



Denver Boulder Jewish Teen Education and Engagement Initiative

*Learnings from a Three-Year Evaluation of the
Denver Boulder Jewish Teen Initiative*

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Prepared for
the Rose
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Joseph
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Introduction

The Denver Boulder Jewish Teen Education and Engagement Initiative (the Initiative) began in 2014 with a partnership between Rose Community Foundation and Jim Joseph Foundation. The Initiative was conceived in response to research and a community engagement process done in 2010 by Rose Community Foundation's Jewish Life Committee and the Allied Jewish Federation (now JEWISHcolorado) about engaging Jewish teens in greater Denver and Boulder.

The Initiative is one of 10 communities across the US participating in an effort to create new Jewish teen programming and increase teen engagement. Each community works toward a common set of outcomes, expectations, and measures of success. The funders of all of the Initiatives participate in a collaborative in order to facilitate learning across all communities. A national evaluation effort referred to as the Cross Community Evaluation (CCE) developed tools for this shared measurement and will aggregate findings from the 10 communities' evaluations to capture common learnings.

THE INITIATIVE

The desired ultimate impact from this Initiative is that throughout their lives, every teen in the Denver and Boulder Jewish communities can answer the question, "How can my Judaism inform, inspire, and advance the good I seek to do in the world?" To accomplish this, the four-year Initiative (2014–18) was created with three initial objectives in mind, and with an undercurrent of innovation running through its activities. The three objectives are:

1. Increase funding to existing innovators and new projects as a means to provide higher quality experiences and achieve incremental growth in teen participation.
2. Increase the number and quality of Jewish professionals and trained volunteers working with Jewish teens.
3. Promote youth-initiatives and youth-led ideas that engage teens and their peers in Jewish life.

Furthermore, the Initiative was designed to learn about and strategize for:

- Involving Jewish teens who come from diverse Jewish backgrounds
- Expanding the breadth of Jewish opportunities to meet teens' diverse interests
- Scaling successful models of teen engagement while piloting new, innovative models
- Developing relationship-building and mentoring skills among Jewish youth professionals and involved adults
- Building models for Jewish teen engagement that are financially sustainable
- Establishing Jewish teen education and engagement as a priority for local Jewish community leaders and parents

The Initiative centers around five main grantees (described in the following paragraphs) that are working together to achieve overall Initiative outcomes as well as their own individual goals. The grantees received an infusion of funding, and many were able to grow their staff with additional members. The Initiative is now embarking on its fourth year, with the possibility of being regranted in the future.

Boulder Jewish Teen Initiative (BJTI) offers Boulder teens fun ways to explore Judaism through a mix of one-time and ongoing opportunities, events, and activities. BJTI launched with the Initiative and hired a full-time director and support staff. Currently, BJTI coordinates programs, including High School Culture Clubs (JSC Clubs), NaviG8, Moving Traditions groups, and general access programs in the Boulder area; BJTI convenes a Teen Advisory Board as well. BJTI staff also meet one-on-one with Boulder Jewish teens. In addition, BJTI serves as a hub for Jewish programs for teens in the Boulder community by curating a website and program calendar to facilitate relationships among organizations.

Jewish Student Connection (JSC) organizes and staffs Jewish student clubs within public high schools in the Denver community and maintains one-on-one relationships with students through in-person meetings and texting. The model began in the Denver area in 2011 and has expanded through area high schools to reach Jewish teens and their friends. JSC staff partner with a faculty member to serve as club advisor and work in conjunction with student leaders to prepare the programming. The Initiative funding enabled JSC to hire additional staff members to expand its presence. JSC's goal for the coming year is to begin offering clubs in middle schools to reach younger teens.

Intended to be the backbone of the Initiative, **jHub** has a role in many different areas related to Jewish teen engagement. jHub organizes community-wide events; houses a central repository of available teen programs and events on its website; convenes, trains, and supports youth professionals in the region; convenes a Steering Committee to oversee the Initiative; and runs teen programs, such as the jHub Fellows and J-Serve. jHub had its beginnings in the Jewish Youth Professionals Council (JYPC), a collective of teen professionals in the Denver and Boulder communities. The group has grown to include more professionals serving Jewish teens, reaching 29 members in 2016–17. The Initiative funded a director to oversee and expand the work into a community-serving organization.

Moving Traditions brings together small, intimate groups of teen girls and boys with the goals of building positive relationships and thinking more deeply about gender, cultural expectations, ethics, and Jewish life. Support from the Initiative helped Moving Traditions hire its first full-time director in Colorado and experiment with a new program model of community groups not based in institutional partner organizations.

Presentense Colorado – A Program of Upstart (PTC-U), a new addition to the Denver and Boulder communities with Initiative funding, has recently merged with UpStart. PTC-U is a teen Fellowship that engages teens in design thinking. Through the Fellowship, teens design and market community action projects that reflect Jewish values or teachings, while engaging their Jewish peers through empathy interviews and testing prototypes. The program also provides workshops and business mentors to the Fellows, and has engaged a Teen Advisory Board and a Steering Committee.

THE EVALUATION

The Initiative funders partnered with Informing Change to evaluate the Initiative over the first three years of its four-year lifespan. Our data collection and analysis was framed around six evaluation questions:

- **Engaging Teens:** To what extent are a growing number of diverse Jewish teens in the Denver and Boulder communities engaged in Jewish opportunities during their middle school and high school years?

- **Impacting Jewish Teens:** How and to what extent are teens in the Denver and Boulder communities experiencing Jewish learning and growth during their middle school and high school years? In particular, what is the Jewish learning and growth for teens participating in activities supported by the Initiative?
- **Developing Jewish Professionals and Involved Adults:** How and to what extent are Jewish professionals and involved adults in the Denver and Boulder communities increasing their capacity to effectively educate and engage teens?
- **Grantee Accomplishments:** How and to what extent are the programs within the Initiative achieving their goals and intended impacts?
- **Initiative Backbone:** How and to what extent is jHub serving as a backbone organization to the Initiative and creating a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts?
- **Sustainability:** How and to what extent is the community developing capacity and leadership to sustain a priority focus on Jewish teen education and engagement over time?

We used a mixed-method approach consisting of surveys and interviews of various stakeholder groups, along with reviews of grant reports and other relevant materials (Exhibit 1). Our data collection instruments drew upon those developed by the CCE team to use across communities, along with questions specific to the Denver and Boulder communities.¹ In total, we conducted 103 interviews of key stakeholders and professionals. Surveys yielded responses from 456 teens in the Denver and Boulder areas (the majority of whom participate in Initiative-funded programs), 121 parents of Jewish teens in the Denver Boulder area, and 70 professionals.

Data Collection Methods by Year

Exhibit 1

	Surveys	Interviews
Year 1 (2014–15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teens • Parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth professionals • Grantee & national staff • Community leaders & stakeholders • Funders
Year 2 (2015–16)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teens • Parents • Youth professionals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grantee & national staff • Community leaders & stakeholders • Teens • Funders • Parents
Year 3 (2016–17)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teens • Youth professionals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grantee & national staff • Community leaders & stakeholders • Board members • Funders • Parents

¹ After we launched data collection in Year 3, the CCE team finalized two additional tools that are, therefore, not incorporated into this evaluation: the Current Engagement Framework for assessing teen involvement in their Jewish communities in the past year, and outcomes and indicators for assessing a community's work with youth professionals.

This report draws on data collected over all three years of the evaluation. When we report on data for “Jewish teens,” we are referring to those teens who identified their families as either all Jewish or Jewish and something else. For a more detailed account of our methods, please see Appendix A.

We would like to acknowledge a few key limitations to this evaluation:

- The primary data sources used in this evaluation were self-reported (e.g., surveys, interviews), which may have presented some bias.
- Based on grantee feedback on the data and their experience with the teens in their programs, we suspect that the survey responses bias toward teens who are more involved and engaged with the Jewish community. We believe there may be more teens from less engaged backgrounds who did not complete the survey.
- Grantees opted to gather the data from the teens themselves through paper surveys at clubs, emails, text messages, and social media communications. The most successful method was asking teens to complete the survey during a session (either electronically or by paper), as seen in the highest number of responses being from JSC and nearly all of the teens from jHub and PTC-U completing the survey (although these are smaller programs and represent fewer teens). See Exhibit A3 in Appendix A for counts by program by year.
- For Moving Traditions, response rates were lower than desired for a program of its size and limited our ability to draw conclusions specific to this program.

This report is organized into the following chapters.

- **Engaging Jewish Teens:** First we provide a snapshot of the extent to which teens have been involved in Jewish programs and activities in Denver and Boulder, and their reflections on these experiences.
- **Individual Grantee Accomplishments:** Next, we zoom in on each grantee individually to review its accomplishments and challenges in the first three years of the Initiative.
- **Youth Professionals in Denver and Boulder:** In an effort to understand the forces behind creating more quality programming for teens, we describe the network of professionals and the supports they have sought out and used to improve their work with teens.
- **Building Community Capacity to Provide Teen Experiences:** We examine how the Initiative has affected the Denver and Boulder communities’ capacities for prioritizing Jewish programming for teens.
- **Recommendations and Lessons Learned:** Based on the evaluation findings, we offer a set of recommendations and overarching lessons learned about what it takes to engage in an ambitious investment such as the Initiative.

Engaging Jewish Teens

The Initiative seeks to address Jewish teens' low levels of participation in their local Jewish communities. According to a population study of Jewish teens in the Denver and Boulder communities conducted by American Institutes for Research (AIR) at the start of the Initiative in 2015,² approximately 11,296 Jewish teens (ages 13–18) lived in Denver and Boulder. Of those teens, 70% were likely to be disengaged from Jewish life based on low levels of participation in Bar/Bat Mitzvah experiences (75% of teens did not have one) and participation in post-Bar/Bat Mitzvah learning programs (84% of teens did not participate). To community leaders, the study validated their concerns that a large slice of the Jewish teen population had limited engagement.

The Initiative aims for its grantees to spark an increase in teen involvement directly through their own teen programs. In addition, the Initiative intends for grantees to contribute to increasing teen involvement indirectly by developing the skills and networks of Jewish youth professionals (primarily through jHub programming) and by inspiring other Jewish organizations to change how they approach teen engagement to reach more teens. Once teens participate in Jewish programs, the hope is that they have meaningful, inspiring moments that deepen their connection to Judaism and the Jewish community.

SATISFACTION WITH INITIATIVE PROGRAMS

Across the Initiative grantees, **teens—Jewish and non-Jewish—who come to grantee programs find them very enjoyable**, noting aspects of the programming and fellow participants as key contributing factors. Throughout the first three years, most teens (71%) rate the grantee programs as great.³ Based on these positive experiences, teens are very likely to participate in Jewish programs again, whether with the grantee or with other Jewish organizations (Exhibit 2). Some teens offered suggestions of how to further strengthen the programs, including greater organization, time management, and communication by program staff (19%), as well as changes to program content and activities (38%) such as being more teen-led, having more interactive activities, or offering more educational content on Israel and Judaism.⁴

Teens' Favorite Things About Grantee Programs in 2016–17 (based on comments from 219 teens)

- Making new friends, developing new connections: 40%
- Program content and activities: 24%
- Learning about Judaism, culturally or religiously: 20%
- Feeling like they're part of the Jewish community: 11%

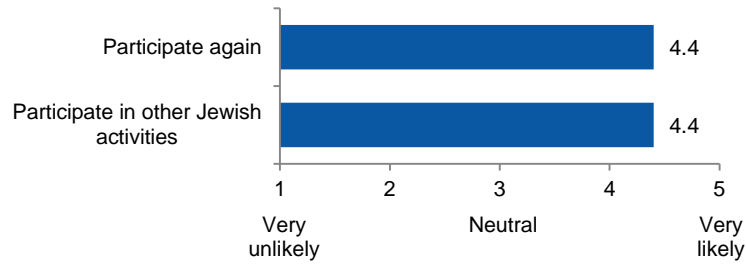
² Cohen, S. M., Greenberg, A., & Kidron, Y. (2015). *Jewish Teen Population Estimates: Denver/Boulder Metro Area*.

