experience. Kudos to [the camp director] and all of the counselors for creating such wonderful summer memories. My son has really enjoyed getting to know the counselors from Israel and other Jewish communities around the world.”

– JCC Maccabi Sports Camp Parent

Despite great programs and satisfied customers, not every camp succeeds long term

Every business admitted into a business incubator is a calculated risk and, to some degree, an experiment. The Specialty Camps Incubator is no different. Incubator leaders select a set of promising ideas for new camps, assess their market appeal and operational feasibility, and vet the leadership and support that stand ready to move a new camp idea through development and into implementation.

Incubator II's four new overnight camps all launched successfully and delivered great summer programs to hundreds of satisfied campers and their families. But only three opened as residential camps for a fourth season in 2017. Camp Inc., plagued by continued low enrollment since the first summer, decided it could not sustain operations as a residential camp and has shifted to running day camp and after-school programs.

The Campers at Incubator Camps

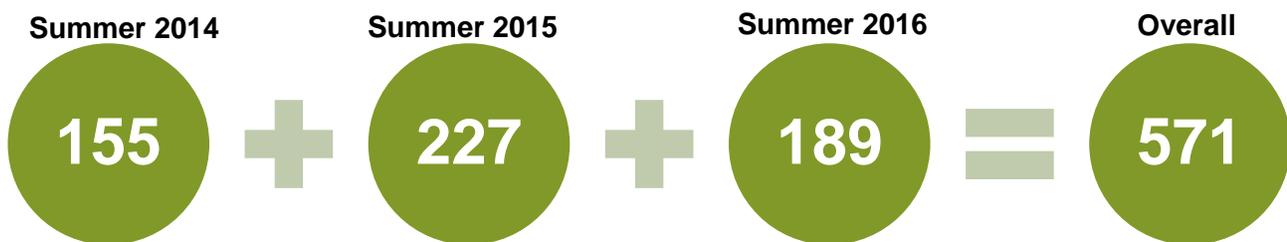
The Incubator was designed to accelerate the development of new specialty camps that attract a market of middle school and high school youth ages 11–18 (as opposed to just younger campers), particularly those who are brand new to Jewish camp. These camps did just that.

Incubator Camps successfully attract & retain older youth who otherwise wouldn't be at Jewish camp

Over three summers, **the Incubator II camps successfully attracted 571 new campers who had never attended a Jewish camp before**, either overnight or day camp (Exhibit 6). Similar to Incubator I, this represents 37% of all campers across three summers.⁵ Within this group of Incubator campers with no prior Jewish camp experience, approximately 20% are age 14 or older.

Incubator camps draw youth with no prior Jewish camp experience.

Exhibit 6



“It was the perfect fit for our summer schedule and a way for [Camper Name] to go to their first Jewish sleep away camp even at the age of 14, and not feel like an outsider.”

– 6 Points Sci-Tech Academy Parent

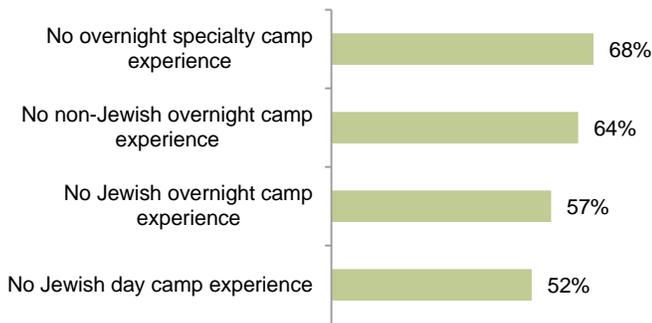
⁵ Percentage out of 1,536 campers for which there is data. Incubator I camps attracted 770 campers attending a Jewish camp for the first time, representing 38% of all campers across three summers.

More than half of Incubator II campers (57%) were attending overnight Jewish camp for the first time (Exhibit 7), meaning they may have attended a Jewish day camp in the past, but not a Jewish overnight camp. Regardless of their prior Jewish camp experience, a majority of parents (66%) say their child would not have attended another Jewish camp that particular summer if they hadn't attended an Incubator camp.

Among the campers in the target age range (ages 11–18) who were attending a Jewish overnight camp for the first time, the age distribution does not cluster at the youngest age of 11 but spreads across the full middle- and high-school age range. This is another indicator that the appeal of the Incubator specialty camps is strong enough to draw older youth who previously avoided or resisted attending Jewish camp (Exhibit 8).

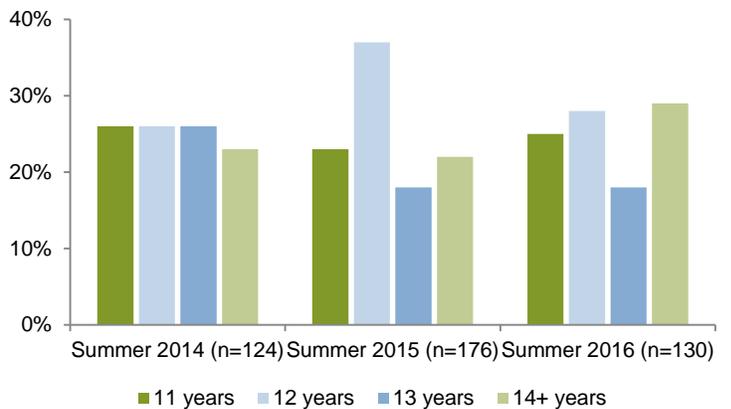
Many campers had no previous camp experience.

Exhibit 7 | n=1,364–1,437



First time campers between 11–18 years represent a range of ages.

Exhibit 8



Most Incubator campers are middle school and high school age youth

Another goal of the Incubator was to attract a challenging preteen and teen market—Jewish youth ages 11 to 18 in grades 6 through 12. In each of the three summers, **over 75% of campers fell within the target age range.**⁶ Furthermore, the percentage of **new campers** in the target age range who had never attended a Jewish overnight camp before increased each year: 49% in 2014, 58% in 2015, and 61% in 2016. The average camper age is 12, but since the camps are still new, the average age may rise over time if camps can retain these campers as they age. This demographic data is similar to the FJC Overnight Camps Census Report, which found that Jewish camper attendance peaks in grades 6 to 9 when campers are around ages 11 to 14.⁷

“As parents, we were concerned about [Camper Name] being away from home for a couple weeks, but he was really excited for the opportunity. In the end, the personnel we spoke with made us feel certain that he would be safe and welcome at camp....and he was!”

– Camp Inc. Parent

⁶ 79% in 2014, 79% in 2015, and 81% in 2016.

⁷ Cohen, S. (2016). Jewish Overnight Camps in North America: Highlights from Foundation for Jewish Camp 2016 Camp Census.

“This camp combined [Camper]’s two loves: Judaism and sports! But also it broadened her world, being with Jews and other campers from lots of different backgrounds.”

– JCC Maccabi Sports Camp Parent

As previous studies have shown, older teens tend to fall out of the camping market.⁸ ⁹ JData reports that campers entering grades 10 to 12 (around ages 15 to 18 years) represent only 17% of the Jewish camper population.¹⁰ The Incubator camps, however, have a higher percentage of high school-aged campers and have seen a steady increase over the three summers: 24% in 2014, 24% in 2015, and 30% in 2016. **Of the high school aged Incubator campers, 29% have been to camp for all three summers**, showing that the camps are able to attract and retain older aged youth.

The Incubator camps are appealing to a different market than typical Jewish overnight camps, which tend to attract more girls than boys.¹¹ **Incubator camps as a whole are serving more boys than girls (66% boys, 33% girls, 1% other)**. Out of the four Incubator camps, Camp Zeke is the only camp with a higher attendance of girls (56%) than boys (44%) in aggregate, but Incubator camps have been working on attracting more girls through tailored programming and scholarships. Over the three summers, the percentage of girls in the aggregate camper population increased from 28% in 2014 to 32% in 2015 and 35% in 2016. Across the years, 6 Point Sci-Tech Academy and JCC Maccabi Sports Camp have been able to increase the proportion of girls attending, providing a better gender balance for camp activities and social life (Exhibit 9).

The number of girls attending Incubator camps has steadily increased each year.

Exhibit 9

| | 2014 (n=85–159) | | 2015 (n=90–307) | | 2016 (n=75–365) | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|------|--------------------|------|--------------------|------|
| | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys |
| 6 Points Sci-Tech Academy | 17% | 82% | 22% | 77% | 26% | 72% |
| Camp Inc. | 29% | 71% | 32% | 66% | 29% | 69% |
| Camp Zeke | 49% | 51% | 56% | 44% | 58% | 42% |
| JCC Maccabi | 15% | 85% | 16% | 83% | 21% | 76% |

⁸ Sales, A., Samuel, N., Boxer, M. (2011). Limud by the Lake Revisited: Growth and Change at Jewish Summer Camp. Brandeis University.

⁹ Cohen, S. M. (2006). Jewish Overnight Summer Camps in Southern California: A Marketing Study. Foundation for Jewish Camping, Inc.

¹⁰ Sales, A. (2015) JData Revealed: Same, Changed, New – Three Takes on Jewish Overnight Camps. JData.

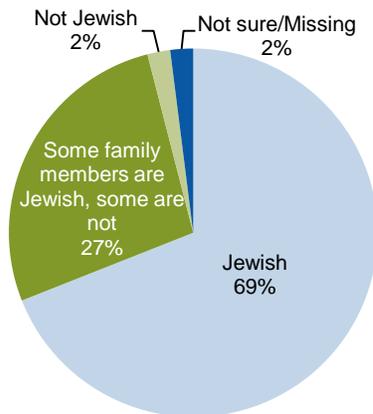
¹¹ In 2013, 52% of Jewish overnight campers in the US were girls and 48% were boys according to a report by JData. (2014) JData Revealed: Headlines from the World of Jewish Overnight Camp. JData.

Incubator camps serve campers from diverse Jewish backgrounds

The Incubator camps are attracting campers from a range of different backgrounds and varying levels of Jewish experiences (Exhibits 10 & 11). Most campers (69%) are from families where all members are Jewish, but Incubator camps attract **more campers from interfaith families** (some family members are Jewish, some are not) than other Jewish summer camps (27% vs. 14%).¹² Designed with a pluralistic culture in mind, Incubator camps create a diverse and inclusive environment where campers and counselors with many types of Jewish backgrounds can feel comfortable. In open-ended survey responses, both parents and campers note their appreciation for the camps' inclusivity, with one camper saying "the staff is always so inclusive and want to make you feel at home for the small amount of time you're there."

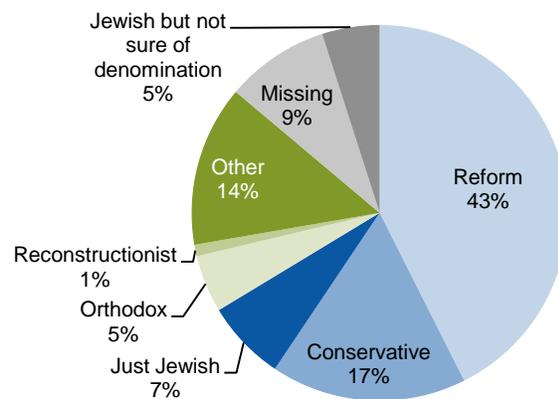
About a quarter of campers come from interfaith families.

Exhibit 10 | n=1,528



A majority of campers come from Reform-affiliated families.

