



Seeds of Opportunity

A National Study of Immersive Jewish Outdoor,
Food, and Environmental Education (JOFEE)



This research report was sponsored by:

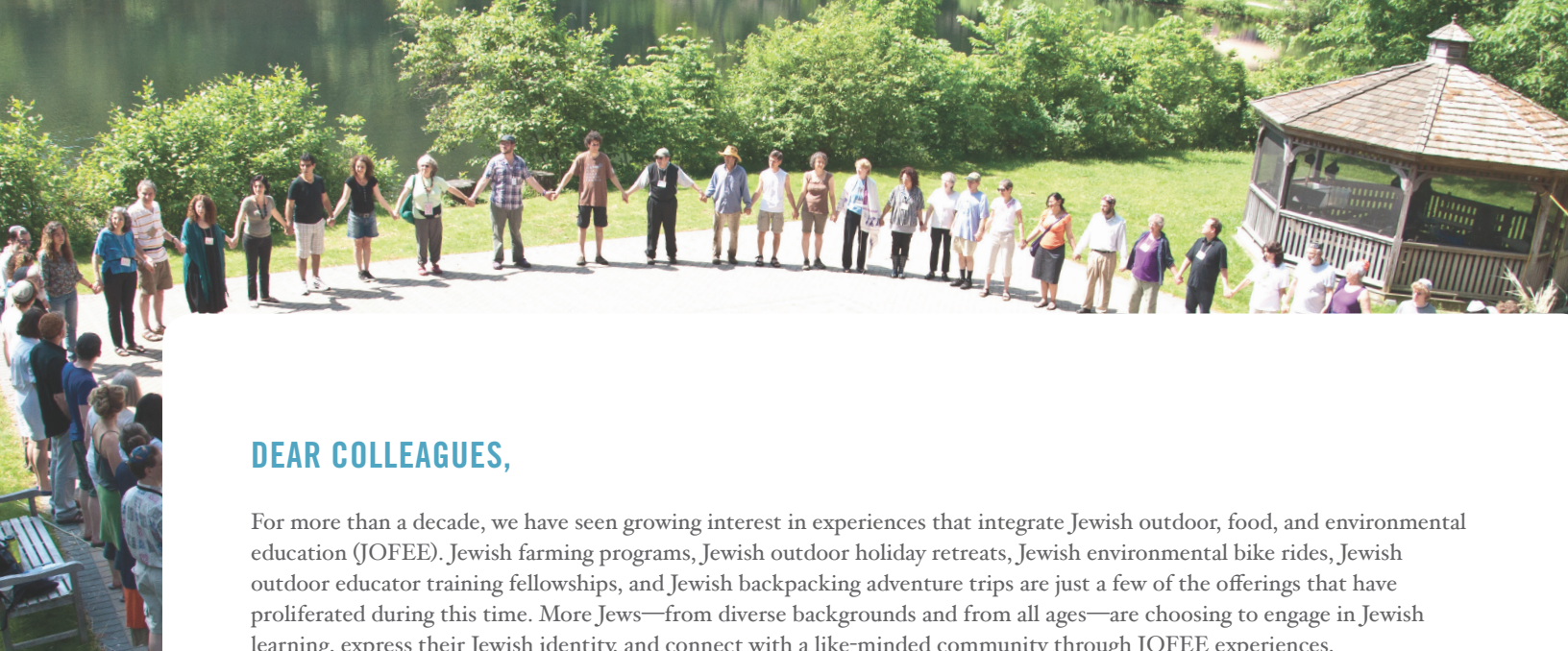


Analysis and report prepared by:



Special thanks to:





DEAR COLLEAGUES,

For more than a decade, we have seen growing interest in experiences that integrate Jewish outdoor, food, and environmental education (JOFEE). Jewish farming programs, Jewish outdoor holiday retreats, Jewish environmental bike rides, Jewish outdoor educator training fellowships, and Jewish backpacking adventure trips are just a few of the offerings that have proliferated during this time. More Jews—from diverse backgrounds and from all ages—are choosing to engage in Jewish learning, express their Jewish identity, and connect with a like-minded community through JOFEE experiences.