³ n=385 unique teens from 2015–17 who participated in grantee programs.

⁴ Based on comments from 102 teens.

Teens' experiences in programs may lead them to participate again and attend another Jewish program.

Exhibit 2 | n=371–374 unique teens from 2015–17 who participated in grantee programs



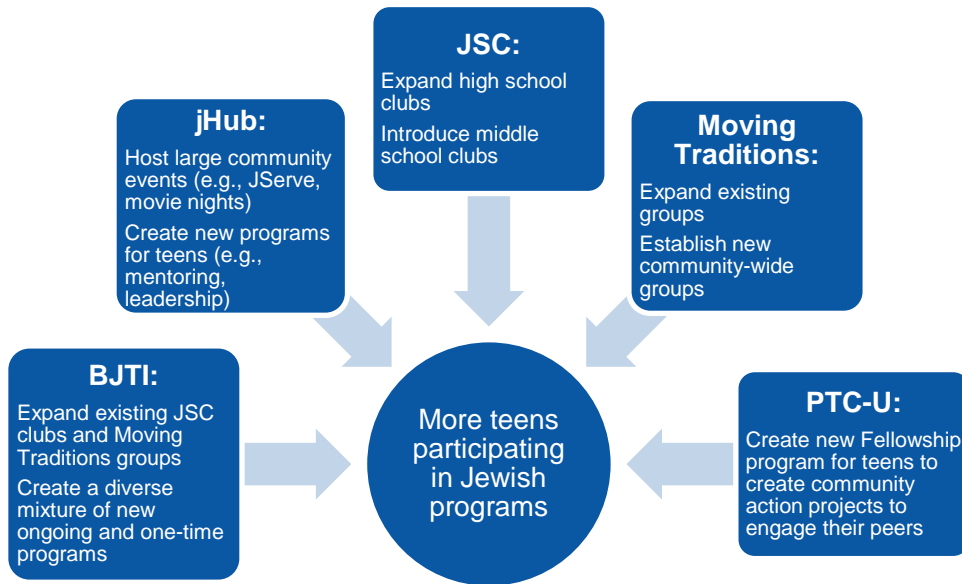
INCREASING TEEN INVOLVEMENT IN JEWISH OPPORTUNITIES

Programs Available for Teens

As the vehicles for increased teen engagement, exciting programs that appeal to the wide diversity of Jewish teens in the Denver and Boulder communities are crucial for growing the number of participating teens. **The Initiative added more and different opportunities in an effort to attract new teens while also retain existing ones** (Exhibit 3). In the first three years of the Initiative, grantees experimented with growth strategies to see what worked well, and they will apply those learnings in the Initiative’s final year (and potential renewal period) to keep expanding their offerings.

The grantees used diverse strategies for growing the overall number of teens involved in Jewish programs.

Exhibit 3



Perceptions from youth professionals and community leaders suggest that the overall landscape of programs available for Jewish teens has remained fairly stable over the past three years, with the exception of a few changes such as NCSY coming to Denver and Initiative grantees offering new programs. Community and Initiative leaders agree that there are already many options for Jewish teens’ involvement, even if these opportunities are not attracting as many teens as they hope. However, some leaders and professionals want to offer teens new, more

diverse Jewish program options. For example, several interview informants mention youth groups as being the predominant option available and acknowledge that those types of programs will not appeal to teens who are more introverted or uninterested in large, social group programming. On the other hand, some community stakeholders want to focus on how to funnel more teens into the programs that already exist. Despite these differences, community stakeholders agree on the importance of providing programs that meet teens where they are; for example, many highlight the success of JSC in meeting teens in school.

“I feel like a lot of the existing programming is youth group and not all kids are interested in youth groups. I think some of those smaller, more intensive programs are great for kids who don’t want anything to do with a youth group but want to be part of something and feel like they are making a difference.”

– Grantee

“I feel like we offer enough programs. Whether we’re offering the right programs is what I’m grappling with.”

– Community Leader

A bright spot in the early years of the Initiative has been the shift to offer teens more leadership opportunities. Leadership roles benefit both the teens who have been active in Jewish programs by providing them with chances to deepen their roles, as well as teens who have been active leaders in the secular community by giving them a way to develop and demonstrate leadership skills in a Jewish setting. Within the Initiative, four of the grantees offered teen leadership opportunities (e.g., advisory boards) and leadership skill development components of their programs (e.g., PTC-U Fellowship, jHub Fellowship, JSC club leaders). Beyond the grantees, community leaders say they have recently seen a wider variety of teens—rather than the same set of teens—getting involved in leadership.

“I think we’ve come to depend on teens. There’s been a transformation to making sure we include the voices of youth in all that we’re doing.”

– Community Leader

These teens tend to provide feedback and input on programming and decisions, and in some cases take a strong lead in event planning and recruitment (e.g., jHub Fellowship planning the Opportunity Fair). While these leadership opportunities are viewed in a generally positive light, professionals and community leaders explain that they have to overcome challenges in establishing and aligning expectations of what these teens can do, recognizing that many of them are new to the skills and responsibility that leadership requires.

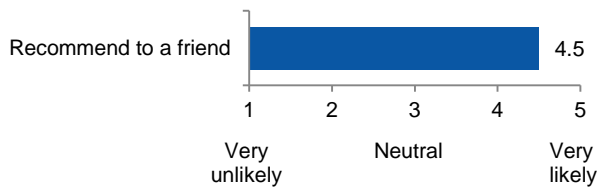
Teen Recruitment

Once programs exist, the next step is to make sure teens are aware of and interested in them. Teens say they learn about these programs mostly through other teens (75%)⁵, and Initiative grantees find that the best way to recruit teens (especially those who have not been very involved previously) is through hearing other teens talking about the program and why it is worth their time. Youth professionals leverage this recruitment technique by encouraging participants to use word-of-mouth recruitment strategies with their friends and peers, which teens seem very likely to do based on their positive experiences in these programs (Exhibit 4).

⁵ These results match results from the 2015 and 2016 surveys.

Teens are very likely to recommend grantee programs to their friends.

Exhibit 4 | n=374 unique teens from 2015–17 who participated in grantee programs



“Word of mouth has been by far the most successful.

Students hearing from their peers, their parents, have been the top ways we’ve received applications.”

– Grantee

However, grantees still also rely on recruiting teens through adults (e.g., parents, program leaders) as well as electronic strategies (e.g., social media, newsletters, websites), although fewer teens report learning about programs through these methods: only 39% of teens learn about the grantee programs through adults and only 12% from electronic sources. Parents themselves, especially of older teens, say they are not very involved in their teens’ decision making about what programs to participate in, leaving those choices to their teens. Grantees have shifted their attention and efforts to using Instagram and Snapchat, having recognized that teens prefer those social media platforms over Facebook.

These recruitment strategies have been somewhat successful: **teens and professionals believe there is more information available now about the opportunities that exist for teens.** About two thirds of teens (68%) believe they know more about Jewish activities than a year ago, and many professionals (10 of 18) say there is more information available about the programs that exist for teens. There remains, however, greater opportunity for teens to connect to programs through other programs. Many community and Initiative leaders would like to see professionals themselves more actively involved in facilitating teens’ cross-program involvement, shifting to a culture of collaboration rather than competition. Teens validated this sentiment, noting that they wish the Jewish community would better coordinate their efforts so fewer programs are in direct competition with one another for teens’ time.

While there is increased awareness of the opportunities for teens, professionals believe this has yet to generate more interest in the programs. Many professionals (11 of 16) rate interest in the programs as about the same as a year ago among teens and among parents (10 of 15), despite more information about the programs being available. This result suggests teens may be encountering barriers to participation that marketing and messaging alone cannot address (Exhibit 5).⁶ However, programs can address some of the other limitations such as helping teens find a familiar face at events by partnering with already engaged teens to bring more of their friends and creating inclusive environments that make it easier to be a first-timer.

“There’s plenty of opportunity. I think there is an invisible barrier that no one figured out quite yet which is how do you get the kids to want to be involved.”

– Board Member

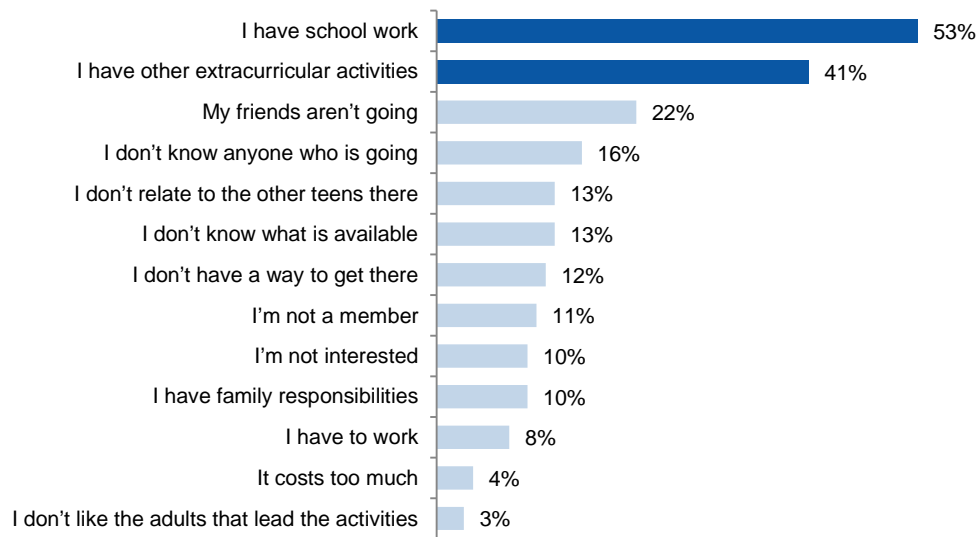
“I think the diversity and variety are out there. I don’t think that families in Boulder necessarily prioritize it outside of those who are already involved. We know there are a lot of Jewish teens out here, we know that they want to be involved in the community somehow. But in the modern Boulder generation, other things tend to win out and it’s usually other extracurricular activities.”

– Grantee

⁶ Based on teens who participated in grantee programs.

Throughout the Initiative's first three years, Jewish teens face commitments to school and other activities that limit their ability to participate in more Jewish programs.

Exhibit 5 | n=316



Profile of Initiative Teens

Besides getting more teens involved in the Jewish community, the Initiative sought to increase the diversity of teens connecting to the Jewish community, particularly reaching teens who had not previously been very (if at all) involved in programs to cultivate an engaged Jewish community of teens that is more representative of Denver and Boulder's Jewish populations. It appears the Initiative is reaching a limited number of the less involved teens. As mentioned earlier as a limitation, some of the larger grantees had lower survey response rates and may have received responses from the more involved teens and fewer from less involved backgrounds. Overall, from these teen survey respondents, many appear to have previously been involved in the Jewish community, although there are some signs of more diversity among participating Jewish teens, including those who have been less involved in the Jewish community previously. We provide highlights of the teens participating in the Initiative programs based on the survey respondents:

- ❖ **75%** of Jewish teens in the Initiative's first three years say they have **had a Bar or Bat Mitzvah ceremony**,⁷ compared to 25% of teens reported in the AIR population study.
- ❖ **33%** of Jewish teens in the Initiative's first three years say they **live in intermarried households**,⁸ compared to the 2007 Metro Denver/Boulder Jewish Community Study's finding that 46% of children live in intermarried households.
- ❖ **21%** of Jewish teens in 2017 say **their only Jewish program experience was through the Initiative programs**.⁹
- ❖ In 2017, **48%** of Jewish teens say they **are involved in Jewish activities weekly**, compared to 32% in 2016.