Exhibit 11 | n=1,243

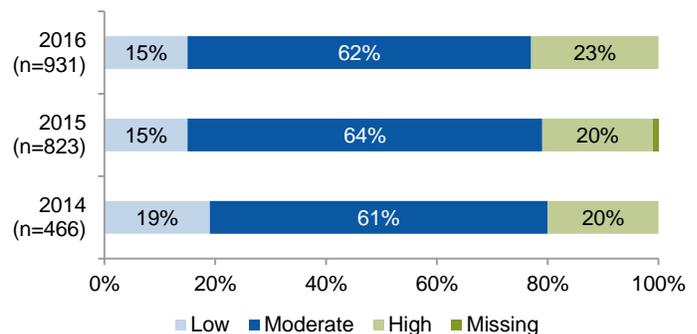


With their unique programming, the integration of Jewish learning with specialties, and an ability to meet campers where they are, the Incubator camps successfully attract Jewish youth with low to moderate levels of prior Jewish experiences. Previous studies have found that most campers attending Jewish camps come from families with high levels of prior Jewish

experiences.¹³ In contrast, **about two-thirds of Incubator campers fall in the "moderate" level of prior Jewish experiences**, which mirrors findings from Incubator I (Exhibit 12).¹⁴

Each summer, most campers had moderate levels of prior Jewish experiences.

Exhibit 12



¹² Sales, A. (2015) JData Revealed: Same, Changed, New – Three Takes on Jewish Overnight Camps. JData.

¹³ Cohen, S.M., Jewish Overnight Summer Camps.

¹⁴ Details on the calculation for the levels of prior Jewish experiences are provided in Appendix C. The level of prior Jewish experiences of all campers may change in future years if the number and proportion of returning campers continues to grow, since a returning camper is counted as having a higher level of prior Jewish experiences than the previous summer.

The Draw of the Specialty & the Great Camp Experience

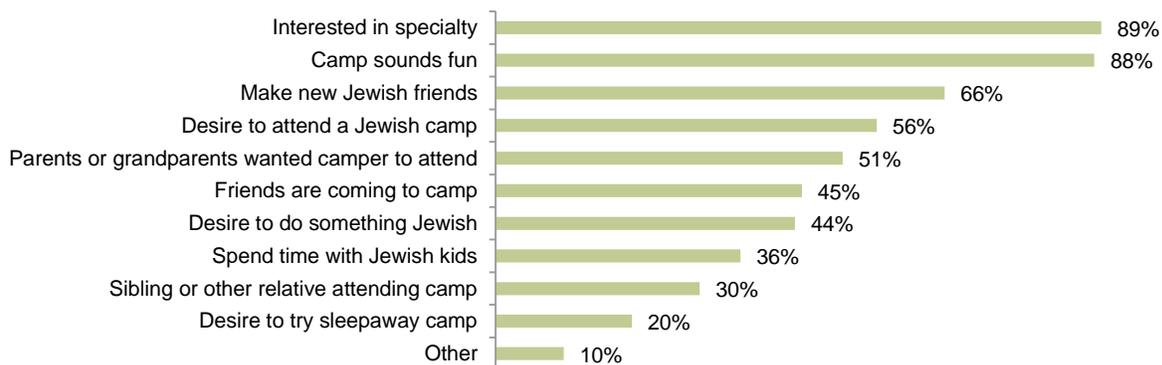
As Incubator camps mature, there is little to no change in who they recruit. Each summer, the Incubator camps consistently attract new campers in the target age range, including many who never attended a Jewish overnight camp before, showing that there is ample market for future recruitment of this unique group of campers. New campers cite consistent messages for attending camp each year, with the camp specialty being the biggest draw.

The camp's specialty is a key driver for camp enrollment

The specialty aspect of the Incubator camps gives youth a chance to participate in activities that are unique experiences or subjects that they are passionate about. Similar to camps in Incubator I, the camp specialties are the biggest attraction to campers and families each year. Across all three summers, **89% of campers say the specialty is the reason why they attend the Incubator camp** (Exhibit 13). Regardless of how many summers a camper attended camp, the specialty aspect of the Incubator camps is still the number one reason for choosing to attend camp.¹⁵ The specialty aspect offers something that campers may not find at other Jewish camps and it appears to help campers overcome prior reluctance to sign up for camp. When remembering back to why they first decided to send their child to camp, most parents (63%) cite the specialty factor.

Across all summers, fun camp programming is the biggest initial attraction for campers.

Exhibit 13 | n=1,536



¹⁵ 95% (n=778) of campers who attended camp for one summer gave the specialty as a reason for attending camp; 98% (n=437) of campers who attended for two summers gave it as a reason; and 99% (n=157) of campers who attended for three summers gave it as a reason. Although $p < 0.05$ for this statistical test, there is little variability among the three percentages and the strength of the difference is quite small ($\Phi = 0.085$).

The high percentage of both campers and parents who note the camp specialty as an appeal shows that **the FJC Specialty Camps Incubator can take some credit for the high rates of campers who had never previously attended a Jewish overnight camp.** For example, of the 61% of new campers in the target age range (11-18 years old) in 2016 who had never attended a Jewish overnight camp before, 62% of their parents cite the specialty factor and 41% cite the camp's Jewish values as reasons for sending their child to this camp. Furthermore, rather than citing parental influence, a majority of campers in this same category say they went to this camp for the specialty (87%) and because it sounded fun (83%).

The great camp experience keeps campers coming back

In addition to attracting new campers with limited Jewish camp experience, Incubator camps are **successfully retaining campers from year to year.** On average across camps, approximately two-thirds of campers return to or plan to return to camp.¹⁶ The most frequent reasons campers give for returning to camp are the specialty, the opportunity to spend time with campers and staff, and the fun they have at camp.¹⁷ Motivations for returning to camp are similar to new campers' reasons for initially attending, however returning campers are more likely to say that they come back because their friends are also returning, including friends made in the previous summer.¹⁸

The number of summers a camper has already been to camp does not directly impact parents' motivations for sending their child back to camp the following summer. Reflecting on plans for 2017, parents of campers who attended for one summer were just as likely to plan to send their child back to camp as parents of campers who attended for three summers.¹⁹ **Nearly all campers (95%) who attended for more than one summer say that they were able to do something new or different at camp,** showing that most campers are glad that camp is not exactly the same each year. The Incubator camps have done well in diversifying the programming to make each summer's experience positive and memorable for every camper.

“The camp experience was terrific for my daughter. I really can't overstate it. I think the combination of team sports and Jewish summer camp traditions was just the right combination for her.”

– JCC Maccabi Sports Camp Parent

“I loved Camp Zeke! Healthy eating, being Jewish, and being active all describe me, so I am so glad that I went to a camp just like that. I can't wait to come back in the summer!”

– Camp Zeke Camper

“There was nothing much to decide. It was an amazing concept and I was sold on it as soon as I heard about it - healthy, organic food, culinary arts, and fitness. A no brainer!”

– Camp Zeke Parent

¹⁶ 74% of campers returned in 2015, 75% in 2016, and 79% plan to return in 2017.

¹⁷ Campers who returned in 2015: 94% mentioned the specialty, 85% mentioned spending time with campers and staff, and 87% mentioned camp sounding fun. Campers who returned in 2016: 93% mentioned the specialty, 89% mentioned spending time with campers and staff, and 94% mentioned camp sounding fun.

¹⁸ Returning campers in 2015 and 2016 were more likely to come to camp because their friends were attending than new campers in 2015 and 2016 (2015: $n=759$, $p<0.001$, $X^2=87.154$, $\Phi=0.339$; 2016: $n=852$, $p<0.001$, $X^2=152.240$, $\Phi=0.423$).

¹⁹ The number of summers a camper has attended camp is not significantly associated with whether a parent says their child will be returning to camp in 2017 ($\Phi=0.872$).

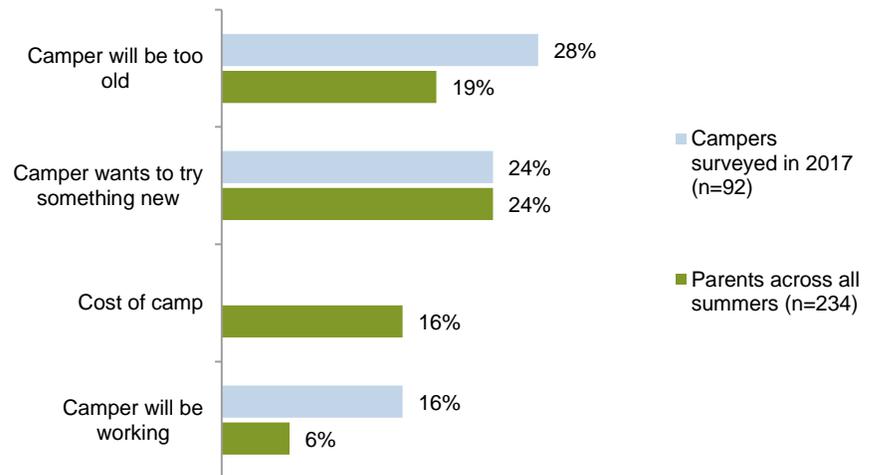
When campers do not return, the decision is usually not because of dissatisfaction with the camp

Some of the most common reasons from both parents and campers on why a camper does not return to camp are unrelated to customer satisfaction. The most frequent reasons are the age of the camper, the camper's desire to try something new, and the cost of camp (Exhibit 14). **The desire to try something different is a common reason for why campers don't return**, just as it is a motivator for why campers choose to attend camp in the first place. This desire to try new things and collect a range of different experiences is typical among the target age group of the Incubator camps. Each year, returning to the specialty camp can lose some of its novelty appeal but, as mentioned earlier, almost all (95%) returning campers say they were able to try something new when they returned to camp for another summer.

Another common reason for not returning to camp is the camper being "too old." It appears that younger campers are more likely to return to camp the following year, as high school-aged campers often have other competing summer interests (e.g., summer jobs, college preparations). For example, among campers ages 14 to 18 who attended camp in 2016, 44% say they will not be returning in 2017 because they feel they are too old and 25% say they will be working. Campers younger than age 11 in 2014 and 2015 were more likely to return to camp in 2015 and 2016, respectively, than campers ages 11 to 18.²⁰ That being said, the Incubator camps have still been able to attract higher proportions of high school youth than other Jewish summer camps.²¹

The most common reasons for not returning to camp are outside of the camps' programming.

Exhibit 14



“6 Points Sci-Tech Academy will forever have a special place in my heart and Jewish identity. It pains me that I won't be going this year, but I will continue to live by the lessons I have learned at camp. I am also very appreciative of the two scholarships I got to go to camp the past two summers and hope I could help in the future (maybe as staff).”

– 6 Points Sci-Tech Academy Camper

²⁰ Campers younger than 11 in 2014 were more likely to return to camp in 2015 than campers 11 and older (n=235, $p<0.001$, $\Phi=0.238$); campers younger than 11 in 2015 were more likely to return to camp in 2016 than campers 11 and older (n=828, $p<0.001$, $\Phi=0.239$).

²¹ (2014) JData Revealed: Headlines from the World of Jewish Overnight Camp. JData.

Creating Fun, Jewishly-rich Camp Experiences

The Incubator camps are designed to influence campers in three areas:

- Jewish experience, learning, and growth;
- Specialty knowledge and skill; and
- Personal development.