With this increased engagement has come an increased investment of time and resources by organizations, communities, and funders. Yet, until now, there was no full understanding of what JOFEE looked like nationally. How many programs are there? How have the offerings expanded? Who participates in them? Who leads them? What influence do they have on individuals, organizations and communities?

In the fall of 2012, the Jim Joseph Foundation, Leichtag Foundation, The Morningstar Foundation, Rose Community Foundation, Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation, and UJA-Federation of New York, in collaboration with Hazon, began the process of answering these and other questions by conducting a national research study on JOFEE. Over the last 18 months, Improve Group designed tools and completed data collection and Informing Change led a collaborative process to make meaning, engage key stakeholders, and ultimately produce *Seeds of Opportunity: A National Study of Immersive Jewish Outdoor, Food, and Environmental Education (JOFEE)*.

This study examines key components of numerous aspects of JOFEE. In particular, it presents current outcomes and analysis on the future potential for JOFEE to foster compelling, effective Jewish learning experiences for a diverse cross-section of the Jewish community, especially young adults. Additionally, findings offer insight about how engagement in JOFEE leads to deeper connections with the outdoors, food, and the environment.

Some readers already may be aware of JOFEE initiatives and the Jewish engagement opportunities they offer. Other readers will be introduced in this report to JOFEE strategies, programs, and leaders for the first time. For community and institutional leaders, we hope that this analysis helps you better understand how JOFEE experiences can positively affect your organization and community members. For practitioners in the JOFEE field, we hope the findings help support your existing work and help to identify additional engagement opportunities. And for funders—including the cohort of foundations that funded this study—this report provides substantial information about the innovative efforts and outcomes through JOFEE strategies. We hope *Seeds of Opportunity* will be a valuable resource as you consider future opportunities to invest time and resources in the Jewish community.

We look forward to hearing from you and working with you as we embark on this important work together.

*Jim Joseph Foundation
Leichtag Foundation
The Morningstar Foundation
Rose Community Foundation
Schusterman Family Foundations
UJA-Federation of New York*

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“ I came to [JOFEE] with zero formal Jewish education. Everything was self-taught or learned from friends. But after [JOFEE] I knew how to lead *birkat hamazon*, shake the *lulav*, dip in a mikvah, so much...But more than anything I just felt like a more confident person as a teacher and as a Jew.”

—JOFEE Participant



Introduction

OVER THE PAST DECADE, observers of Jewish education have seen a growing interest in experiences that integrate Jewish learning with outdoor, food, and environmental issues. Local, regional and national philanthropists and practitioners have invested time and resources to develop innovative learning opportunities that address these issues, including new initiatives and organizations, some of which have expanded their reach globally.

While interest and participation in these programs is growing, there has not yet been rigorous research or a formal evaluation of these efforts.¹ The Improve Group was engaged in early 2013 to conduct a national study of immersive Jewish outdoor, food and environmental education programming and coined the term JOFEE for the purposes of this study.² The programs focus on one or more of the key elements of the outdoors, food, and the environment, all explored through a Jewish educational lens. The immersive programs range from weekend retreats providing hands-on experiences that celebrate the intersection of food, sustainability and Jewish life, to Jewish outdoor adventure summer camps that teach campers about healthy living, to fellowships at Jewish educational farms focused on sustainable agriculture and social action, and much more.

The research was designed to explore JOFEE programs, participants and professionals. It focused specifically on immersive JOFEE programs lasting four days or longer, and on the adults (over 18 years old) involved in the programs as participants or educators. This particular focus provided

a manageable scope for the study and explored a sub-set of JOFEE experiences that was anticipated to exhibit more lasting effects due to their immersive nature. At the same time, the research sponsors recognized that the experiences included in this study are only one segment of a much broader array of JOFEE activities which also include shorter and episodic opportunities in different settings, often at the local level, and for all people, young and old.