⁷ n=270 unique Jewish teens from 2015–17 who participated in grantee programs.

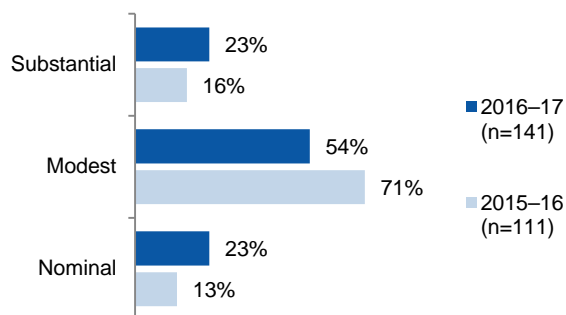
⁸ n=271 unique Jewish teens from 2015–17 who participated in grantee programs.

⁹ n=132 unique Jewish teens in 2016–17.

- ❖ In 2017, significantly more Jewish teens are from **nominal Jewish backgrounds (23%)** than in 2016 (13%) (Exhibit 6).¹⁰
- ❖ In 2017, **significantly fewer teens say they usually or always attend a Passover Seder (79%)** than in 2016 (93%).
- ❖ In 2017, Jewish teens generally **agree with the items comprising the CCE’s learning and growth factors** (Exhibit 7).
- ❖ On average, teens (Jewish and non-Jewish) are **15 years old and in the tenth grade**.¹¹

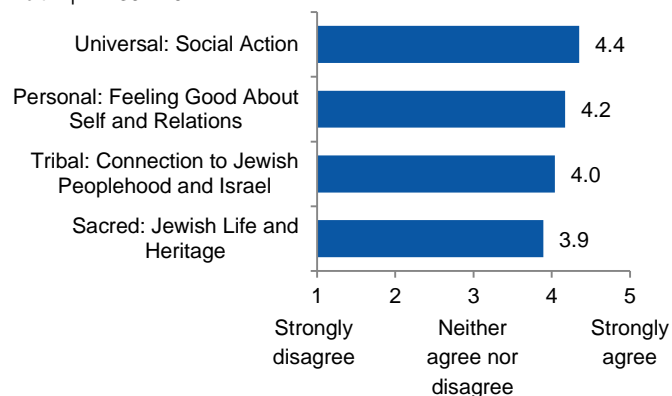
The Initiative reached more Jewish teens from nominal backgrounds in 2016–17.

Exhibit 6



Jewish teens in Denver and Boulder feel a strong sense of social action (i.e., the Universal score).

Exhibit 7 | n=139-140

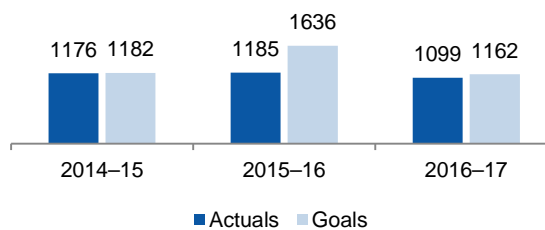


Participation in Initiative Programs

Through their first three years, Initiative grantees had some success in introducing new teens to the Jewish community and continuing to engage teens who were already fairly involved. Across the Initiative’s first three years, 66% of teens say they were first-time participants in a grantee’s program¹² and 11% of the Jewish teens say they were first-time participants in any Jewish program.¹³ However, progress in recruiting teens, let alone those who are new to grantees’ programs or Jewish life in general, has been slow; each grantee experienced setbacks (described in more detail later in this report) that hindered progress toward their goals (Exhibit 8).¹⁴ Nonetheless, some grantees reached their goals within a year and some grantees attracted a growing number of teens each year, showing some early signs of progress and possibility with these programs. Overall, grantees succeeded in impacting how many Jewish teens participated in the Denver and Boulder Jewish communities.

Grantees fell short of their teen enrollment goals throughout the Initiative.

Exhibit 8 | n=5 grantees | Teens served by Initiative grantees (duplicated count)



¹⁰ Based on scoring of the Background Classification Framework developed by the CCE team (Appendix B provides more information).

¹¹ n=416 unique teens in the first three years of the Initiative, including Jewish and non-Jewish teens who participated in grantee programs, for both age and grade.

¹² n=287 unique teens from 2015–17, including Jewish and non-Jewish teens who participated in grantee programs.

¹³ n=206 unique Jewish teens from 2015–17 who participated in grantee programs.

¹⁴ Grantees modified their targets for each year. With jHub, no targets were set for large community events such as JServe and movie nights in Years 1 and 2, so the target reported includes jHub’s target for the teen programs plus the actual counts for the community events.

IMPACTING TEEN JEWISH GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

Consistently across the Initiative’s three years and various programs, **teens enjoy their Initiative experiences, and many derive positive outcomes in their lives from Initiative programs.** Many Jewish teens report increases in the Initiative’s outcome areas (grouped by factors developed by the CCE) because of participating in 2016–17 grantee programs (Exhibit 9).¹⁵

Most Jewish teens participating in Initiative programs report increases in connections to Judaism and the Jewish communities.

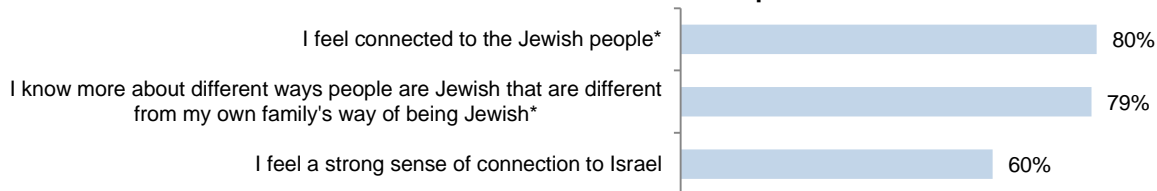
Exhibit 9 | n=130–134 | Percentage of teens reporting they increased because of participating in Initiative programs

* This outcome is specific to the Denver Boulder Jewish Teen Education and Engagement Initiative. We placed it within the CCE factor that seems most relevant.

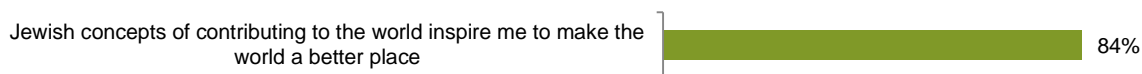
Personal: Feeling Good about Self and Relations



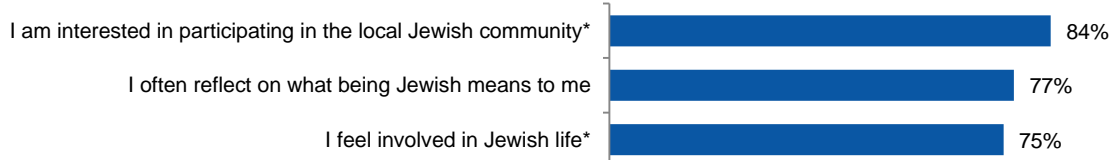
Tribal: Connection to Jewish Peoplehood and Israel



Universal: Social Action



Sacred: Jewish Life and Heritage



¹⁵ Direct comparisons to 2014–15 and 2015–16 are not possible due to changes in how questions about Jewish learning and growth outcomes were asked. In general, teens responded positively in the first two years, and a pattern was established that the majority of teens experienced the Jewish growth and learning that the Initiative leaders and grantees desire.

With 84% of teens indicating they have an increased interest in participating in the local community, this is an encouraging sign that the Initiative programs are successfully growing teen interest in engaging with the Jewish community. Most teens (84%) also say that the Initiative programming instilled in them Jewish values for making the world a better place. In addition to the Jewish learning and growth outcomes, parents and board members connected to the Initiative programs describe many teens becoming more self-confident and developing leadership skills and a greater sense of responsibility.

Parents of teens who come from more religious households or have been attending day school say Initiative programs provide their teens with less of a Jewish influence and more opportunities to have fun and socialize. However, other parents have seen their teens develop deeper connections to Judaism and new interest in Jewish life and Israel. Initiative programs expose teens to different types of Judaism beyond what is practiced in their households, and 79% report learning more about different types of Jewish practice through the grantee programs. Parents across the board see this as one of the programs' greatest benefits.

“[The grantee program] has made my son more aware of his Judaism and made him more proud of sharing it with his non-Jewish friends.”

– Parent

Non-Jewish Teens' Experiences*

About a quarter (28%) of the teens surveyed say their families are not Jewish, and nearly all of these teens are JSC participants. JSC attracts many non-Jewish teens who want to spend time with their friends during lunch and participate in the club.

Even these non-Jewish teens report having a greater interest in learning more about Jewish life (90%), feeling more connected to the Jewish people (87%), being more interested in participating in the Jewish community (78%), and feeling inspired by Jewish values (77%).

Providing meaningful opportunities for Jewish teens to learn with their non-Jewish friends about Jewish life creates the inclusive environment that many teens seek in programs they choose to participate in. Notably, fewer than 25% of the Jewish teens say that most or all of their closest friends are Jewish, showing that much of their social circle is composed of non-Jewish friends.

* Results are for teens surveyed in the Initiative's first three years who participated in grantee programs.

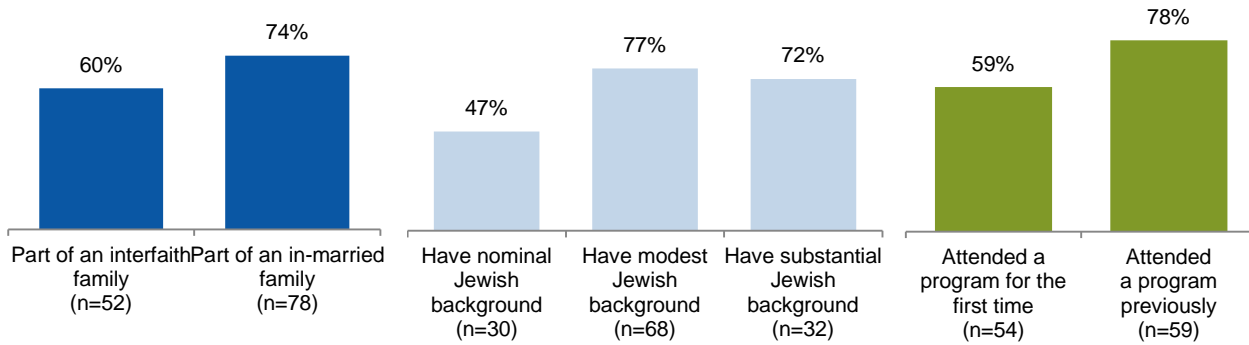
“Her interests are more going towards Israel, so she seems more aware to the news and to how it affects Israel, which before she didn't really think or care about that.”

– Parent

More highly engaged teens tend to have closer interactions and connections with Jewish youth professionals than other teens, and in particular the less engaged teens targeted by the Initiative (Exhibit 10). This tendency likely reflects a combination of the more engaged teens feeling more comfortable reaching out and bonding with the staff, as well as staff tending to focus on the teens they see more often; teens who say they attend events with more frequency are more likely to have close supportive relationships than those with less frequent attendance. These trends are expected and emphasize the importance of youth professionals being intentional in building relationships with newcomers to their programs and the Jewish community.

Teens from more Jewishly engaged backgrounds are more likely to have close, supportive relationships with staff.