Across the camps, campers and their parents say the Incubator camps contributed to camper growth in each outcome area. Camper outcomes are driven in part by the positive social environments created at each camp that support campers to explore and challenge themselves, whether to learn more about the history of Judaism, practice a new skill, or figure out how to do something on their own. Campers have the sense that their Incubator camp is a safe space designed for them and their interests.

“I discovered a group of people I could legitimately connect with and who understood me in my love for Judaism, discovery, and discussing nerdy things.”

– 6 Points Sci-Tech Academy Camper

“Yes, I do feel that my life changed by going to Camp Inc. because I got to meet my best friends and also learned more about business.”

– Camp Inc. Camper

“Camp Zeke allowed me to experience a sleep-away camp for the past three years, and each year was a different experience. I enjoyed how the camp was so small so I was able to get to have a conversation with almost each camper. It allowed me to make friends that will last a lifetime.”

– Camp Zeke Camper

“I learned a new way of thinking about work ethics in basketball. It doesn't matter if someone is better at a sport than you. All that matters is the amount of effort and work you put in.”

– JCC Maccabi Sports Camp Camper

Camps are shaping campers' lives in all three intended outcome areas

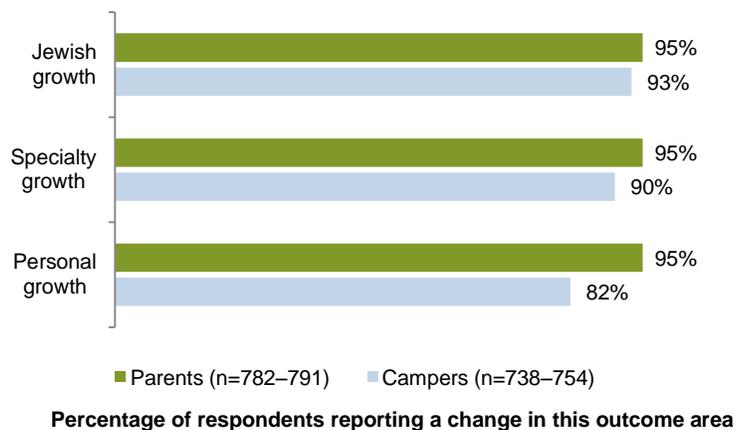
Nearly every camper who attended an Incubator camp says that camp somehow changed their Jewish selves, specialty skills, and personal development. **Over 80% of campers and 90% of their parents say that camp changed the camper for each of the three outcome areas** (Exhibit 15). Campers who report changes in one outcome area also tend to report changes in the other areas.²² Results for camper outcomes are consistent across camps, gender, ages, and returning status for Summer 2017.

These trends in survey data align with camper and parent remarks about the biggest ways in which campers changed because of camp (Exhibit 16). Over the first three years, **84% of parents and 66% of campers say something “big changed” for the camper because of going to camp.** These unprompted responses highlight what campers and parents see as camp’s greatest influence nearly a year later. The results are consistent with trends from Incubator I camps, and also follow the trend in Incubator I responses of parents being more likely to report changes for campers than campers themselves (both for individual outcomes and “big change” items).

Below are more details about these responses and the specific outcomes within each outcome area.

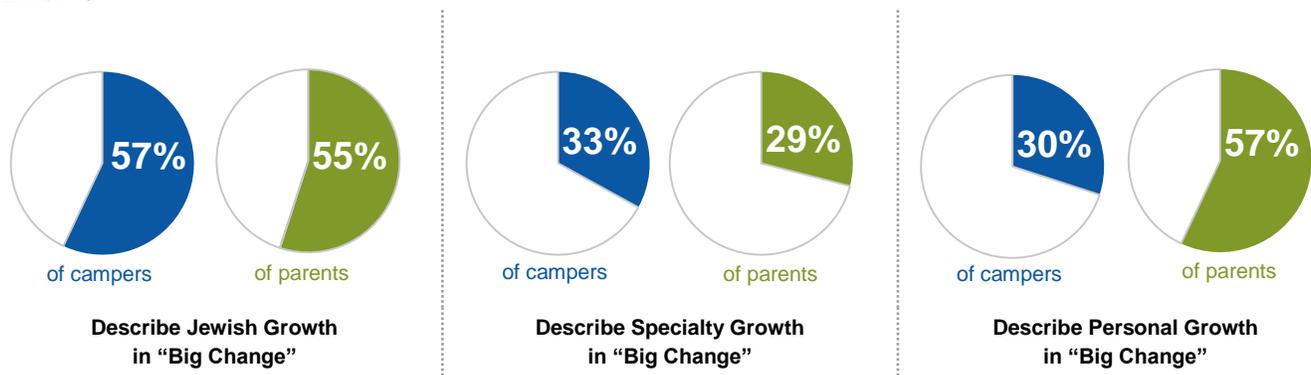
Most campers grew some way in each outcome area because of camp.

Exhibit 15



In describing a “Big Change” in their lives due to their camp experience, more than half of campers chose to write about something Jewish.

Exhibit 16



“A big change that happened in my life because of Camp Zeke was becoming much more appreciative of Judaism and Israel overall.”

– Camp Zeke Camper

²² Correlation for campers between Jewish growth and specialty growth: $n=742$, $r=.284$ (small relationship). Correlation for campers between Jewish growth and personal growth: $n=737$, $r=.338$ (medium relationship). Correlation for campers between specialty growth and personal growth: $n=736$, $r=.337$ (medium relationship). Correlation for parents between Jewish growth and specialty growth: $n=782$, $r=.440$ (medium relationship). Correlation for parents between Jewish growth and personal growth: $n=781$, $r=.396$ (medium relationship). Correlation for parents between specialty growth and personal growth: $n=776$, $r=.291$ (small relationship).

Incubator camps help campers from all types of Jewish backgrounds continue on their Jewish journeys

Many campers have felt camp’s influence on their Jewish life. **Around half of campers and 7 in 10 parents report changes in at least 5 of the 10 listed Jewish outcome areas because of going to camp.** The most commonly selected outcome areas are learning more about camp’s core Jewish values, about Judaism, and how important being Jewish is to the camper (Exhibit 17). Campers and their parents describe campers as being more curious and excited about Judaism and taking initiative to create their own connections to Judaism, often different from the ways their parents relate to Judaism.

“He connected more with being Jewish and realized it was not about sitting in a temple and praying or learning about the holidays. It was much bigger than that.”

– JCC Maccabi Sports Camp Parent

Learning about Jewish values and how to use them in relation to the specialties resonates with campers and stays with them as they return home and to their regular lives. The majority of campers (63%) and parents (78%) say that campers now apply the Jewish values they learned at camp when they need to make important decisions and choices. The Jewish values in the context of the specialties are the link to Jewish growth for many campers.

“I can honestly say that I feel more connected with Judaism since I was able to have a Jewish experience with like-minded people. Experiences at camp changed my perception of myself in relation to my interests and Judaism. Some of the other campers have become my best friends, and meeting a variety of Jewish leaders and young Jewish adults and hearing their thoughts and about their lives has heavily influenced how I view modern Judaism and its role in society.”

– 6 Points Sci-Tech Academy Camper

Campers know more about Jewish values and what it means to be Jewish because of going to an Incubator camp.

Exhibit 17



Percentage of respondents saying camp changed this item for them

The camp community of Jewish youth and adults provides many campers with new Jewish friends and role models. **Most campers (79%) say that camp changed how many Jewish friends they have**, with many saying one of camp’s biggest influences is the expansion of their Jewish network and, in some cases, making Jewish friends for the first time. The inclusion of staff and campers from Israel gives campers daily opportunities to interact with an Israeli, which, according to their comments, is an exhilarating experience. Among those campers who were motivated to attend camp to make Jewish friends, 85% say that camp changed how many Jewish friends they had. They went to camp wanting to make new Jewish friends, and they actually did.

“It was great to connect and live with other Jewish girls my age. It helped me broaden my knowledge on Israel and Judaism. I had girls from all over the country and from Israel! It was so cool and I made many best friends.”

– Camp Zeke Camper

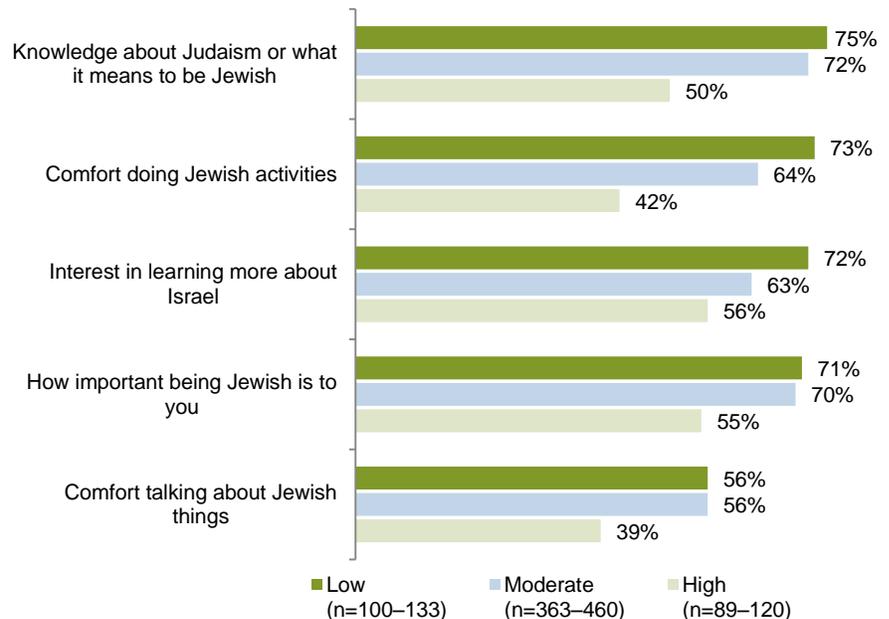
“[Camper] established very strong relationships and bonds with her other bunk mates. They shared in their Jewish experiences at home and in their community and related on a very personal level that she has not been able to access with her school friends.”

– Camp Inc. Parent

Camp attracts campers across the spectrum of Jewish backgrounds. **More campers with low and moderate levels of prior Jewish experiences when they first came to camp report positive changes in Jewish outcomes compared to campers with high levels** (Exhibit 18). Survey responses from campers with less involved Jewish backgrounds are strikingly different for “knowing more about Judaism” and “comfort doing Jewish activities.” Camp directors have many stories of how the less-Jewishly involved campers get excited learning about their Jewish heritage and connecting with Jewish activities when they go back home. One camp director describes the effect of camp’s immersive experience this way: “A lot of our campers came to camp having no connection to Judaism outside of camp. Suddenly, not only are they in this Jewish place, but they have some incredibly charismatic counselor who is their mentor and guide through this whole experience. Before they even unpack, they’re in an all-camp ritual learning about Jewish values. For other campers, camp is fundamentally different than anything they’ve seen in synagogue or in Hebrew school. Camp is a really fun, joyful version of Judaism—an environment where Judaism is everywhere and it’s exciting and fun. That has a tremendous impact on the campers. They go home excited about Judaism.”

Campers from less involved Jewish backgrounds are more likely to report camp influencing the Jewish outcomes.