Drawing from the initial research, Informing Change was commissioned to conduct further analysis and collaborated with funders, practitioners and community leaders to make meaning of the research, with the goals for some, to inform future investments in this area, and for others, to help support and grow JOFEE going forward. The picture of immersive JOFEE experiences shared in this report is complemented by two case studies on JOFEE experiences in Colorado and New York. The report also offers actionable recommendations for practitioners and funders interested and involved in supporting JOFEE.

1 Green Hevra recently conducted a study of the Jewish environmental movement. The report will be released in 2014; data also informed a virtual map of the Jewish environmental movement at <http://www.jewcology.com/map>.

2 While the term JOFEE may not fully capture the entirety of these experiences, nor is it a universally agreed-upon term, we use the term JOFEE throughout this report for the purposes of brevity.

Key Takeaways

This research has uncovered a number of interesting and noteworthy insights about JOFEE.

1

GROWTH

There has been tremendous growth in the number of immersive JOFEE experiences over the past 15 years, to the point that over 2,400 people participated in immersive JOFEE experiences in 2012. JOFEE has an even more extensive reach through additional non-immersive and local experiences, which are not addressed in this report.

2

ENGAGEMENT

Immersive JOFEE programs are important vehicles for engaging young Jews and a diverse cross-section of the Jewish community through multiple types of immersive experiences.

3

RECONNECTION

Immersive JOFEE programs have provided a meaningful place for disengaged or alienated Jews to reconnect Jewishly.

4

INTERSECTION & INTEGRATION

The merging of Jewish tradition and learning with the outdoors, food and environmental issues is a major reason why people participate in immersive JOFEE programs and what they take away from their experiences.

5

JEWISH LIFE, LEARNING, & MEANING

Participating in immersive JOFEE programs inspires a positive connection to Jewish life, learning and meaning, particularly among participants who are younger, had fewer Jewish childhood experiences and have had more immersive JOFEE experiences.

6

COMMITMENT TO OUTDOOR, FOOD, & ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Immersive JOFEE experiences have played an important role for many participants in their connection with the outdoors, food and the environment and the importance of these issues in their lives.

7

CATALYST FOR WIDER JEWISH LEADERSHIP

Large numbers of immersive JOFEE participants see themselves as leaders in the Jewish community and are actively creating Jewish experiences in their communities.

8

PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP

JOFEE brings new educators and professionals into the Jewish community. Over half of the passionate, skilled Jewish people working in JOFEE were drawn to a job in Jewish life through their interest in one of the broader areas of the outdoors, food or the environment.

9

COMMUNITY & SOCIAL TIES

JOFEE is a powerful Jewish community builder for participants, professionals and mainstream Jewish organizations at local, regional, and national levels. JOFEE partnerships are modeling a collaborative approach of working and learning together.

10

HOPE

Participation in immersive JOFEE experiences has increased participants' sense of hope for the future of the Jewish people.



“ Participation in JOFEE experiences showed me that Judaism could look different than the form that I grew up with. [JOFEE] connected the things that I care most about (environment, outdoor education) to my Jewish identity, and pushed me to become interested in food and food justice as well. ”