Exhibit 10 | Percentage of 2016–17 teens reporting increases in having close, supportive relationships because of participation in grantee programs



Individual Grantee Accomplishments

The five Initiative grantees have all experienced successes in their work during the first three years, while overcoming significant organizational changes and challenges. At the same time, the grantees have also fallen short in their goals for program growth and progress toward sustainability, largely due to those same changes and challenges. Grantees' Year 4 plans as well as proposals for renewal funding are informed by their learning from the first three years; their strategies aim to address their challenges to reach more teens in a financially sustainable way.

BOULDER JEWISH TEEN INITIATIVE (BJTI)

BJTI began as a new program funded by the Initiative based on Boulder community leaders' interest in having a centralized hub of teen programming. At the time, few organizations in the community were offering teen programs, so community leaders hoped that BJTI could both offer a diverse range of teen programming and serve as an information source for the community about opportunities for teens. BJTI also works with families who are new to the community to introduce them to Jewish organizations and programs for teens; supports other professionals in developing their teen engagement skills; and convenes community leaders to establish community support and goals for Jewish teen engagement.

Through the Initiative, BJTI has served a growing number of teens (from 63 in Year 1 to 203 in Year 3) through ongoing programs (e.g., JSC clubs, Moving Traditions groups) and one-time events and community programs. Of note in Year 3, BJTI launched the NaviG8 program for nine teens in eighth grade, and found the pilot to be very successful in introducing these teens to other opportunities available for them (including leadership roles) with the goal of stemming drop-out following teens' Bar and Bat Mitzvah ceremonies. BJTI will continue the program in Year 4, hoping to expand to include more teens due to increased interest from families. The BJTI executive director has also served as a coach for multiple PTC-U participants from Boulder.

While reaching more teens each year, BJTI fell short of its teen recruitment goals. To attract more diverse teens (especially those who have not previously participated in programming), BJTI has experimented with different types of programming, varying how frequently programming occurs and how in-depth the content is, but has struggled to establish critical masses of teens at these programs. The programming has shifted from more

BJTI Highlights

In the first 3 years:

- Served 278 unique teens
- Fundraised \$1,835
- Ran 4 JSC clubs, 3 Moving Traditions groups, NaviG8, a Teen Advisory Board, and approximately 59 other events for teens

In Year 3:

- Reached 338 newsletter subscribers (31% open rate) and 1,771 website visitors

innovative to more traditional with these changes, with more focus on preventing drop-out after teens' Bar and Bat Mitzvah ceremonies.

Fundraising has been a difficult process for the organization and BJTI has fallen well below its goals for the Initiative. Through the first three years of the Initiative, BJTI raised \$1,835 against a goal of \$58,750. BJTI describes challenges of "donor drain" in Boulder due to other large fundraising efforts in recent years as well as potential donors perceiving the funding from the Initiative as sufficient for the program. There was also some miscommunication between the Initiative funders and BJTI regarding when to begin using a fundraising consultant in Year 3, which set the organization back for the year. In Year 4, fundraising is a major focus, with BJTI recognizing the need to raise \$100,000 and splitting fundraising responsibilities equally between BJTI (specifically the executive director) and the three members of the BJTI Steering Committee.

As BJTI moves into the future, it recognizes the need to elevate its director into an executive director role, focusing more on the organizational and community support activities, and with a smaller role in direct teen service programming. The teen programs will be led by the program director supported with high school and college interns.

jHUB

Among the key successes for jHub in the early years has been enabling professionals to connect with one another more frequently, building a network of youth professionals. Among the professionals surveyed in Year 3 who were involved in the nascent group of youth professionals that preceded jHub, six of seven believe it is better now with a director overseeing the group. They mention benefits such as having more structure and organization, having more professional development opportunities, and alleviating the need for professionals themselves to be organizing these activities.

However, jHub's ambitious workplan to serve as the Initiative's backbone has been hindered by failed assumptions, governance shortfalls, and organizational changes. jHub began with the assumption that youth professionals would continue to be involved and serve on committees to advance the work. Instead the professionals deferred the organizational work to the director, limiting what the organization has been able to accomplish in the first three years. Furthermore, the Steering Committee tasked with helping guide jHub's work and spearheading community-wide commitment to teen programs had limited effectiveness due to turnover and group dynamics. In addition, initially housed within Colorado Agency for Jewish Education (CAJE), jHub shifted fiscal sponsorship to JEWISHcolorado when it merged with CAJE in August 2016, requiring staff attention to this unexpected organizational shift.

Although jHub has offered multiple professional development opportunities through the years, it is unclear how much these offerings have improved youth professionals' skills. Nearly half (42%) of professionals say that participating in jHub has not impacted how they engage with teens. All of the professionals who say it has greatly impacted how they work with teens are Initiative grantees and may have had a different experience with jHub as compared with other professionals in Denver and Boulder. A challenge has been to offer trainings that either have a broader appeal among professionals or are more targeted to specific types of professionals (e.g., those newer to the field, those needing to develop more advanced management skills).

jHub Highlights

In the first 3 years:

- Served 676 unique teens, mostly through large community events (e.g., JServe, movie nights) and small cohort programs
- Supported 91 professionals (including those working with teens and those working with other populations) through jHub meetings, professional development trainings, and informal mentoring
- Held 16 professional development sessions

In Year 3:

- Reached 932 newsletter subscribers (25% open rate) and 2,000 website visitors

jHub has also offered a couple of programs for teens each year of the Initiative, some of which have struggled to attract teens and provide engaging experiences for them. In Year 1, jHub offered a mentorship program that drew only seven teens and ended after an unsuccessful pilot year. More recently in Year 3, the Fellows program worked actively together to put on the Opportunity Fair in January 2017, but their efforts fizzled out afterward when they no longer had a goal to work toward.

In the Initiative's first three years, jHub spent time and energy developing a database or count of the unique Jewish teens participating in programs, events, and activities in the community. This work encountered many obstacles, with pushback from organizations not wanting to share their information, concerns about protecting the information once collected, and concerns about how the information would be used. In Year 3, jHub addressed these challenges by shifting away from a central teen data tracking process to partnering with the CCE team to gather a point-in-time snapshot to establish a 2015–16 baseline count for unique teen participants.

The future of jHub looks uncertain, as its current fiscal sponsor may not continue to host jHub; jHub will face severe challenges trying to fundraise on its own (which has not been part of the current workplan), as it would be competing with its own members. It plans to continue its efforts from the early years of the Initiative to support professionals and provide a few teen programs. jHub also plans to delve more deeply into understanding teen engagement in the community and developing community-wide marketing and outreach plans.

JEWISH STUDENT CONNECTION (JSC)

JSC began as arguably the strongest existing organization in the Initiative, with an area director in place since November 2010 and a national infrastructure supporting the work. Through the Initiative, JSC estimates reaching 969 unique teens, through high school clubs around the Denver area, with a peak of 502 teens served in Year 3. The Initiative allowed JSC to hire additional educator advisors for reaching more schools and clubs as well as making time for the director to focus on organizational oversight and fundraising. The new staff members do require additional training and support from the director, as they are often working in their first professional jobs. However, JSC was successful with its fundraising (earning \$257,224 against its goal of \$251,600 through the first three years) due in part to the additional organizational oversight time afforded to the director by hiring additional staff. A key challenge though of Year 3 was the deficit the organization ran, showing it may need additional assistance with budget management.

JSC Highlights

In the first 3 years:

- Served 969 unique teens including many non-Jewish teens eager to learn about Judaism and Israel
- Expanded from 5 high schools to 11
- Fundraised \$257,224

In Year 2, the JSC national office closed, creating concern about the future of the program in the Denver area. The Initiative funders stepped in to save the program and provide the funding and support it needed to transition to being a project fiscally sponsored by CAJE. Similar to jHub, JSC again faced a fiscal sponsorship shift when CAJE merged with JEWISHcolorado. As JSC approached Year 4, it faced a decision regarding its future to remain housed within JEWISHcolorado or strike out as its own 501(c)(3) organization, with both options presenting benefits and challenges. JSC chose to become a program of JEWISHcolorado, benefitting from the supports (financial and non-financial) it offers.

JSC's greatest success in the Initiative is growing its presence in high schools in Denver through adding six new schools and expanding the students participating within schools. Another goal of the Initiative was to expand into middle schools, which has been challenging for JSC. Similar to other grantees, JSC hopes that more middle schoolers can become involved with the organization and prioritize it as they enter high school and the diverse and numerous opportunities it offers teens. Other organizations and community leaders in Denver and Boulder see JSC's presence in the schools as a key element of its success to reach the teens who have not been involved (or

only slightly involved) in other Jewish programming; these other organizations often reach out to JSC to connect those teens to their own programs.

MOVING TRADITIONS

Moving Traditions began the Initiative on a very strong footing with the hiring of its first full-time director in Colorado.

However, personal issues forced the director to resign from her role in June 2016 after being on leave for a few months, leaving an interim director in place while the national office searched for a replacement. In January 2017, a new director was hired with experience in the Denver and Boulder communities and a strong background in fund development, which the program cites as the main success of Year 3 in the Initiative.

Moving Traditions Highlights

In the first 3 years:

- Served 270 unique teens
- Ran 60 groups
- Held a National Training Conference at the University of Denver (June 2016)
- Fundraised \$77,832

An ongoing difficulty through the Initiative has been to accurately understand Moving Traditions' presence in the Denver and Boulder communities. During Year 1, Moving Traditions uncovered that it had fewer existing institutional partners and groups than was understood when the Initiative began. With the arrival of the new director in mid-Year 3, Moving Traditions again learned that some institutional partners and groups had ceased operating. Furthermore, Moving Traditions currently can provide only an estimate of the number of teens in each group (nine teens) rather than the actual counts. These difficulties have all combined to limit the extent to which Moving Traditions has achieved its growth targets through the Initiative. Moving Traditions anticipates gaining a better understanding of its current presence in fall 2017.

In addition to growing Moving Traditions' institutional programming, the Initiative made possible the opportunity to experiment with a new community group model to reach teens who are not affiliated with synagogues or other institutional partners. The director established a community group in Year 1 that sustained itself through the first three years of the Initiative; however, it had been hoped that more groups would exist by the start of Year 4. Moving Traditions' leaders feel these programs have required more time and effort to establish, needing more involvement by parents than the traditional groups.

Moving Traditions is also now rolling out a new model nationally that re-establishes its relationship with the institutional partners. A few highlights of the new model include dual registration with the institution and Moving Traditions (providing Moving Traditions with direct contact information for group members and more exact counts of participants), more regular curriculum updates, and an annual fee for partners. Specifically in Denver and Boulder, Moving Traditions will be rebooting its goals from the first three years after having developed a better understanding of its presence in the communities.

PRESENTENSE COLORADO – A PROGRAM OF UPSTART (PTC-U)

PTC-U began a new iteration of its Fellowship program in Denver and Boulder through the Initiative funding, modifying the existing curriculum and structure for adults into a teen-friendly model and continuing to refine it each year with guidance from the Initiative and, beginning in Year 3, from Upstart. Through the merger with Upstart, PTC-U has received much more organizational support and expertise to transition the program to its next life stage. The other major accomplishment PTC-U staff point to during the first three years of the Initiative is the development of a large network of support and presence in the Denver and Boulder communities. The director accomplished this primarily through one-on-one conversations with community leaders, parents, and teens.