Exhibit 18



Percentage of respondents saying camp changed this item for them

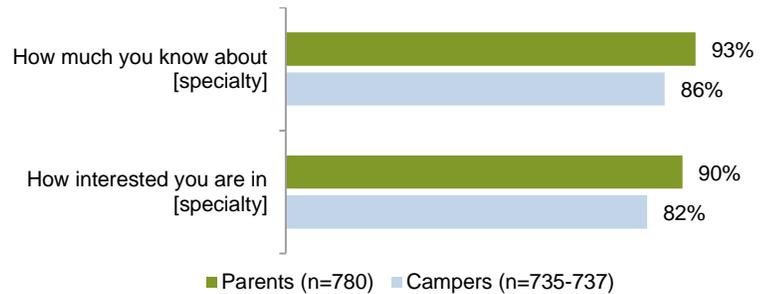
For campers from interfaith families, similar levels of campers and parents report changes across the Jewish outcomes, except for two notable differences. **More campers from interfaith families say that camp changed how many Jewish friends they have (85%) than campers from all Jewish families (76%).** These campers tend to have fewer Jewish friends back home, so the friends they make at camp are often their first or closest Jewish friends. **More parents of campers from interfaith families say that camp changed how comfortable their child is doing Jewish activities (79%) compared to parents of campers from all Jewish families (69%).** These data show that campers from interfaith families are in general having similar camp experiences as other campers, and they leave camp with more Jewish friends and feeling more comfortable doing Jewish activities.

Campers build skills and deepen their interest in the specialties that first drew them to camp

Since the first summer of Incubator I, more campers say their specialty skills and interests have changed because of camp than any other outcome area. This pattern continues through Incubator II (Exhibit 19). The specialty is the driving force for campers to attend these camps, and **campers deliver on providing high-quality specialty experiences.** For older campers at Camp Inc. and 6 Points Sci-Tech Academy, the specialty experience is helping to shape their plans for college majors and careers. JCC Maccabi Sports Camp is fine-tuning campers’ technical sports skills and sportsmanship skills. Campers leave Camp Zeke with new motivations and skills for incorporating healthy eating and physical activity into their daily lives.

Campers are more interested in the camp specialties and learned more about them.

Exhibit 19



Percentage of respondents saying camp changed this item for them

“I think that it has helped me realize that I am not the only Jewish kid who likes science and technology.”

– 6 Points Sci-Tech Academy Camper

“Before going to Camp Inc., I had a very small idea of what entrepreneurship was. After attending, it seems something really cool that I want to do in my life.”

– Camp Inc. Camper

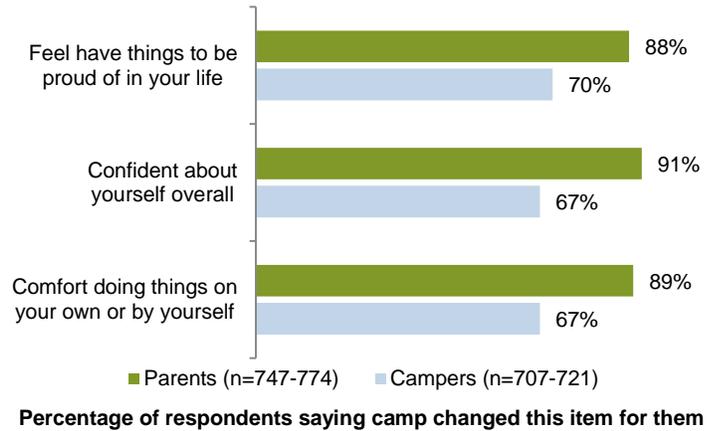
Campers and their parents across all camps express appreciation for the opportunity to combine Jewish learning and growth with specialty learning and growth. They say the interplay between the two areas is what makes camp enjoyable and meaningful. Incubator camps have found creative ways to integrate Jewish values with entrepreneurship, science, sports, and healthy living and thus offer campers a more holistic experience than a specialty camp alone. Using examples from the history and current events of Judaism and Israel, camp leaders relate the specialty to campers’ Jewish heritage.

Campers are more independent and have greater self-confidence after their camp experiences

Parents, however, are much more likely to notice changes in their children’s personal growth and maturity than the campers themselves (Exhibit 20). Parents describe their children as more mature, more comfortable doing things on their own, and more responsible because of camp. Campers (particularly those who have never been to camp before) note how momentous the experience is for them and express excitement to return summer after summer.

Parents are more likely to report changes in campers' personal growth than the campers themselves.

Exhibit 20



“She matured by leaps and bounds during her sessions at JCC Maccabi! It increased her independence, confidence, and emotional flexibility!”

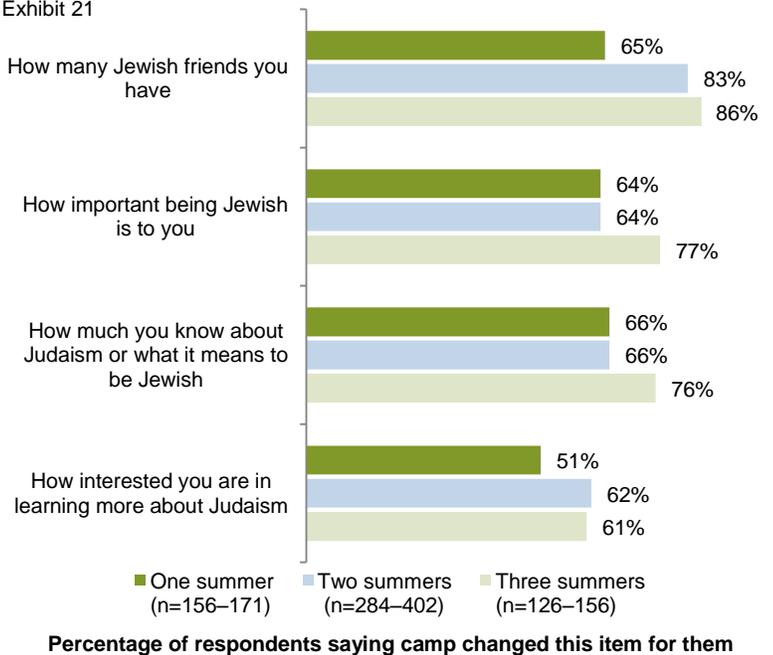
– JCC Maccabi Sports Camp Parent

The more summers campers attend camp, the more likely they are to report camp changing their Jewish knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors

Camper retention is a key driver for enhanced Jewish outcomes for campers. More campers who attend camp for more than one year say camp changed how many Jewish friends they have and how interested they are in learning more about Judaism (Exhibit 21). Going to camp for three summers further helps campers learn more about Judaism and see being Jewish as important to them compared to going for one or two summers.

The more summers campers attend camp, the more likely they are to report camp changing Jewish outcomes.

Exhibit 21



A small portion of campers attended Incubator camps in all three years of this evaluation—what the Incubator camps sometimes refer to as their “pioneer” or “founding” campers. For these campers, we matched their responses across all three years to look at the effect of multiple summers on their likelihood to say that camp changed the Jewish outcomes for them. While the results of this matched examination are powerful because they account for differences among individuals over time, they represent a very small proportion of campers, and we ask readers to please note the small sample sizes related to these findings.

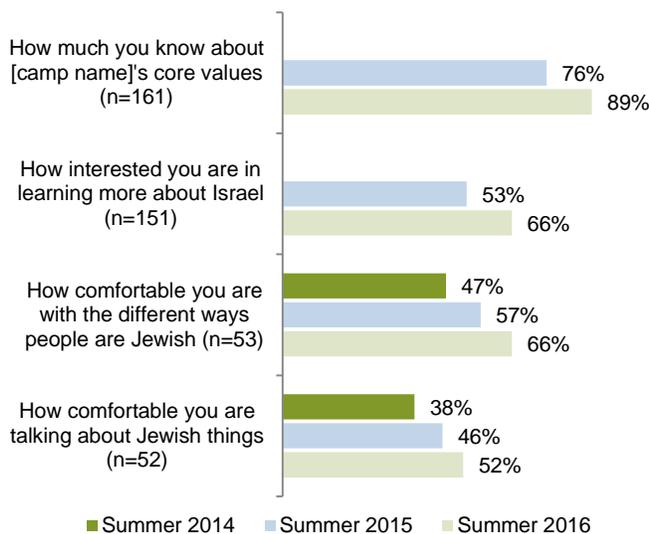
With that caveat, in general, **a growing percentage of campers report camp changing them after each summer, with the peak occurring after their third summer** (Exhibit 22). The parents of this small group of campers show similar trends, with the highest rates of parents reporting camp change after Summer 2016, the third summer (Exhibit 23).

“Prior to 2014 [Camper Name] had been to a nondenominational camp... While he loved the setting, he felt something was missing. After he went to his first summer at JCC Maccabi Sports Camp, he discovered what was missing: Jewish comradery and sportsmanship, Jewish friendships and community. He loved it so much that he went back to JCC Maccabi last year for four weeks and will return again this summer for four more weeks. He loves this camp and its focus on sports while incorporating Jewish culture.”

– JCC Maccabi Sports Camp Parent

Pioneer campers report a growing influence of camp on their Jewish selves.

Exhibit 22

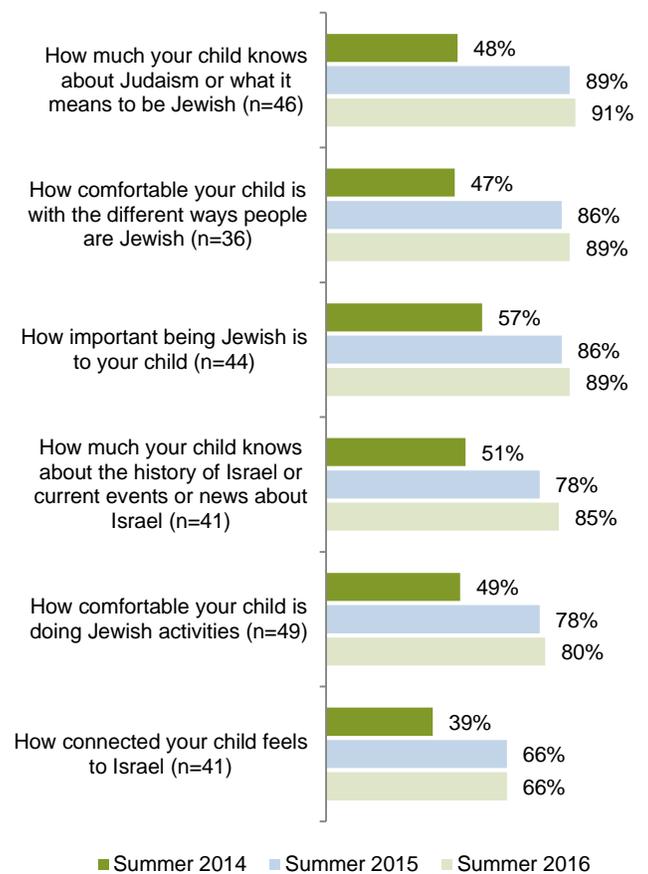


Percentage of respondents saying camp changed this item for them

In many examples of repeated exposure to a program or lesson, the impact of the initial experience plateaus or declines after multiple applications. Conversely, past research on Jewish camp shows that repeat experiences deepen impact. This small group of campers confirms the latter: attending these camps for multiple years produces greater influence over time. This, along with the findings above about the number of summers campers attend, show that attending camp for more summers has a stronger positive influence on a young person’s life.

More parents of pioneer campers report camp changed their children's Jewish lives after the second and third summers at camp.