PTC-U has run two cohorts of the Fellowship, with more applicants and Fellows in Year 2. It has a small, cohort-style program design with 12–16 Fellows each year (a goal is to grow to 20 in 2017–18) along with a few teens (mostly program alumni) serving on an advisory board. Fellows then engage their peers in their project development, such as by participating in empathy interviews to design the project, piloting the project, and participating in project implementation. PTC-U continues to seek ways to engage more of the broader teen community. In Year 2, the 12 Fellows involved 4 teens in their work, growing in Year 3 to 16 Fellows involving 74 other teens.¹⁶ As PTC-U proceeds with its third cohort of Fellows in Year 4, it brings a revamped program design through the merger with Upstart, with the goals of weaving Jewish values and connections more into programming; providing more opportunities for teens to develop, test, and implement their projects within the Fellowship time frame; and engaging more teens from the wider community in programming. For example, in previous years Fellows generally only developed their prototypes during the Fellowship, but in the new model, they will move on to implement and test the prototypes with their peers and share those learnings in the culminating showcase. Furthermore, an overarching Jewish value will guide the projects and program for each year. To help with the program's ongoing financial sustainability, Fellows will be asked to pay a fee for participating in the program (with financial aid assistance available) and will learn fundraising skills rather than receive a microgrant to fund their work.

PTC-U Highlights

In the first 3 years:

- Served 130 unique teens, including 28 Fellows in 2 cohorts
- Received 49 applications for the first 2 Fellows cohorts
- Recruited 11 adults in Year 2 and 24 in Year 3 to engage with teens as coaches, trainers, and subject matter experts
- Fundraised \$105,687

In Year 3:

- Reached 736 newsletter subscribers (36% open rate) and a monthly average of 370 website visitors
- Provided 4 workshops for teens and professionals in the community outside of PTC-U

SUPPORTS FOR GRANTEES

Unlike the other communities participating in the Funder Collaborative, the Initiative invested in five “big bets,” mostly operating independently. There was no centralized infrastructure for the Initiative beyond grant oversight provided largely by Rose Community Foundation staff, the local funder. To a degree, Rose Community Foundation stepped into this role to convene the grantees quarterly and provide guidance on their individual work throughout the year, including extensive review and feedback on semi-annual progress reports.

The Initiative began with three grantees in start-up mode (BJTI, PTC-U, and jHub); for the two existing programs (JSC and Moving Traditions), the organizational challenges they experienced also shifted them somewhat into start-up mode in Year 2. Start-up organizations can benefit greatly from extensive supports, such as regular coaching or mentoring and training for staff on both program implementation and organizational development, as

¹⁶ The initial goal was to reach 150 teens; this was modified to 45 teens midway through Year 3. These are potentially duplicated counts across the Fellows.

they establish and scale their programs. However, the Initiative was not designed with these supports, and national organizations (JSC, Moving Traditions, PresenTense) in some cases did not provide it as needed. As the grantees enter Year 4, they have all found institutional homes that provide them with more of these backings.

Another common challenge for the grantees has been operating with minimal staff, in some cases only one person. These “one-person shops” place exceptional burdens on the staff member to excel in all areas (e.g., program development and implementation, fundraising, operations and management), but in most cases, it is very unlikely for an individual person to be strong across all these areas. For these grantees, most are stronger in their programmatic rather than operational skills, and would benefit from additional support on how to navigate these two roles as well as strengthen their operational leadership skills. Proficiency in operational skills is important for leaders of start-up and expanding organizations who need to grow their program’s donor bases and position their programs for sustainability.

As expected, the grantees note the Initiative funding was the key factor in allowing them to establish their programs. Beyond that, they also found the cohort nature of the Initiative to be very helpful for sharing ideas with and providing support to one another. BJTI and jHub directors were also more directly involved with the Funder Collaborative, an experience they cite as very useful for learning about efforts in the other communities. One possible support for the future or for other new communities that grantees raised is legal consulting, particularly for guidance on policies for working with teens.

During Year 3, the funders connected four of the grantees with a local consultant to help them develop strategic business plans. This was a new experience for the grantees—both creating a strategic plan and working on it with a consultant. They were pushed to really embrace the executive director role and consider a detailed plan for their programs’ futures. The grantees did create solid plans, but they also described multiple challenges in the process, such as having difficulties coordinating with the consultant, wanting more structure in the work, and feeling a lack of clarity about how directive the consultant’s guidance was.

A major support the grantees received was the evaluation efforts conducted at the national and local levels. These evaluations were intended to provide grantees with information about their programs specifically, how the combined Initiative’s efforts were resulting in broader changes in Denver and Boulder, and how their programs contributed to the national goals of increasing Jewish teen engagement. With so many purposes, the evaluation activities were extensive and to some degree burdensome for the grantees to monitor their programming at a detailed level and gather survey responses from large portions of their teens. The grantees struggled to fulfill these requirements due to capacity and skill limitations, so they will be receiving additional technical assistance in Year 4 to prepare for ongoing evaluation efforts.

Youth Professionals in Denver & Boulder

The Initiative invested in jHub to convene, train, and support youth professionals to better serve teens. Youth professionals had the opportunity to attend meetings, additional trainings, and workshops to network with other youth professionals and learn how to successfully engage teens in programming.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Denver and Boulder area youth professionals appear to be accessing more professional development opportunities outside of the Initiative than within it, continuing a similar pattern observed in previous years. Close to half (48%) of professionals say they receive professional development on the job or internally through their organizations, and more than one third (38%) report they receive professional development through coaching or mentoring from other Jewish professionals. A similar percentage of youth professionals in 2016 also reported that they received professional development through coaching or mentoring (42%), and 2015 findings also showed that youth professionals tended to turn to professional development opportunities offered through their organizations rather than the Initiative.

Professionals fell into three groups (see box) based on their academic and professional backgrounds. These disparities in professionals' backgrounds create different needs and wants for professional development. During interviews, a few stakeholders mentioned that the Initiative must work to provide opportunities that better match professionals' skills, or offer opportunities that are applicable across the spectrum of skill levels and job descriptions. Findings from the 2015 evaluation show similar struggles with professional development. Even though jHub hosted three well-attended professional development training sessions in 2015, some youth professionals reported that the information presented was not advanced enough to help them take their skills to the next level. Other reasons professionals do not attend training sessions include not having time to participate (41%) and having conflicting commitments (48%).

Denver Boulder Area Professionals

38% are early-career professionals

- Have a bachelor's degree and two years or fewer of experience in their current role

35% are mid-career professionals

- Have an advanced degree and up to three years' experience in their current role

28% are late-career professionals

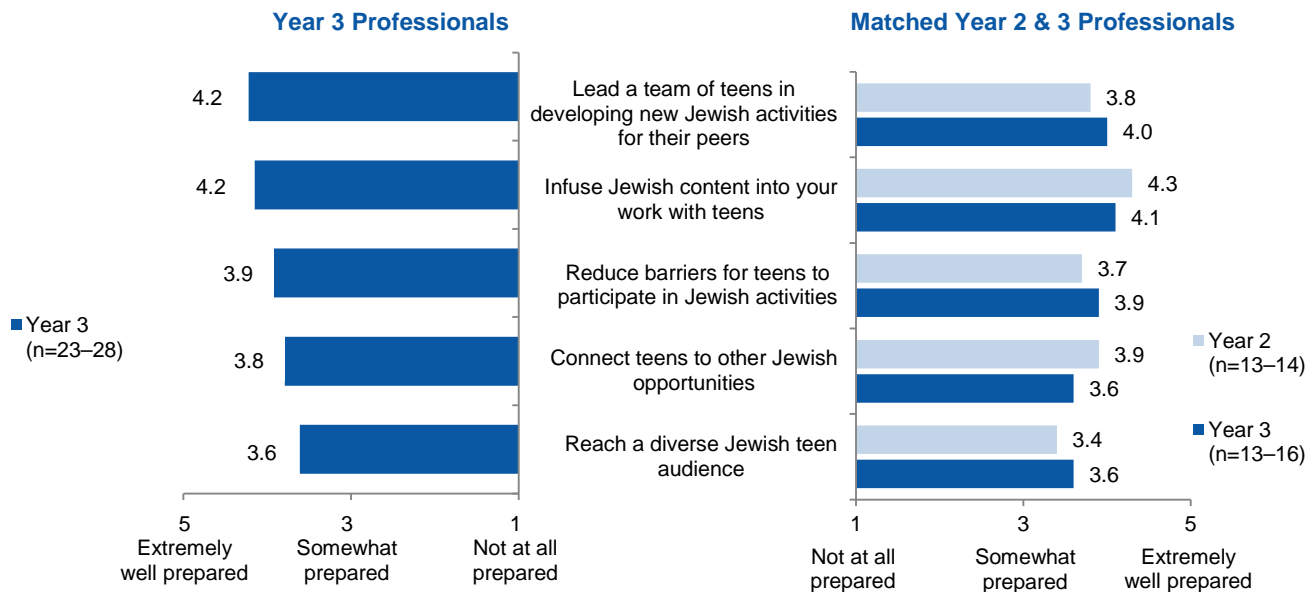
- Have a higher level degree (doctorate or rabbinate/cantorate), or more than four years' experience working with Jewish teens or in their current role

PROFESSIONALS' STRENGTHS & AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Most professionals continue to feel prepared to work with teens and connect them to Jewish opportunities. The majority of professionals participating in 2016–17 feel prepared to lead teens in developing new Jewish activities, infuse Jewish content into their work with teens, reduce barriers to participation in Jewish activities, and connect teens to other Jewish opportunities (Exhibit 11). Looking at the data closely, professionals who participated in both Years 2 and 3 continue to feel prepared in these areas with no statistical differences in their ratings.

Professionals feel prepared to reach diverse teens and provide them with a meaningful Jewish program experience.

Exhibit 11 | Extent to which youth professionals feel prepared to...



However, professionals feel less prepared to support their programs' finances than to work with teens. About one third of professionals do not feel prepared to seek additional funding for their program. Although youth professionals report feeling more prepared to seek funding for their program in Year 3 compared with Year 2, their average rating is lower than in other areas. A few stakeholders, including one professional, also mentioned fundraising as an area for professional development among the youth professionals in their interviews this year.

“I think there needs to be some training in terms of how do you run a nonprofit while still being able to serve teens. They need to be able to raise money to make sure that they’re sustaining themselves. They need to be able to have relationships with parents so that parents feel comfortable that they’re turning their kids over to some program and that it’s going to be a safe environment for them to be in.”

– Community Leader

Areas of Strength

Youth professionals were asked to rate their skill levels against the 22 indicators of teen development from Jewish teen programs developed for the larger CCE work. These data give us a better understanding of the areas where youth professionals feel they can support teen development and the areas where they themselves need more support.

Youth professionals generally feel confident in their abilities to support teens' personal development. For example, all youth professionals feel skilled in helping teens have close conversations with counselors or other staff, and professionals know how to help teens feel good about participating in and making friends at Jewish activities (Exhibit 12). In general, youth professionals who have been in the field for longer are more confident than their early- or mid-career peers are about their ability to help teens connect to Judaism, presenting an opportunity for experienced staff to share their knowledge and skills with others and for targeted professional development opportunities for those newer to the field. In particular, all late-career professionals indicated that they are skilled in stoking teens' excitement for learning more about Jewish life.

Most youth professionals feel confident supporting teens with their personal development.

Exhibit 12 | n=25–28 | Percentage of professionals reporting they feel fairly well or extremely skilled



Areas for Additional Support

Of the 22 indicators of teen development that professionals were asked about, making Jewish programming compelling to teens is an area where they indicate needing additional support: one quarter (27%, some from each career level—early, mid, and late) report that they need some professional development to help make Jewish programs and events one of teens' favorite activities. Additionally, one third of professionals (33%, all early- or mid-career) report that they need some professional development in helping teens feel excited about learning more about Jewish life.