Exhibit 23



Percentage of respondents saying camp changed this item

“I’m glad that my child was a founding camper. He has enjoyed the last 3 years there and it feels like his summer home away from home.”

– Camp Zeke Parent

Strong Program Design & Continuous Improvement Creates Desired Camper Outcomes

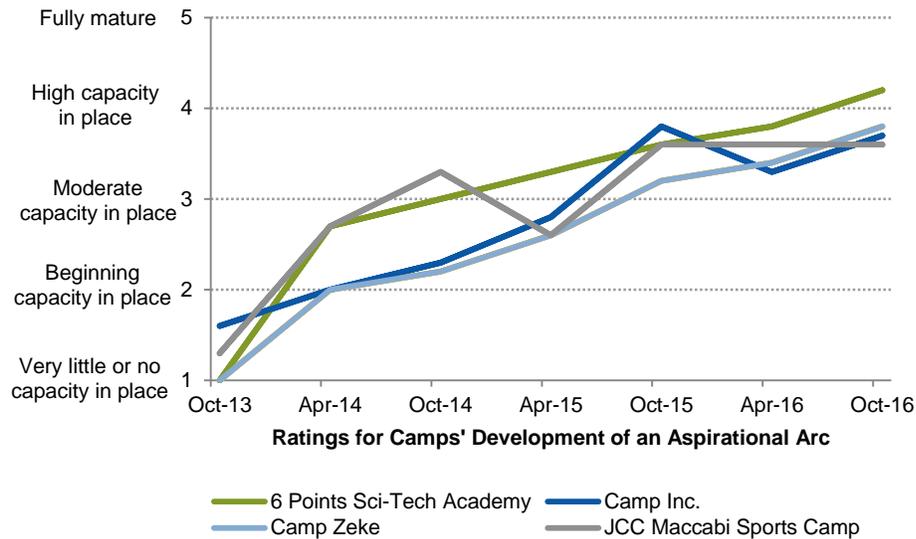
From the start of Incubator II, the camp leaders and their mentors gauged their program designs and program-related choices against their desired camper outcomes. Their processes for designing and improving all aspects of their programming—specialty, Jewish, and general camp—were deliberate and thoughtful. Camp directors worked on program refinement and improvements at Incubator workshops with their peers and mentors, as well as with the specialty staff, Jewish educators, and other key program personnel at the individual camps.

Following the premise of the Incubator, the four camps **annually honed their specialty programs to ensure they would continue to attract campers**. Keeping camp fresh and new was part of each year's program planning. Incubator staff observed and reviewed each camp's program operational plan and gave guidance on how to optimize the timing and flow of complex program schedules. Most of the specialties chosen by the camps appealed to a broad population of campers; the business and entrepreneurship specialty attracted the smallest number of campers, although those who participated were enthusiastic and parents were satisfied.

Camps paid attention to developing **aspirational arcs**—that is, an intentional program progression for returning campers that includes opportunities for skill development, greater responsibility within the camp community, and leadership roles. In the camps' semi-annual organizational capacity assessments, the ratings for this aspect of program development show all camps growing from little to no capacity to high capacity (Exhibit 24 on the following page). With coaching from Incubator staff and mentors, including camp directors from Incubator I camps, each camp anticipated the interests and needs of returning campers and added program elements for this purpose. In some cases, the appeal of returning for another summer is rooted in programmatic progression. JCC Maccabi Sports Camp offered the chance to work on a second sport rather than further develop the same sport; campers at Camp Zeke eagerly returned for the opportunity to do *krav maga* and weight training; 6 Points Sci-Tech Academy returning campers could choose advanced versions of specialty classes. In other cases, the camps added new curricular elements. Camp Inc. added broader business tracks and a specialty area in marketing; 6 Points Sci-Tech Academy brought in new coding languages and 3-D printing as electives.

Each camp sought to offer an aspirational arc through program additions and adaptations that appeal to returning campers.

Exhibit 24



Camp directors wanted their campers to love all aspects of camp, not just the specialty that drew them there, and tried to **strategically add and refurbish multiple elements of the camp experience**. Camp Zeke tapped the talents of its summer staff to augment the electives list; for example, national level soccer players coaching soccer and professional dancers leading Zumba workouts and weight training for dancers. Camp Inc. built out its wilderness skills electives when campers said they wanted hiking time. JCC Maccabi Sports Camp kept polishing its “Maccabi Cup” all-camp program by adding fun, competitive elements and incorporating camper leadership. As noted in an earlier section of this report, nearly all campers (95%) who attended more than one summer say that they were able to do something new or different at camp.

Camp leaders **aligned all aspects of program design and delivery with the camp’s mission and goals**. In 2012 each camp articulated its mission and values, creating the statements that would announce the contributions that this new camp would make in the world. Each camp’s Jewish values guide the design and implementation of the specialty program and give a cohesive frame for the many elements that make up a camp community.

The Incubator process emphasizes camps designed around the **needs and interests of pre-teens and teens**, including bringing in the best age-appropriate elements tested over the years in traditional overnight camps. As a result, each camp can showcase a combination of newer program elements such as Zumba, investing, and robotics, alongside long-proven camp elements of song fests, campfires, and camp-wide Olympic days. Camps have successfully woven these aspects together under the umbrella of a clearly articulated camp mission and a set of Jewish values that are visible and known to all campers as well as parents and staff.

Whether a camp or an in-town program, Jewish or secular, successful youth organizations figure out and use a **system of continuous program improvement**. The Incubator II camps had a head start in creating and using a system because of the Incubator’s investment in evaluation. The camp leaders had a good base of data to study, including their annual CSI customer satisfaction surveys, annual summaries of camper and parent responses to Informing Change surveys, and organizational capacity assessments. They also built off examples of customer feedback tools that experienced camp directors spoke about in Incubator workshops and incorporated their own routines to ensure they heard directly from campers and parents about the summer program experience (e.g., personal calls to parents).

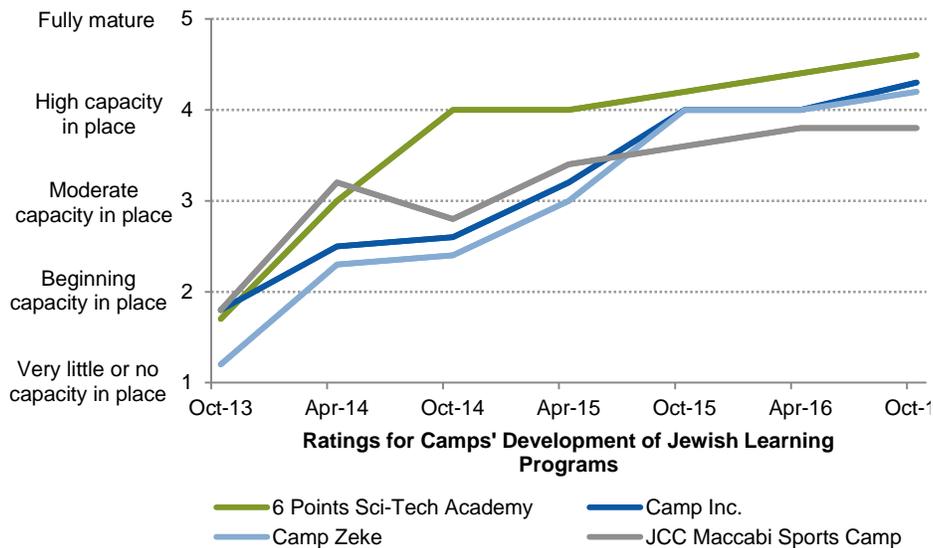
The Incubator staff and mentors emphasized that **well-trained, well-supervised camp staff** are a critical component of program strategy and thus affect the desired outcomes of a camp, in Jewish outcomes as well as specialty outcomes. Incubator speakers and mentors made the new camp directors wiser beyond their years in knowing how to hire, train and supervise staff, design their job descriptions, and inspire them to serve as positive role models for their campers.

Incubator camps found multiple and different ways of infusing Jewish content into the camp experience

Incubator camps **experimented with how to integrate Jewish content into their specialty areas and aimed for greater and seamless integration into other program areas.** With their mission and values, camps could envision Jewish life at camp—a Jewish life that would resonate with young campers and take advantage of the camp setting and camp activities. Over time, each camp’s vision came into being (Exhibit 25), either with what Incubator staff call *Fully Integrated* or *Partially Integrated* Jewish content (see sidebar on the following page). Working with the Incubator’s Jewish Life consultant Michelle Shapiro Abraham, each camp considered both approaches. The point, said Shapiro Abraham, is to find a way for Jewish elements of camp to be authentic within the camp’s nature, which would be different for each camp. Just as camps are striving to authentically represent teen interests and needs, they are also striving to create authentic and age-appropriate welcoming Jewish environments.

Most of the camps needed two summers worth of experience before reaching moderate capacity for integrating Jewish learning.

Exhibit 25



Camps incorporated their chosen **Jewish values** into their specialty programming. The larger two camps—Camp Zeke and 6 Points Sci-Tech Academy—found it easier than the other two camps to weave Judaism and Jewish life into their specialties, and each year they continue to expand, deepen, and innovate this intersection. JCC Maccabi Sports Camp and Camp Inc. tested different ways of linking their dedicated specialty time period with Jewish learning. In all camps, the directors and their leadership teams created frameworks for non-specialty camp programs that they refer to regularly; for example, at morning flag gatherings and during awards programs or camper recognitions (e.g., JCC Maccabi Sports Camp’s Mensch Award, Camp Inc.’s Chai Tiles).

Beyond specific instances of calling out Jewish values, the camps incorporated Jewish ritual-based content into their programs, for example morning and evening prayers, blessings at meals, and Shabbat. Staff holding the position of Jewish Educator have found creative, camp-specific ways to incorporate Jewish text, stories, and history (e.g., Camp Zeke’s interactive choose-your-own-adventure on Tisha B’av, JCC Maccabi Sports Camp’s camp song). Similarly, Israeli staff bring current day Israel alive for campers through formal programs and in casual conversations about their homes, friends, families, and daily lives in Israel.

Actualizing the vision of an integrated Jewish camp experience requires leadership from the camp director, intentional staffing, and infrastructure. Incubator staff regularly reviewed and assessed each camp’s plans for and delivery of Jewish content. Through the final year (2016) of Incubator support, Shapiro Abraham urged camp directors to keep experimenting with ways to embed Jewish life in all aspects of the camp experience, and to “push the envelope” on strategies that could take advantage of the immersive experience of camp life.

Shapiro Abraham emphasized that camp leaders need to deliberately build the infrastructure needed to bring their vision for Jewish life at camp into being. This includes securing a Jewish educator and a skilled song leader; allocating time and resources for pre-camp program development; and sharing responsibilities for Jewish integration across several members of the camp leadership team. The bulk of the responsibility to manage this development—as well as to build buy-in from all staff and parents—falls to the camp director. For that reason, the Incubator staff paid attention to helping camp directors and assistant directors develop their unique sense of themselves as Jewish educators. The Incubator staff and mentors confirm Shapiro Abraham’s point of view that the director’s comfort with seeing themselves as a Jewish leader relates to the level of success he or she will have in integrating Jewish life in the camp. The myriad decisions that a director and assistant director make—choices of activities, supervising staff, language for marketing materials, finding opportunities for outreach at synagogues—are all affected by the camp leaders’ personal comfort level as an advocate for living a Jewish life.