“I think we need to continue engaging Jewishly, whether it’s studying or some classes, that Jewish needle always has to be moving and that we can’t expect to engage and inspire the kids if we’re flat. I think one of the problems we find is that our professionals working with teens don’t necessarily do that and might not have the strongest Jewish backgrounds.”

– Grantee

Compared with indicators of teen development, more professionals need support helping teens connect to and express their Judaism. Denver and Boulder youth professionals need support encouraging teens to learn more about Judaism. Some need more professional development in supporting teens' conversations about Israel or Jewish life; others need support in sparking teens' interest and getting them to engage with these conversations in the first place. With professionals from all three career stages indicating opportunity for growth in this area, sparking and sustaining teens' interest in and conversations about Jewish life and Israel is a useful topic area for further professional development. One stakeholder echoed this need during interviews, noting that even though youth professionals may come from Jewish backgrounds (89% identified as Jewish, and the remaining 11% identified as culturally Jewish),

trainings and workshops should be provided to add to their knowledge. One third (34%) of professionals also report that they do not feel fully equipped to help teens spend time with their families around the Jewish holidays, and slightly more than one quarter (29%) need support helping teens make Shabbat feel different from the rest of the week (Exhibit 13). Some professionals, however, did note that helping teens connect with their families or make Shabbat feel different is not part of their role as a youth professional.

Although many youth professionals feel confident connecting teens to Judaism, there is room for improvement.

Exhibit 13 | n=17-27 | Percentage of professionals reporting they need professional development

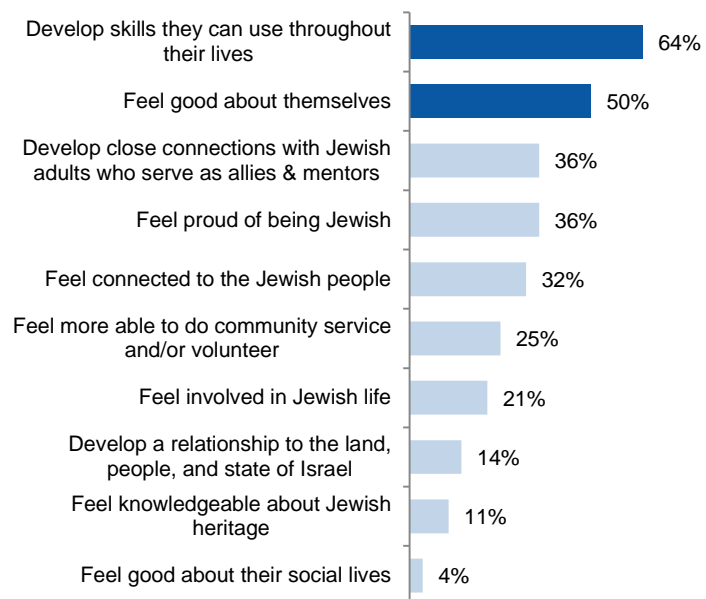


PRIORITIES IN WORKING WITH TEENS

Professionals working with Jewish teens in the community want to help teens develop themselves as individuals. Two thirds (64%) of youth professionals say one of their top goals is to help teens develop skills they can use throughout their lives, and half (50%) want to help teens feel good about themselves (Exhibit 14). These were also the top goals selected in Year 2, and overall there were no meaningful changes in professionals' ratings of their top goals from Year 2 to Year 3. One area of difference, however, is that significantly more professionals in Year 2 said one of their top goals was to help teens feel proud of being Jewish (44%) compared with Year 3 (36%). Although many professionals say their goals have not changed over the last year, one professional describes shifting goals for the teens she works with in response to recent events taking place across the country that have affected the Jewish community.

Youth professionals prioritize developing teens as strong individuals first, then as Jewish teens.

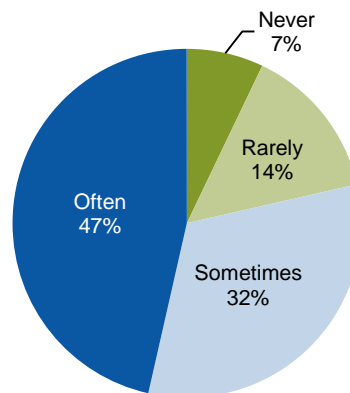
Exhibit 14 | n=28 | Percentage of professionals who say they can support teens



Last year, evaluation findings showed that although parents valued one-on-one relationships with adults for their teens, neither teens nor professionals placed high priority on this area. Data from this year's survey of professionals show a similar trend, with only about one third (36%) of youth professionals reporting that one of their top priorities is helping teens develop close connections with Jewish adults. Interestingly, when asked if they provide one-on-one mentoring to teens, the majority of professionals say they do (Exhibit 15). It appears that although only a small group of professionals intentionally focuses on building individual relationships with teens, many more actively foster these relationships themselves.

The majority of professionals provide one-on-one mentoring to teens

Exhibit 15 | n=28

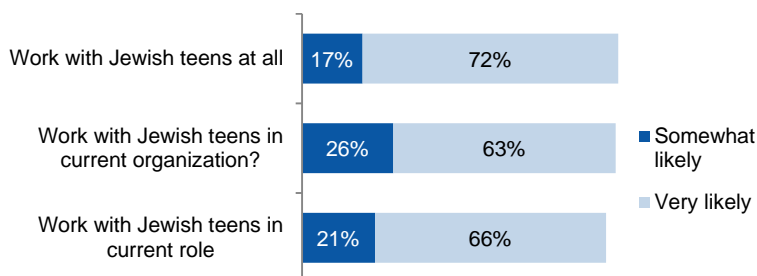


COMMITMENT TO THE WORK

Youth professionals are committed to their work with teens, at least in the short term. On average, youth professionals in Denver and Boulder have been working with Jewish teens for five years and in their current positions for three years, and almost all professionals believe they will still be working with Jewish teens in their current role (66%) in the next two years (Exhibit 16). A similar percentage believe that they will still be working with Jewish teens in their current organization (63%), and the overwhelming majority of youth professionals believe they will still be working with Jewish teens in any capacity in the next two years (72%). These findings reflect youth professionals' sentiments in 2016, with similar numbers of youth professionals expressing their commitment to the Jewish education field in the near future.¹⁷

Youth professionals are committed to continuing their work with Jewish teens in the near future.

Exhibit 16 | n=27-29 | Over the next two years, how likely professionals are to...



However, youth professionals' long-term career goals are less certain. Findings from the Year 1 evaluation report showed that although some professionals were working toward higher-level management and leadership positions within Jewish organizations, others did not have clear goals to advance their careers in the Jewish education field. Youth professionals responding to the Year 2 survey shared the same uncertainty about their long-term goals. Some professionals noted they were re-evaluating their current positions or preparing to move into other positions outside of the Jewish sector. During interviews in Year 3, one stakeholder echoed these concerns, saying the Initiative needs to focus on preventing burnout to increase retention.

Generally, early- and mid-career youth professionals in the Jewish education field value supervision as an important factor in their decision to remain in the field. In the Denver and Boulder region, almost one third of professionals are dissatisfied with the supervision they receive in their work with Jewish teens, representing early-career and mid-career professionals, all from different organizations in the community; no late-career professionals reported dissatisfaction with supervision in their work with Jewish teens. If increasing retention

¹⁷ This trend is consistent at both the cohort level of all professionals completing the surveys in 2016 and 2017 as well as the individual level when we match responses from professionals who completed the surveys in both 2016 and 2017.

rates in the community is a priority, the Initiative should consider working with local organizations and youth professionals to understand what the professionals need from supervision and how organizations can provide this support.

Compensation is also an important factor for youth professionals who are considering their career options. Most professionals report they are working full-time in one organization (87%), almost double the percentage who reported they were working full-time in 2016 (46%). Providing full-time positions to youth professionals is an important step toward improving staff retention rates as well as increasing capacity to support teen programming in the community.

As the Initiative looks to strengthen the community of youth professionals in the Denver Boulder area, retention will be an important issue. Future evaluations should explore this topic further to provide more clarity concerning the disconnect between youth professionals' intentions and the staff turnover that grantees and local community leaders talk about in the Denver and Boulder communities.

“Every one of these Jewish youth professionals goes into it for all the right reasons. They believe in it and so I think we just need the ‘how can we keep them there?’ How can we help them with professional development and how can we help them so that they don’t burn out?”

– Board Member

Building Community Capacity to Provide Teen Experiences

The Initiative began in a community where there is some history of collaboration, such as youth professionals convening to provide guidance into what became jHub, yet also history of organizations working in silos. Although not the highest priority goal of the Initiative, it intended to formalize the network of youth professionals and continue to foster collaboration to further elevate Jewish teen engagement as a priority (for both fundraising and programming) in the community. This work primarily fell within jHub’s scope to be the community convener and develop strategies for collaboration.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATION & NETWORKING

From the first year of the Initiative to the third, Initiative grantees demonstrated excitement and cooperation in working with one another. However, that partnership has not inspired other community professionals in a cohesive way. Throughout the course of the Initiative, grantees shared introductions to teens and parents, engaged in cross-program promotion and recruitment, and learned with one another. They participated in one another’s programs and events, and co-hosted/co-branded a small number of events. Grantees, stakeholders, and Initiative funders recognize this camaraderie among the grantees and speak of it positively, as it provided support and a positive environment for the grantees’ work. The partnerships are marked by the characteristics of a coordinated group, rather than a group working in coalition or collaboration (Exhibit 17). Grantees’ work together has not risen to serve the wider community of teens in the Denver and Boulder communities. Instead, the focus remains on supporting the quality and success of individual programs.

Five Levels of Collaboration & Their Characteristics¹⁸

Exhibit 17

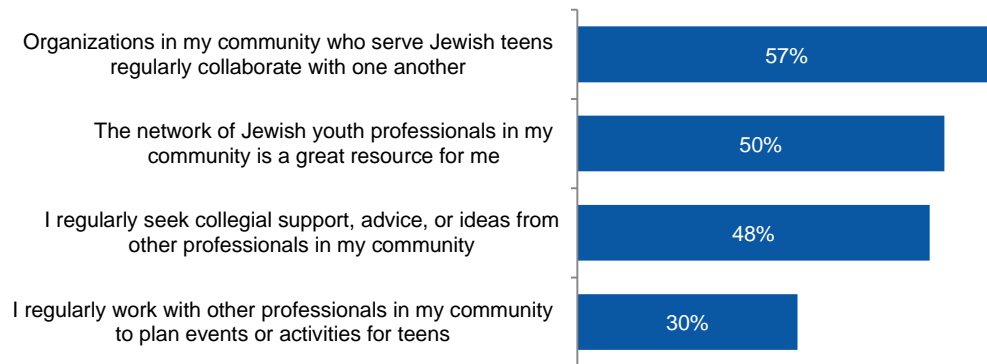
Level 1: Networking	Level 2: Cooperation	Level 3: Coordination	Level 4: Coalition	Level 5: Collaboration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aware of organization Loosely defined roles Little communication All decisions are made independently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide information to one another Somewhat defined roles Formal communication All decisions are made independently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share information and resources Defined roles Frequent communication Some shared decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share ideas Share resources Frequent and prioritized communication All members have a vote in decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members belong to one system Frequent communication is characterized by mutual trust Consensus is reached on all decisions

¹⁸ Frey, et al. (University of Kansas) (2006). “Measuring Collaboration Among Grant Partners,” *American Journal of Evaluation* 27, No. 3 (September): 383–392. Available online: <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?sessionid=E92D3128544110D7C18F97F2720A93E9?doi=10.1.1.457.8934&rep=rep1&type=pdf>.

Over the course of the Initiative, professionals report that collaboration within the community—among individuals and organizations—increased for some and remained the same for others (Exhibit 18). Compared with individual collaboration, more professionals tend to report an increase in the frequency with which *organizations* in the community that serve Jewish teens regularly collaborate with one another. It may be that the individual professionals do not take part in collaboration as an aspect of their own roles. Similar proportions of professionals report increases in the same areas during the second year of the Initiative.

Overall, some professionals report that the community collaboration and the value of the Jewish youth professionals’ network increased over the course of the Initiative.

Exhibit 18 | n=21–23 | Percentage of professionals reporting increases



Looking back to the end of the second year of the Initiative, professionals did not agree strongly that they collaborated with one another. Only half of professionals report perceiving the Jewish youth professionals’ network to be a great resource (50%), and even fewer report regularly collaborating with one another to plan events and activities for teens (39%). Despite lower levels of collaboration among individuals, professionals report that the organizations in the community that serve Jewish teens regularly collaborate with one another (50%). Consistent with what professionals report as jHub’s greatest perceived value, professionals report regularly seeking collegial support, advice, or ideas from other professionals in the community (58%).¹⁹

“jHub is very useful to [help professionals] know what is going on, and to have a forum for us to share common interests and challenges. It feels like a community, which is invaluable.”

– Grantee

Only those professionals who agreed that they networked with others in Year 2 of the Initiative also reported that they increased their networking in Year 3.²⁰ This includes professionals both working in Initiative grantee organizations and those working in organizations in the broader community. **Professionals have attributed their increasing collaboration and sense of a network to jHub**, noting that it allows them to learn about what is going on in the community and build relationships with other organizations.

¹⁹ Data source: 2016 survey of professionals, including 36 respondents.

²⁰ These comparisons are based on 11–13 professionals who responded to the professionals’ survey in both Year 2 and Year 3 of the evaluation.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR TEEN PROGRAMS

The Initiative has not yet cohesively rallied the broader Denver and Boulder Jewish communities around the issue of teens and teen programming. Less than half (45%) of professionals report that the communities have prioritized reducing barriers to teens participating in Jewish programs and events. Half (53%) of professionals surveyed report that prioritizing Jewish life for teens by the Denver and Boulder Jewish communities has increased over the course of the Initiative, though

further evidence of this increase remains to be seen. Although the Initiative strategically focused on working with professionals themselves, Initiative funders reflect that even if community professionals prioritize teens and teen programming, they cannot raise the priority level of teens on their own; professionals must gain support and buy-in from their organizational leaders.

“Teen professionals can be extremely effective but if their boss doesn’t appreciate it or help them with it or promote it, then we’re not reaching our full potential.”

– Funder

Across the Denver and Boulder communities, there is evidence of stagnant or decreased teen participation supporting other data suggesting that teen engagement has not risen in priority level with organizations and individuals outside of the Initiative. The combined (duplicated) count of Jewish teens participating in programs by jHub members decreased 17% from 2015 to 2017 (from 4,133 to 3,410 teens).²¹ Since these are all duplicated estimates, the CCE conducted an estimation study of 2015–16 unique teen participation and determined that 2,733 unique teens (24% of the teen population estimated by the AIR study) participated in Jewish programs in 2015–16.²² Interview informants corroborate these numbers, commenting that they have seen little (if any) change in teen participation through the Initiative’s first three years.

Advisory boards, composed of parents and community leaders, demonstrate some commitment among community members to teen programs in their support of Initiative grantees. However, this commitment does not reach beyond the Initiative grantees. Advisory boards act as sounding boards for grantees’ ideas, provide guidance and advice, and make connections to donors. Stakeholders agree that these advisory boards are not leveraged to their full potential. They could be more efficient and effective, work more cohesively, and convene differently to guide Initiative grantees and support their work toward a larger community goal. The advisory boards need guidance and facilitation to maximize their impact for grantees.

Unlike the other grantees, jHub coordinated a multi-purpose Steering Committee, focused not only on providing input on jHub’s program, but also on supporting and coordinating the community’s overall approach to Jewish teen engagement. The jHub Steering Committee was initially envisioned as a mechanism for bringing community leaders together to rally around and promote teens as a priority within the community. As mentioned earlier, the Steering Committee waned over the years with turnover issues, and as a result, little work could be done to prioritize teen engagement among community organizations or leaders.

The perception of whether support for teen programs has changed differs when viewed from the perspective of professionals and community leaders. Professionals report that the number of champions for teen programs and the amount of funding have increased over the course of the Initiative: nearly two in three (59%) professionals report that there are more champions who rally around and support local Jewish programs,

²¹ jHub annually asks its members to report the total number of unique teens they serve. Recognizing that not all programs reported data in all three years, we confirmed that this trend holds after accounting for differences in the number of programs reporting counts of teens each year. Over all three years, 16 programs reported attendance for totals of 3,713 teens; 3,736 teens; and 3,119 teens, making for a decrease of 16% from the first to the third year.

²² The CCE plans to conduct similar studies for 2016–17 and 2017–18 participation.

activities, and events for teens. Additionally, 55% of professionals report that donations and other funding for Jewish programs, activities, or events for teens are somewhat or much higher during the third year of the Initiative, compared with only 13% in the second year. However, when asked who is funding activities and events for Jewish teens, community stakeholders tend to name similar larger-scale funders who support youth programs, suggesting the funding landscapes in Denver and Boulder have remained relatively stable since the start of the Initiative. Initiative stakeholders do not describe or display a sense of urgency around teen engagement; it is simply not in crisis and does not yield a funding response to raise its profile in the community.

Initiative grantees had mixed success in leveraging donations from individual donors. Each grantee receives funding from vastly different sources within the community, and tends to report the same funders during each year of the Initiative. Grantees increased the amount of donations they received each year, and national organizations contributed more each year. Despite this, most grantees fell short of their goals—JSC is an exception that exceeded the goal and jHub did not have a fundraising goal. Most grantees were not able to garner substantial donations from individual donors. As grantee staff navigated through competing priorities, donor relations were not leveraged to the extent needed to meet fundraising goals or rally broader program and community support. Parents, in particular, surfaced as an especially hard audience to reach. Grantees engaged parents as donors minimally. Community stakeholders do not describe parents as being leveraged to support Jewish teen programming, beyond a small circle.

“For some reason, teens in general, I think, are harder to fund than some other areas.”

– Community Leader

Recommendations & Lessons Learned

As one of the first communities to launch, the Denver Boulder Jewish Teen Education and Engagement Initiative has paved the way for expanding Jewish teen engagement, not only in the Denver and Boulder communities but also across the nation. The Initiative sought to take risks and try innovative ways to reach new teens and, as to be expected, some have worked while others fell short. Through it all, there has been a constant theme of learning among the grantees, community leaders, and the other communities participating in the Funder Collaborative. Grantees used this learning to pivot and try new techniques for reaching more teens and providing them with enriching experiences.

We offer the following recommendations and lessons based on evaluation findings over the first three years of the Initiative.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Update the goals of the Initiative for the upcoming grant cycle.

Currently in its fourth year and approaching a potential three-year renewal, the Initiative is at a cross roads in determining its goals for the next cycle. Based on the work so far, we see two potential goals the Initiative could continue pursuing (see box), and there may be other goals that are more important to Initiative leaders and funders. Regardless of which goals to pursue, we recommend narrowing the Initiative's focus. During the first grant cycle, the Initiative has been open to pursuing both goals, however they require different types of programming and approaches, which, for grantees, spreads them too thin in their work. Both goals also have pros and cons. For example, with the first goal, it may be easier to find these teens because of their connection through their Bar/Bat Mitzvahs, but we know from AIR's study that this is only a small proportion of the Jewish teens in the community. With the second goal, it will be harder to find these teens and motivate them to come to programs, but it will add new teens to the overall mix and may help a teen find his or her place in the community and show more short-term impacts.

Potential Initiative Goals

- Stem drop-off after Bar and Bat Mitzvah ceremonies, targeting middle school teens to connect them to Jewish programs where they are.
- Draw in Jewish teens (primarily high school age) who have had little or no involvement recently with the Jewish community.

Many grantees are planning to spend more energy on reaching middle school teens in the near future, which may or may not be aligned with the Initiative's goals. These grantees (like many teen programs in the Denver and Boulder communities) have very small staffs (one person or a few people), which makes it difficult to actively pursue both goals at the same time. By selecting a focus for the next few years of the Initiative (and it does not have to be a permanent focus), grantees can direct their efforts toward that focus and hopefully make more progress than trying to pursue both goals simultaneously.

2. Provide more individualized professional development for youth professionals in Denver and Boulder.

Youth professionals in Denver and Boulder have different professional development needs that have been difficult to address as a group. Some are very new to their roles and need early-career development, while others are mid-career and shifting to higher-level responsibilities, requiring more training with operations and management. Further, these youth professionals also receive professional development support from their organizations. Given these constraints, we recommend the Initiative shift its professional development efforts from a one-size-fits-all approach to an individualized style.

In the individualized format, each professional would receive support to develop a unique professional development plan. This plan would identify the key areas of need and strategies for addressing those needs through mentoring or coaching, webinars, professional courses and trainings, and continued education. It will be important for these plans to push the professionals while remaining achievable, focusing in on key objectives rather than on an exhaustive list of activities and needs.

When looking across professional development plans, the Initiative can highlight common areas of need and provide community-wide training opportunities. Common needs that may surface could include fundraising skills, and jHub or another organization could offer a workshop on fundraising strategies for the broader youth professional community.

From the evaluation, we learned that many professionals are working one-on-one with teens. We see this as an opportunity to provide more coaching and training around how to develop and approach these meetings. We suspect that many professionals do not have underlying strategies for how they support individual teen development and could benefit from more guidance on how to maximize these relationships to benefit both their programs and the teen. From the grantees, we've also heard that it can be time consuming to manage relationships with many teens, another potential opportunity for training and development for professionals.

3. Re-clarify relationships between funders and grantees.

The Initiative functions differently than a typical grantee-funder relationship, creating some tensions and confusion about funder and grantee roles. With five independent grantees, the local funder served more as a centralizing force than it anticipated, is typical, or than it generally has capacity for. Grantees felt accountable to both the local and national funders but had different levels of interaction with each of them (i.e., they expressed wanting more direct connection to the national funder). Grantees noted feeling uncertain about how to interpret suggestions from the funders: were they simply ideas for the grantee to consider or were they directive guidance?

As we've noted in the report, the first three years of the Initiative have been challenging with the grantees undergoing major organizational changes and not progressing as far as everyone hoped in the initial goals. This has likely contributed to a sense of anxiety at all levels, creating even more tension than sometimes exists in funder-grantee relationships. However, not all aspects of the Initiative's grantee-funder relationships were challenging: grantees are appreciative of the support (financial and non-financial) they received from the funders during this innovative grant period, and the two funders felt they worked well together, complementing one another's strengths.

The potential renewal period provides an opportunity to re-establish the working relationships across the funders and grantees, to clarify expectations and roles. The funders will need to decide what role they would each like to have in the renewal period: would they like to become less involved, more involved, or maintain the same involvement as the first grant period? The funders and grantees should clarify how they will communicate with each other (e.g., how directly grantees will communicate with the national funder, to what extent feedback is

suggestive or directive) and how to hold each other accountable, and reiterate the Initiative’s focus on risk taking and learning, knowing some things may fall short of expectations.

The renewal period is also a good moment to clarify how the Initiative is organized. More specifically, the funders will need to decide how (if at all) the Initiative will be centralized; in the first grant period, jHub held this responsibility, to an extent, as well as Rose Community Foundation. This may take different forms: one entity could be in a strong position to be the central, organizing node in the Initiative, or the Initiative may not need a centralizing entity and could instead have a de-centralized structure. Regardless, the Initiative needs to make explicit the roles of each entity—among funders and grantees—which, whether as a centralizing node or not, support the Initiative structurally in moving toward its goal or goals.