“We do not expect our Incubator Camps to simply have Jewish life elements; we hope that they will be leaders in the field. We hope that by the third year they are confident in their [Jewish] community and are developing a culture of experimentation where they embrace exploration, learn from failures, and imagine new possibilities for creating vibrant and joyful Jewish environments.”

– Michelle Shapiro Abraham

Fully vs. Partially Integrated Jewish Content

“**Fully Integrated specialty camps** bring Jewish learning in to every aspect of their specialty programming. Whether campers are in the garden, sports field, yoga studio or kitchen, an effort is made to bring Judaism into the specialty activities themselves. This differs from the **Partially Integrated** approach where Jewish learning is isolated to specific experiences—often outside of the designated specialty time.”

– Michelle Shapiro Abraham, FJC Specialty Camps Incubator II Summer 2015 Jewish Life Report

“I tell camp directors that in the places where Jewish learning can add to the experience and help campers understand what they are doing in new ways, they should explore a fully integrated model. However, if the Judaism is just an ‘add-on’ and doesn’t fit comfortably with [the specialty] or what they are doing, it is much better to choose other places to add in Jewish learning.”

– Michelle Shapiro Abraham

Creating supportive, inclusive camper-focused Jewish communities facilitate a camp’s ability to reach its intended outcomes

An important feature of each camp’s overall program—directly tied to intended camper outcomes—is a **dynamic camp community** in which all campers feel comfortable and welcome. In addition to staff training and specific program activities to create a sense of belonging, camp directors added staff positions dedicated to addressing camper care and inclusion. The staff in these positions found ways to help the whole camp community embrace campers with challenging behaviors, and they worked to quickly dispel cliques and conflicts that can make a week at camp

“[Camper name] now has a great group of ‘campies’ that she met as a result of Camp Zeke. They text constantly and are gearing up for a reunion at a bunkmates’ Bat Mitzvah next month!”

– Camp Zeke Parent

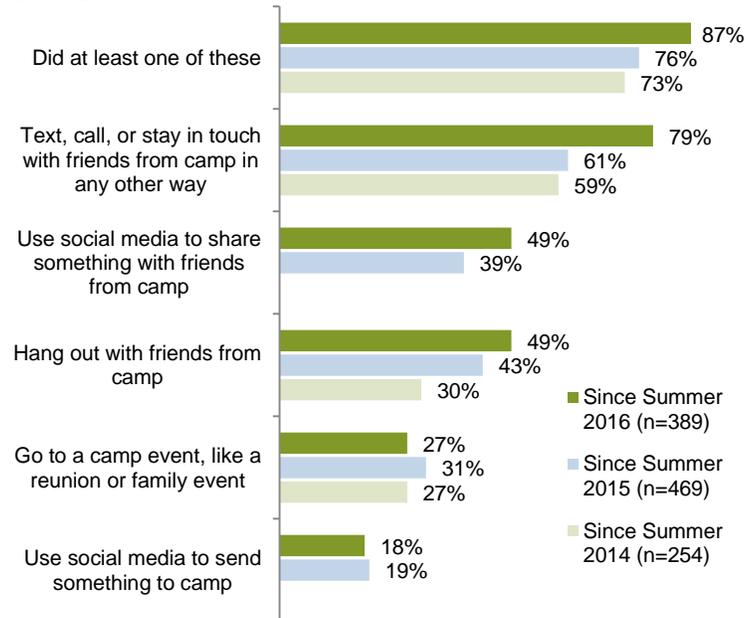
miserable for a middle or high school age camper. Parents responded well to the presence of these positions, whether for a particular need of their child or just as part of the camp philosophy. When thinking back to when they first decided to send their child to camp, some parents say they were attracted to the “newness” of the Incubator camps, particularly as they offered a community for their child without existing “cliques.”

The camp communities continue to some degree throughout the year; campers stay connected through social media and occasionally through personal visits. **Over 70% of campers report staying in touch with other campers when they are back at home.** They are most likely to text or call each other, and many also use social media (such as Facebook) to stay connected (Exhibit 26).

Camps’ pluralistic approach to Judaism has meant that **campers from all Jewish backgrounds and denominations have felt comfortable and welcomed.** Further, Incubator camp communities are safe, youth-centric places for campers to actively explore Judaism and what it means to them in their own way—asking questions and hearing from other campers and the young adult staff what being Jewish means to them. Camp directors facilitate this inquiry by hiring and preparing excellent staff who are willing to be Jewish role models and by ensuring a supportive camp community.

Campers maintain the camp communities while at home between summers.

Exhibit 26



Campers Make a Camp Survive & Thrive

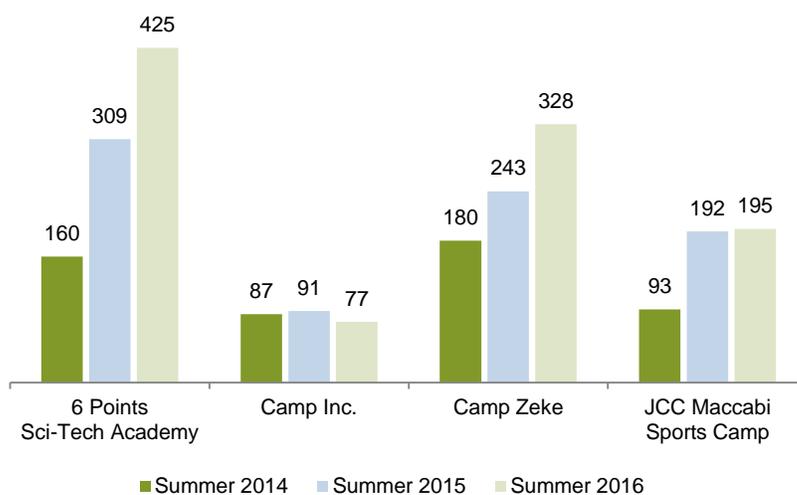
While designing camp programs, marketing to their target audiences, and monitoring camper outcomes, the leaders of each new Incubator camp have also been building the foundation for a camp with a future. Startup funding from the Incubator allowed each camp to launch in aggressive, robust ways, but the camps have had different experiences as they have worked to exit their startup stage. Campers are the critical key to this progression.

Steady upward enrollment growth in the early years appears to be the most significant indicator of camp stability and likely sustainability

Similar to the new camps in Incubator I, the Incubator II camps started with relatively small sessions, with 87 to 180 campers as their total enrollments for the first summer. In comparison, the third summer yielded total camper counts ranging from a low of 77 to a high of 425 (Exhibit 27). Steady enrollment growth has been the key to building camps' sustainability.

As the Incubator ends, it is clear that the camps with the best prospects for future sustainability are those with steadily growing camper enrollment. The effort needed to correct an enrollment drop or stagnation during a camp's early years is difficult to muster while also marshalling a forward momentum on all of a camp's other development fronts. This pattern is consistent in the nine camps of Incubator I and II; **campers that are most successful and lasting are the ones that demonstrate a pattern of steady enrollment growth in their first three summers.**

Two camps had steady enrollment growth while in the Incubator.
Exhibit 27



The two Incubator II camps that saw steady camper growth through new and retained campers—Camp Zeke and 6 Points Sci-Tech Academy—have exited startup business mode and are highly likely to be sustainable. JCC Maccabi Sports Camp is on the path to sustainability, but its low annual

growth rate hampers its trajectory. The fourth camp, Camp Inc., could not recruit the numbers of campers needed to make its operations feasible, despite strong program outcomes, good infrastructure development, and very satisfied campers and parents. As a result, Camp Inc. has not survived as an overnight camp.

Camper retention is an effective strategy to build a large enough camper base for a camp to endure

As they were advised by the veteran camp directors who shared their expertise at Incubator workshops, the camp directors worked hard to retain families and campers from one summer to the next. **High camper retention created stable platforms for three of the camps, from which they could grow camper enrollment.** These camps retained close to two-thirds of their campers from year to year (Exhibit 28). Within the arena of specialty camps, both Jewish and non-Jewish, these retention rates are unusually high, according to several veteran camp directors who told us that specialty camps typically have retention rates around 33% and would consider a 50% retention rate very successful. A total of 609 individual campers (40%) chose to return for one or two more years after their initial summer. While it is theoretically possible for a camp to grow and thrive without strong camper retention, the experience of camps in Incubator II as well as in Incubator I demonstrate the challenges of not having robust camper retention.

Strong camper retention supported the development of three Incubator camps.

Exhibit 28

| Camps | % of 2014 Campers Who Returned in 2015 | % of 2015 Campers Who Returned in 2016 | % of 2016 Campers Who Will Return in 2017 ²³ |
|---|--|--|---|
| 6 Points Sci-Tech Academy | 69% | 73% | 61% |
| Camp Inc. | 27% | 37% | N/A |
| Camp Zeke | 47% | 73% | 65% |
| JCC Maccabi Sports Camp | 58% | 57% | 63% |
| Overall % Across All Incubator Camps | 49% | 66% | 63% |

Quick camper enrollment growth in the first three years stimulates positive development of multiple areas of camp operations

In addition to generating income for the camp’s livelihood, larger enrollment numbers boost a camp over whatever might be the minimum threshold required for that particular camp’s survival. The sooner that is achieved, the healthier the overall camp structure—not just the finances but also the summer staffing structure, program implementation plans, and customer service and communications infrastructure. This pattern holds true when examining all nine camps of both Incubator cohorts.

In recruiting campers for the first and second summers, the **new camp directors had to experiment with offering discounted fees and scholarships**, balancing the camp’s need to both recruit campers and generate fees for a positive bottom line. By the third summer, directors had figured out when and how to incorporate these financial incentives into their recruitment approaches.

²³ Retention rates for 2017 are based on projected camper enrollment as of June 2017. The overall percentage who are projected to return in 2017 is based on the three Incubator camps operating in 2017 (not across all four, as in previous years).

Organizational Infrastructure Drives Towards Sustainability

One reason the Incubator II camps were able to attain market and outcomes goals is the incremental development of critical organizational infrastructure and multiple areas of organizational capacity. All four camps worked to develop the necessary infrastructure for a nonprofit camp organization—moving from idea, through startup, to adolescence (Exhibit 29)—and did this at an accelerated pace. Based on their experience helping Incubator I camps become sustainable, the Incubator staff provided stronger guidance to Incubator II camps around building programs and infrastructure, in some cases telling camp directors about changes that needed to be made rather than making recommendations or suggesting options.

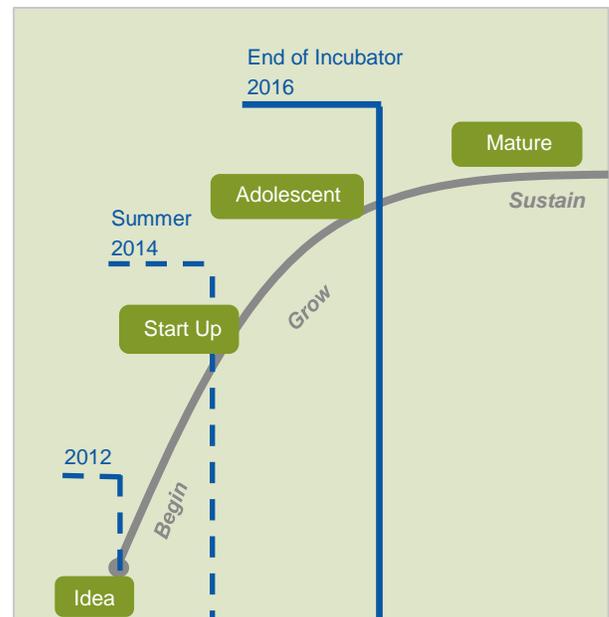
At a quick clip, all four camps developed the infrastructure necessary for organizational growth and development

Incubator camps were able to do intensive development—fast paced compared to other startup nonprofits—due to the Incubator’s coaching and guidance. The Incubator workshop curriculum made them aware of the various aspects of organizational infrastructure that needed to be worked on and connected them with coaches and consultants who could provide additional guidance outside of workshop time.

In Fall 2016, the Incubator camps as a group received an average rating of “highly developed” on their organizational capacity assessments, meaning they were at or above a rating of 4.0 (high capacity in place), for 22 of the 28 organizational capacity areas that have been assessed since 2013 (Exhibit 30 on the following page). The four areas rated as “moderate capacity” were financial sustainability, fund development, board engagement, and marketing and branding.

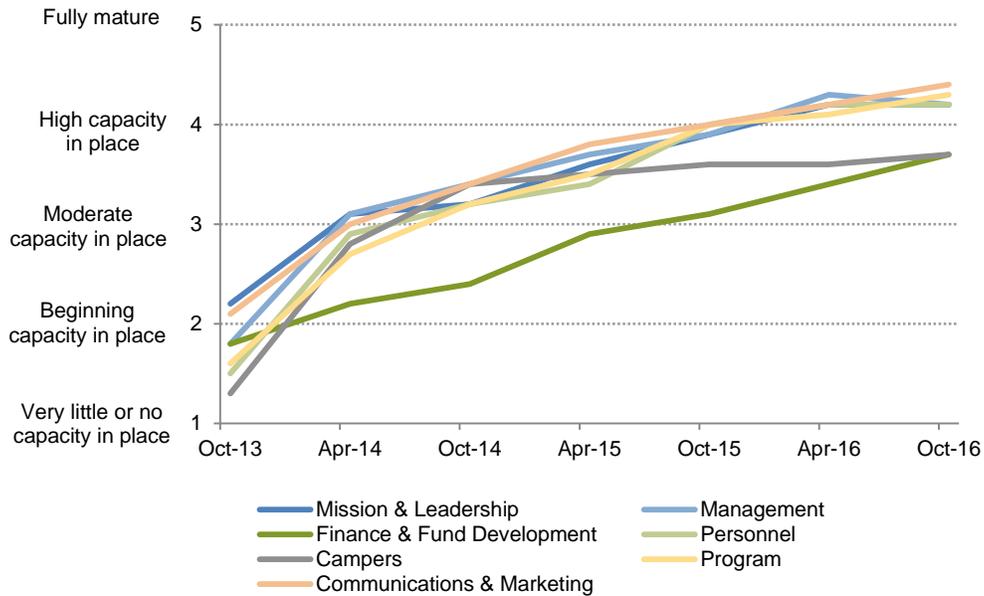
Camp organizations aim to be out of startup mode by end of Incubator.

Exhibit 29



Camps developed their finance and fund development capacities more slowly than their program and management capacities.

Exhibit 30



The camps raced to sustainability at different speeds

All four Incubator camps had long-term sustainability as a goal, but each camp pursued it with a different camp model. The variations in the camp designs and the components of their models affected the speed at which each camp is progressing to sustainability. A number of factors affected a camp’s progress to sustainability.

- **Enrollment growth coupled within reasonable expenses.** “Get the kids” is really the right mantra for the launch years of a new camp. With more campers doing activities, staff are better able to understand the norms for program success and tweak the program design to retain their campers and attract new campers. With higher enrollment numbers, camps are able to stratify staffing positions, mixing a few higher paid experts to design and train and oversee the specialty operations with general camp staff to assist, thus reducing the per-camper cost of programs.
- **Accelerating the financial learning curve.** The more income these camps derived from camper fees, the less they needed to draw upon Incubator funding, thus leaving a higher fund balance to support their future. Larger camps and larger budgets also require a faster, steeper learning curve on financial management and finance-related decision making. It seems that the experience of managing larger camps, despite the risk of new camp directors making bigger mistakes, may lead to more practical learning and fewer experimental (meaning not grounded in an impending need) spending decisions.
- **Reaching a desired minimum camper census.** Looking at the nine camps in Incubators I and II, those that averaged at least 80 campers per week have had the greatest success with sustainability. These are also the camps that were able to retain more than 45% of their inaugural-summer campers, providing a base for generating larger enrollment numbers in the following year.
- **Maximizing camp model characteristics that support camper recruitment and retention.** Three elements of Incubator camp models help with camper recruitment: 1) a specialty with broad appeal, 2)

supportive recruitment networks, and 3) geographic proximity to camper populations and to families with a camp-going culture.

- **Offsetting model-related obstacles to camper recruitment and retention.** A disadvantage for camps at a far distance from large concentrations of Jewish families is the additional travel cost on top of camp fees, and concerns about campers traveling too far from home. These are not deterrents to all families, but they can screen out some or many potential camper families. A small niche market also poses recruitment challenges; Camp Inc. found that the somewhat limited demand for its specialty to be the primary obstacle to enrollment growth.

It falls to the camp director and assistant director to apply their individual talents to the recruiting mix to offset the disadvantages and challenges. Incubator II camp directors' recruitment assets are their personal goal orientation and drive, determination, their ability to build trust and relationships, ability to engage and motivate others, and their skill in seeking and finding opportunities.

- **Early, aggressive fundraising.** With Incubator support, all four camp directors made large gains in their abilities as fundraisers. This is one of the capacity areas that showed the strongest gains in 2016. Camps had "beginning" capacity in Finance and Fund Development in 2014, so the Incubator staff and mentors concentrated time on developing directors' financial management skills, including their ability to control costs, and building their understanding of their annual income and expenses cycles.

Camps' financial statements show that over time, they increased their levels of individual donations and support from a broader range of foundations. The diversity in funding streams has contributed to the camps' financial stability. Incubator staff say they started training and coaching around fund development earlier for Incubator II camp directors than for Incubator I. Whether through the Incubator curriculum changes, prior experience, or personalities, the four camp directors in Incubator II stepped into the fundraising role more easily and earlier than camp directors in Incubator I.

Two of the Incubator II camps ended their third year of full operations showing a net surplus on their financial statements, meaning they did not need to draw on their remaining Incubator funds. This indicates they are in good position to attain future sustainability. The two other camps had operating deficits after their third summer and drew down their remaining Incubator funds. The camp with the largest deficit, Camp Inc., determined it could not generate the funding needed to operate for another summer after 2016.

- **Enlisting board leaders in decision-making, planning, outreach, and fund development.** Over time, the camp directors have engaged more volunteers to serve in board roles and to find individuals with talents matched to the most pressing issues facing the camp. Camp directors in 2017 say that board development continues to be one of their most important next steps for continued organizational development. Incubator II camps developed their board of directors or advisory board earlier than the Incubator I camps; this is due to pointed guidance from Incubator staff about lay leaders roles.

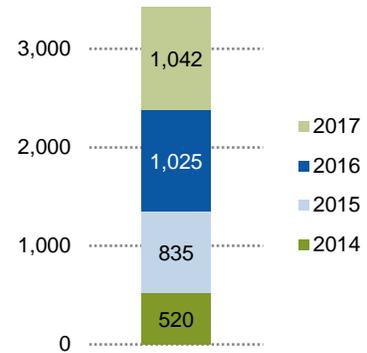
As they were developing for the long-term, camps created real-time value for the campers who have attended these camps

Incubator II camps provided a total of 2,380 camper-sessions in their first three summers of operation. Based on June 2017 projections, an additional 1,042 campers will attend in 2017, raising that number to 3,422 (Exhibit 31). Each of these 3,422 camper-sessions generated positive camper outcomes that are likely to influence the camper for a lifetime.

Counting all actual and projected camper-sessions from 2014 through 2017, the overall investment by the funders breaks out at an average investment of \$3,000 per camper-session. With each additional summer, the average investment per Incubator II camper-session will decrease, thus increasing the overall return on the funders' investments. Additional camper experiences and outcomes will continue for years, and possibly decades, to come.

The Incubator investment's first line of value is having provided 3,422 camper-sessions at new Jewish specialty camps from 2014–17.

Exhibit 31



Conclusion

Meeting Intended Goals

Incubator II sought to expand upon the success of Incubator I and develop four additional Jewish specialty camps to serve families' interests and needs. Again, these camps have made positive progress toward their five articulated goals (see box on page 2). Each camp offered a new option for families to attend Jewish camp and each introduced new pre-teens and teens to Jewish camp. Across camps, campers report positive outcomes related to their Jewish lives, specialty skills, and personal growth.

There was some variation in camp progress toward the final two goals. Two camps—6 Points Sci-Tech Academy and Camp Zeke—achieved enrollment levels for sustainability and reached high levels of organizational development. They are well positioned for continued sustainability following the Incubator. While the other two camps—JCC Maccabi Sports Camp and Camp Inc.—also reached high levels in many of their organizational development areas, they struggled to enroll enough campers in two of their three summers to meet their benchmarks, raising concerns about their sustainability. JCC Maccabi Sports Camp has joined Cohort 9 of the Upstart Accelerator to receive additional support (financial and non-financial) for three years. Camp Inc. has transitioned from an overnight camp into a day camp and is also sharing its innovative curriculum with other camps.

Insights for FJC & the Broader Jewish Camping Field



Integrated Jewish Learning

Nearly all Incubator campers and their parents say that camp had a positive influence on campers' Jewish lives. The way Incubator camps approach integrating Jewish learning, values, and reflections into their programming is working, regardless of whether the Jewish content is fully or partially integrated with the specialty. The camps have also tailored their Jewish curriculum to meet campers at their levels so they engage with it.



Multi-faceted Camp Experiences and Outcomes

A one-size-fits-all model does not work for pre-teens and teens; they each enter camp at such different places in their lives and seek different experiences and moments from each camp session. As new and quickly growing organizations, the Incubator camps need to remember that not every camper is going to enjoy every aspect of camp—it's not a realistic expectation. They should not let discontent or limited influence on some campers distract them from their overall goals. The vast majority of campers enjoy their experiences, and most have felt the influence of the camp on their lives up to a year later still.



The Importance of “New”

The opportunity for a “new” experience is especially appealing to Jewish teens. Teens have many competing interests for their summer time: school, work, internships, spending time with family or friends. To make camp appealing to them, Incubator camps need to continue marketing their newness, both to new campers coming for their first experience and the returning campers who want to do something different from last summer. Returning campers, in particular, can develop attitudes of “been there, done that” as they age and run out of summers to have new experiences before they leave home for college or to start their careers. This hook has worked well in the early years of the camps and needs to remain a focus to ensure sustainability.



Get the Campers

Focusing on enrolling campers in early years allows for quickly and efficiently testing out program elements and operations. Camps with lower enrollment in the first year never quite caught up with their own initial goals and with the other camps. Campers from the first year or two also help with word-of-mouth recruitment, as seen with many parents deciding in later years to send their children to camp after hearing about it from a friend or family member.



A Business Model Designed for Sustainability

For extended sustainability, a new Jewish camp needs to enroll, as a bare minimum, an average of 80 campers per week during their summer season. Camp leaders need to be mindful that giving away camp for free—or at deeply discounted rates—is not the way to reach this enrollment goal. Scholarships and discounts may help bring campers early on, but can also set the camp back on its journey toward financial sustainability. Finding the sweet spot of enrolling campers and making profits is crucial for new camps.