4. Develop more concrete goals and strategies for community engagement.

Without a strong centralized component to the Initiative, nearly all of the progress made was through the work of individual grantees, as was intended in the Initiative’s design. To the extent that the Initiative wants to raise overall support (financial and non-financial) in the Denver and Boulder communities for Jewish teen engagement, we recommend developing more concrete goals and strategies for how to accomplish this within the Initiative’s structure.

Particularly in Year 3, many interview informants identify the youth professionals’ supervisors as key targets to become champions for Jewish teen engagement. These are often the individuals who can lead organizational collaboration in community-wide efforts, promoting shifts from cultures of competition to cooperation amongst Jewish teen programs. Plus, these supervisors need to buy into the Initiative and its goals, if only to support the youth professionals as they grow their skills in working with teens and experiment with new techniques and approaches. Through interviews and Initiative meetings we participated in during the past three years, we have also learned that many of the original leaders in the Denver and Boulder Jewish communities have transitioned out of their roles, providing an opportunity to reignite discussions around community engagement with their successors.

LESSONS LEARNED

In the first three years of this Initiative we have learned a great deal, as have the grantees and Initiative funders. Knowing what we know now about both the Initiative’s challenges and its successes, we offer the following reflections in order to share what we’ve learned with other communities considering similar approaches.

High quality programs produce high quality results

These evaluation results confirm that teens are enjoying and benefiting from Initiative programs. The Initiative invested in these five grantees in particular, believing that as they launched and scaled, they would be able to deliver strong results in supporting Jewish teens in this important time of exploration and development. While they continue to revisit and refine their program models, listening to the needs and interests of teens and adapting to their shifting environments, they are contributing positively to the lives of Jewish teens in Denver and Boulder.

Very small operations have natural capacity limitations

From the perspective of organizational size, Initiative grantees are very small shops—primarily one staff member working in Denver or Boulder, and in a couple of cases, with one or two additional staff. It is unrealistic to expect one person to have the capacity to excel in all aspects of running an organization, from designing and leading high-quality programming and mentoring teens one-on-one, to developing organizational strategy, managing budgets, fundraising, and more. It is therefore important to understand which

aspects of the role are most important, and hire accordingly. Is the role a program director who is immersed in the programmatic content, and thus needs other systems to provide management and strategic functions, or is the role that of an executive director, who may need additional staff for program implementation?

Launching new programs takes time, iteration, and patience

The new programs in this Initiative needed to address a number of issues to successfully establish themselves in the Denver and Boulder communities, including:

- **Recruiting, hiring, and onboarding new staff.** It takes time to find the right staff members, particularly for these types of small-staffed programs, where individuals need to be proficient in many different skill areas, from mentoring teens, to curriculum development, to program management and fundraising.
- **Building partnerships and relationships to establish roots in the community.** Relationship-building was a critical element to grantees' successes, and where it was lacking, due to staffing shifts or lack of adequate attention, it impeded grantees' work. Relationship-building needs to start before the actual work begins. Beyond just knowing who people are, it requires creating a trusting dialogue with others around the current issues they are working on, and understanding where their work intersects and diverges. These relationships are the foundation for potential collaboration and help create a network of champions for teen engagement across a community.
- **Refining program models.** Programs that are adapting their work to fit a new market segment or incorporate new approaches need time for prototyping, testing, and iterating those models before they can achieve their optimum impact.
- **Articulating communications messages.** Programs not only need to be thoughtful about how they message their own programs, but also consider the relationship of their messaging to other programs in the community. They also need to be aware of programs that are trying to hold a dual goal of engaging teens in their own programs while also promoting teen engagement in Jewish life more broadly.

All of this work takes time—and as we found with this Initiative, more time than was originally planned for. As a result, it can take longer than expected to ramp up the number of teens participating in programs.

Targeted supports strengthen and accelerate innovation

Across this Initiative, the grantees benefited from different types and levels of support as they launched and expanded their programs. While the diversity across these programs and the supports they received suggests that there is not one perfect set of supports for all programs, their experience demonstrated the critical need to have access to resources to help a program—especially a small-staffed program—with its programmatic and organizational development. This can come from an organization's national office, from funders (e.g., Initiative funders provided feedback on semi-annual grant reports and budgets, and also offered grantees consulting for strategic business planning), from fiscal sponsors, or from other organizations. Regardless of the source, having access to supports can be particularly helpful to new programs, especially those with very small staffs.

Build capacity to prepare for inevitable changes

Initiative grantees were impacted by a multitude of internal and external changes that impacted their work. This includes changes in the external environment, such as shifts in programs offered to Jewish teens by other organizations (e.g., a synagogue reinvigorating its own youth programming), and changes in other organizational structures (e.g., openings, closures, and mergers of other organizations that have complementary or competing offerings). Internally, grantees experienced structural changes to their organizations or fiscal sponsors, as well as staffing shifts. It is a credit to these grantees that they were able to address and adapt to many of these challenges, but not without impacts on the pace of developing their own work. Their experiences highlight the need for building capacity to prepare for inevitable changes. While it is not realistic to fully prepare for every contingency, it is critical to build adaptive capacity to be able to shift attention when needed. Two particular issues that emerged from the experience of this Initiative include:

- Building a network of stakeholders who are champions for the program and who can also be tapped to addressing new issues that arise. These stakeholders may be board members, funders, parents, or other interested community members.
- Creating a management structure that can swiftly identify emerging concerns and that has flexibility to respond to varying needs while maintaining regular operations.

It's hard to provide one-size-fits-all professional development to a diverse group of educators and professionals

As illustrated in the evaluation findings, the Jewish youth professionals in Denver and Boulder span a range of experience levels, and thus have different professional development needs and interests. In communities the size of Denver and Boulder, it can therefore be challenging to identify professional development offerings that are on the appropriate topics as well as at the appropriate level of depth for a critical mass of people. As the same time, it is not feasible to offer discreet trainings for only a few professionals. There is no one or easy solution to the challenge. It requires understanding the different needs and as much as possible, leveraging existing opportunities offered locally or potentially with professionals in other cities, as well as considering when trainings outside of the Jewish community may be useful, coupled with some follow-up support as needed, to contextualize the learning and apply it to working with Jewish teens.

Setting goals supports reflection and learning

At the outset of their work, and annually thereafter, Initiative grantees established goals for their work, particularly for the number of teens they would reach, and often by the different elements of their programs. For the new programs, this was particularly challenging because they had no history to build upon. Nevertheless, setting goals and then reflecting at the end of the year on the extent to which these goals were met or not provided grantees with an important learning opportunity, which they used to recalibrate expectations for the coming year. Having grantees define their targets differently (e.g., one specified the number of unique teens reached each year, but not over the whole Initiative; another specified teens in different programs each year but not a unique teen total per year), allowed each to set goals in a way that made sense to them, although it hindered the ability to assess these goals Initiative-wide.

Intentional strategies are essential to formulating intended outcomes

As described at the outset of this report, this Initiative is unique in that it focused on five grantee “big bets” rather than on an interconnected, cohesive strategy across grantees to form the Initiative. At the same time, the Initiative maintained the Funder Collaborative’s measure of success to establish Jewish teen education and engagement as a priority for local Jewish community leaders and parents. To be sure, some work happened at the grantee level to address this measure of success, but Initiative-wide, the strategies designed for jHub were not comprehensive or far reaching enough, regardless of how well they were implemented, to be able to address this issue on a substantial level. This experience speaks to the need not only to identify intended outcomes, but to clarify what success can realistically look like for the Initiative, given its design.

The task of tracking data on teens should not be taken lightly

jHub was tasked with trying to aggregate data on Jewish teen programs across the Denver and Boulder communities. This was hampered on two levels. First, programs—and their host organizations—had valid concerns about data sharing and confidentiality. Second, we have seen that there are limits to programs’ data about their teens. They may have more detailed information on some teens than others, they may or may not know which teens went to which programs, and to the extent that they collect teen-level data, it is by no means consistent across organizations. Starting this work at the level of data sharing was a misstep for the Initiative, as programs need to first build their own capacity to collect data. They also need to build a trusting relationship with those with whom they would share their data, as well as see the value of data sharing. The Initiative may have benefited from starting on a much smaller scale, for example asking programs to share information on a few data points on a one-time basis, even without identifying information, and then making meaning from that limited sample. An iterative process can build excitement around how programs can use the shared data and help create buy-in for a data-sharing process.



As of the writing of this report, the Initiative is well underway in its Year 4 activities and in decision-making processes for potential renewal grants. We shared some initial data and reflections with the grantees and funders in summer 2017 to help inform these activities, and hope these broader reflections and recommendations help guide their ongoing work.

We know other communities in the Funder Collaborative as well as the broader Jewish community have learned from this Initiative’s early work—successes and challenges. We commend the grantees and funders of this Initiative in being trailblazers in the work of building community-wide Jewish teen initiatives. It has made the work of others that much stronger. We hope to see grantees continue experimenting with new strategies for reaching teens, providing meaningful experiences to them, and bolstering the overall communities’ commitment to teen engagement.

Appendix A: Data Collection & Analysis Approach

DATA COLLECTION

The evaluation over the past three years used a multi-year mixed-method approach. The major data collection approaches were as follows:

- Surveys
 - Teens
 - Youth professionals
 - Parents

- Interviews
 - Teens
 - Parents
 - Grantee & national staff
 - Community leaders & stakeholders
 - Board members
 - Funders

Data Collection by Year

Exhibit A1

	2015	2016	2017	Total
Interviews	34	36	33	103
Surveys	88	295	264	647

Survey Responses by Respondent Type and Year

Exhibit A2

	2015	2016	2017	Total
Teens	62	159	235	456
Youth Professionals	<i>Did not survey</i>	41	29	70
Parents	26	95	<i>Did not survey</i>	121

Teen Survey Responses by Program and Year

Exhibit A3

	2015	2016	2017	Total
JSC	44	86	157	287
BJTI	2	25	25	52
J-Serve	<i>Did not survey</i>	29	14	43
jHub Fellows	<i>Did not survey</i>	6	9	15
Presentense Fellows	<i>Did not survey</i>	9	16	25
Moving Traditions	16	28	17	61

Interviews by Respondent Type and Year

Exhibit A4

	2015	2016	2017	Total
Teens	<i>Did not interview</i>	7	<i>Did not interview</i>	7
Parents	<i>Did not interview</i>	13	15	28
Youth Professionals	20	<i>Did not interview</i>	<i>Did not interview</i>	20
Grantee & National Staff	6	9	8	23
Community Leaders & Stakeholders	6	7	5	18
Board Members	<i>Did not interview</i>	<i>Did not interview</i>	4	4
Funders	2	1	1	4

Appendix B: CCE Background Classification Framework

We used the CCE team’s Background Classification Framework to define teens’ levels of Jewish experiences growing up. The Background Classification Framework is composed of four demographic questions, which we scored using the point system below to classify teens into three background categories: **Nominal** (0–2.5 points), **Modest** (3–5.5 points), and **Substantial** (6–8 points).

Survey Question	Score		
How many total years had you participated in supplementary Jewish school before high school?	0–1 years (0)	2–3 years (0.5)	4+ years (2)
How many total years had you participated in Jewish Day School before high school?	0–1 years (0)	2–3 years (1)	4+ years (3)
Have you had a Bar or Bat Mitzvah ceremony?	No (0)	Yes (1)	
Before high school, how often had you attended a Passover Seder?	Never (0)	Rarely or Sometimes (0)	Usually or Always (1)
Which of the following describes your family?	We are not Jewish (0)	Some are Jewish (0.5)	All are Jewish (1)



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