Location Matters

Location affects recruitment and the camp experience. Incubator camp directors identified locations to support their specialty and fit their budgets. When thinking about the financial implications of location, it includes the facility costs, operating costs for running that site, and recruitment costs of traveling from that site to meet with new families. The location needs to be attractive and accessible for the target market to support enrollment efforts.



The Critical Role of Assistant Directors

Directors need an assistant director early on. Incubator II camps benefitted from having an assistant director selected for each camp well before the first camp summer so both the director and assistant director could participate in Incubator activities as they developed the camp concept into reality. This support was invaluable to the directors and facilitated many of the organizational development achievements in the early years.



The Value of Data

New camps need data of many types to inform strategic decisions and monitor early activities so that they identify wins and losses for course correction. The Incubator provided camps with data from their campers and families, benchmarked against the other Incubator II camps and Incubator I camps. In addition, Incubator staff and camp stakeholders measured each camp’s progress toward sustainability semi-annually to ensure that progress was being made, so the camps are on track to exit the Incubator out of the startup stage.



Incubation Works!

An Incubator model does work for new Jewish specialty camps. The successes of Incubator I were seen again in Incubator II, with new specialty camps being established as parts of the overall Jewish camping field. The Incubator's financial and non-financial support propelled camps into existence in less than two years after being selected. The Incubator's timely, expert support steered the new camps away from potential pitfalls. Funding was distributed over time to ensure that a camp didn't make disastrous financial decisions to ruin them early on. Also, the Incubator connected camp leaders with the Jewish camping field in a way that built fast and sustained relationships—as the camps exit the Incubator, they still have access to these resources.

Changing the Landscape of Jewish Camping & Campers' Lives

With the addition of Incubator II camps to the Jewish camp world, the field has accepted specialty camps as a worthy strategy to attract and retain older campers. The Incubator I camps demonstrated what could be done, and the addition of the Incubator II camps has dispelled lingering doubts about the appeal of specialties and the potential to integrate Jewish learning with a specialty.

Each summer, the Incubator II campers carry home unforgettable memories and foundational elements for building a joyful Jewish life. From the consistent pattern of camp outcomes, it is clear that the campers increase their interest in Jewish teachings and culture, as well as Israel. They leave camp feeling bonded to a vibrant, active community of Jewish youth and cool adults, with a belief that there exists a Jewish community to which they see themselves belonging—increasing the possibility that they will believe this into the future as well.

FJC Specialty Camps Incubator II Evaluation Framework

PURPOSE OF THE INCUBATOR: Increase the number of teens attending high-quality Jewish summer camps by creating four new Jewish specialty camps using a business incubator approach.

ISSUES ADDRESSED

- A small percentage of Jewish children (10%) attend Jewish camp; many Jewish teens are choosing non-Jewish camps and camps focused on specialty interests
- Current Jewish camps do not have the capacity to attract, retain or accept all Jewish teens in their programs, leaving many teens camp-less
- Teens, pre-teens and their families show high interest in specialty camps, but only a small number of existing Jewish institutions have summer specialty programs that can successfully compete for Jewish teens
- Many Jewish camps do not effectively support young people's Jewish journeys with high-quality Jewish experiential education
- Launching a new camp is a slow and risky process, making entrepreneurs reluctant to tackle innovative programs or the more difficult teen market

STRATEGIES

(in use by the Incubator & the new specialty camps)

- **Market Alignment:** Design and deliver innovative camp concepts—specialties—that spark the interest of the target population
- **Financial Investment:** Use start-up capital to accelerate new camps' planning, marketing and organizational development through their initial three summers
- **Start-up Support:** Provide cohort-based operational support, technical assistance and program guidance, as well as an initial network of professional contacts
- **Professional Development:** Provide individualized coaching and mentoring to build leadership and management skills of Incubator camp directors and other camp leaders
- **Jewish Integration:** Infuse Jewish experiential education in a wide range of camp program elements to strengthen campers' Jewish values and build their sense of belonging in the broader Jewish community
- **Aspirational Arcs:** Apply a multi-year educational and programmatic philosophy to support campers on their Jewish journeys and build a desire to return to camp

TARGET CONSTITUENTS

Jewish Teens Who...

- Never attended a Jewish camp
- Are in middle school and high school
- Are attending a non-Jewish camp
- Exceed traditional camp age requirement

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

(5 years)

- More Jewish teens will be attending Jewish camp
- A wider range of Jewish camp options will be available for currently non-attending Jewish teens and also for families currently choosing non-Jewish specialty and teen camps
- Campers at Incubator camps will demonstrate significant, positive changes in attitudes, knowledge and behaviors related to Jewish life and Judaism, consistent with each camp's Jewish mission and values
- Incubator camps will be competitive in the Jewish camp marketplace and will be enrolling the number of new and returning campers needed for ongoing sustainability
- Incubator camps will have exited the start-up stage of organizational development, will be able to function without Incubator start-up funding and will demonstrate key capacities of sustainable nonprofit organizations

ULTIMATE IMPACT: Increase Jewish learning, strong Jewish social networks and positive Jewish journeys among Jewish youth.

Appendix B: Data Collection & Analysis Approach

DATA COLLECTION

The evaluation used a multi-year mixed-method approach to address the five evaluation questions. The major data collection approaches were:

- Interviews
- Surveys
 - New camper surveys
 - Returning camper surveys
 - Returning campers' parent surveys
 - Follow-up camper and parent surveys
- Observations
- Organizational capacity assessments

Data Collection by Year

Exhibit B1

| | Informing the 2013–14 Report | Informing the 2014–15 Report | Informing the 2015–16 Report | Informing the 2016–17 Report | Total |
|--|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------|
| Interviews | 11 | 11 | 10 | 4 | 36 |
| Surveys | 466 | 1,058 | 1,376 | 817 | 3,717 |
| Observations | 6 | 6 | 5 | 0 | 17 |
| Organizational Capacity Assessments | 2 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 6 |

Survey Responses by Camp and Year

Exhibit B2

| | 6 Points Sci-Tech Academy | Camp Inc. | Camp Zeke | JCC Maccabi Sports Camp | Total |
|------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------------------------|-------|
| New Campers 2014 | 159 | 85 | 134 | 88 | 466 |
| New Campers 2015 | 197 | 69 | 166 | 137 | 569 |
| Returning Campers 2015 | 110 | 21 | 69 | 54 | 254 |
| Campers' Parents 2015 | 91 | 34 | 64 | 46 | 235 |

| | 6 Points Sci-Tech Academy | Camp Inc. | Camp Zeke | JCC Maccabi Sports Camp | Total |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------------------|-------|
| New Campers 2016 | 186 | 46 | 139 | 91 | 462 |
| Returning Campers 2016 | 179 | 29 | 161 | 100 | 469 |
| Returning Campers' Parents 2016 | 151 | 23 | 103 | 59 | 336 |
| Non-Returning Campers' Parents 2016 | 41 | 18 | 18 | 32 | 109 |
| Follow-up Campers 2017 | 212 | 33 | 107 | 37 | 389 |
| Follow-up Campers' Parents 2017 | 202 | 37 | 120 | 69 | 428 |
| Total | 1,528 | 395 | 1,081 | 713 | 3,717 |

EVALUATION STRENGTHS

Nearly every camper completed a survey in 2014, 2015, and 2016; therefore the camper survey sample is highly representative of Jewish campers attending Incubator camps. Many 2016 campers also completed the follow-up survey in 2017. There is also a strong response rate for parents of campers who attended in 2016 (51%), considering that surveys were administered electronically almost a year after their child attended an Incubator camp.

The evaluation uses multiple methods to evaluate Incubator camps' growth, which enables Informing Change to triangulate from multiple sources to reach conclusions. This gives us greater confidence in the findings and resulting implications.

EVALUATION LIMITATIONS

The primary data sources used in this evaluation are self-reported (e.g., surveys, interviews, organizational capacity), which may present some bias. However, this evaluation bases findings only on commonly mentioned responses across multiple informants.

For the organizational capacity assessment, respondents rate camp development against a provided description. This process may result in more subjective ratings. However, the use of multiple raters helps protect against bias.

Younger campers may have had difficulty with some of the language used in the surveys, affecting their responses to some items. The large number of campers completing surveys helps balance these issues.

Due to camp size and response rates, some camps are more represented in the aggregated survey data (i.e., 6 Points Sci-Tech Academy, Camp Zeke) than others (i.e., Camp Inc., JCC Maccabi Sports Camp), which may bias results toward the larger camps.

Appendix C: Level of Prior Jewish Experiences

To better understand campers' collective Jewish experiences and backgrounds before they came to camp, we developed a composite score of their "Level of Prior Jewish Experiences" based on their responses to the eight items listed below. We then grouped campers into three categories based on their total scores: Low (0–2.5); Moderate (3–5.5); and High (6–8).

| Which of the following best describes your family? | We are not Jewish (0) | Some of us are Jewish, some of us are not (0.5) | We are Jewish (1) |
|--|-----------------------|---|-------------------|
| About how often do you go to synagogue or temple? | Rarely, if ever (0) | A few times a year, like the holidays (0.5) | Regularly (1) |
| Before you came to camp this summer, have you ever attended a Jewish day school? | No (0) | Yes (1) | |
| Before you came to camp this summer, have you ever attended Hebrew school, Hebrew classes or another type of Jewish-related class, like Sunday school? | No (0) | Yes (1) | |
| Before you came to camp this summer, have you ever participated in a Jewish youth group? | No (0) | Yes (1) | |
| Before you came to camp this summer, have you ever attended Jewish day camp? | No (0) | Yes (1) | |
| Before you came to camp this summer, have you ever attended Jewish overnight camp? | No (0) | Yes (1) | |
| Have you ever traveled to Israel? | No (0) | Yes (1) | |

Appendix D:

Organizational Capacity Assessment Process

To achieve long-term business sustainability, a camp organization must develop a depth of capacity across a wide range of organizational indicators. From October 2013 through October 2016, Informing Change tracked the progress of 28 aspects of the Incubator camps' organizational development (listed below) through semi-annual assessments by camp directors, members of the camps' Boards of Directors (or equivalent bodies), mentors, and Incubator staff.

MISSION & LEADERSHIP

- Mission Focus
- Strategic Planning
- Advisory Board & Lay Leader Engagement
- Legal Structure & Compliance

MANAGEMENT

- Performance Management – Year-Round & Camp Season
- Management Systems & Practices – Year-Round & Camp Season
- Information Systems

FINANCES & FUND DEVELOPMENT

- Financial Management
- Financial Sustainability
- Fund Development

PERSONNEL

- Senior Management – Year-Round & Camp Season
- Staff Recruitment & Retention
- Staff Training

CAMPERS

- Camper Enrollment
- Camper Retention
- Camper Inquiries & Yield Rate

PROGRAM

- General Camp Program
- Specialty Program
- Jewish Learning
- Aspirational Arc
- Program Improvement

COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

- Marketing & Branding
- Communications
- Customer Service
- External Relations & Networking

RATING SCALE

- 1 = Very little or no capacity in place
- 2 = Beginning capacity in place
- 3 = Moderate capacity in place
- 4 = High capacity in place
- 5 = Fully mature

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