.....
—JOFEE Participant

Programs Included in this Study ³

- Adamah Adventures
- American Jewish University: Experiential Fellowship
- Amir Project: Amir Farming Fellowship
- Burning Bush Adventures
- Camp Newman: Kibbutz Yarok– staff program
- Camp Tawonga: Wilderness Department
- COEJL Conferences*
- Derech HaTeva/Teva Adventure
- Eco-Activist Beit Midrash*
- Eco-Israel Semester Program
- Eco-Israel Summer Program
- Eden Village Camp
- GreenFaith Fellowship Program
- Hazon: Adamah Apprenticeship at the Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center
- Hazon: Adamah Farm Vacations (previously Berkshire Farm Stay 2012) at the Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center
- Hazon: Adamah Fellowship at the Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center
- Hazon: Golden Gate Ride
- Hazon: Cross-USA Ride
- Hazon: Hazon Food Conference
- Hazon: Arava Institute Hazon Israel Ride
- Hazon: Israel Sustainable Food Tour
- Hazon: Jewish Greening Fellowship
- Hazon: New York Ride
- Hazon: Shavuot Retreat at the Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center
- Hazon: SukkahFest at the Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center
- Hazon: Teva at Henry Kaufman Campgrounds
- Hazon: Teva Residential Programs
- Hazon: Teva Seminar at the Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center
- Jewish Farm School: Farm Apprenticeship
- Jewish Farm School: Organic Farm Alternative Break
- Jewish Farm School: Seminar in Organic Agriculture and Educational Gardening
- Pearlstone Center: Alternative Spring Break Program
- Pearlstone Center: Beit Midrash
- Pearlstone Center: Chesapeake Watershed Pilgrimage
- Pearlstone Center: Integrated Sustainability Apprenticeship
- Pearlstone Center: Summer Farm Kollel
- Pearlstone Center: Sukkot Retreat
- Ramah Outdoor Adventure
- Torah Trek Guides Track
- Torah Trek Retreats
- Urban Adamah Fellowship
- Wilderness Torah Retreats: Passover in the Desert
- Wilderness Torah Retreats: Sukkot on the Farm

* These programs are no longer in operation

³ When this research began, Hazon and the Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center were two independent nonprofit organizations, and Teva Learning Alliance was a program of Surprise Lake Camp. During the period of the research, Hazon and Isabella Freedman merged and Teva joined the enlarged Hazon. During the initial period of this research, the Golden Gate Ride, Cross-USA Ride, Hazon Food Conference, Arava Institute Hazon Israel Ride, Israel Sustainable Food Tour, and New York Ride were all run by the legacy organization Hazon. The Adamah Apprenticeship, Adamah Farm Vacations, Adamah Fellowship, Jewish Greening Fellowship, Shavuot Retreat, and SukkahFest were all run by the legacy organization Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center. Teva at Henry Kaufman Campgrounds, Teva Residential Programs and the Teva Seminar were all programs of Surprise Lake Camp.



Research Questions & Methods

This research was designed to describe immersive JOFEE programs, participants, and professionals, as well as what is happening in the lives of individuals, communities, and Jewish institutions as a result of these experiences. The study also explored the possible opportunities and challenges which practitioners, funders, and community leaders should consider, going forward, in relation to JOFEE.

The research utilized mixed-methods, including qualitative and quantitative data collection, and a thorough review of related literature. Approximately 40 stakeholders were interviewed, including JOFEE program directors and educators, rabbis, funders, entrepreneurs, community organizers, thought-leaders, and Jewish education leaders. Additional qualitative data came from two focus groups in Colorado and four focus groups in New York. A survey of individuals over the age of 18 who had participated in immersive JOFEE programs (n=655) provided quantitative data. In addition, 41 immersive JOFEE programs completed a form providing summary information on their

program's history of participation and staffing, budget and a program description. The variety of data sources, offering different perspectives, increases confidence in the findings of this initial look at JOFEE.

Research Considerations

While reviewing this research, we recommend that readers keep several key considerations in mind. First is the reminder that this research focuses only on immersive JOFEE programs of at least four days in length and their adult participants. It does not describe JOFEE more broadly, which includes shorter-term and more localized experiences for people of all ages. Second, survey respondents were asked about the overall influence of their immersive JOFEE experiences on a set of knowledge, attitudinal and behavioral issues. Because many survey respondents participated in more than one program, the analysis cannot distinguish the unique effects of each program on participants. For additional research considerations and methodological clarifications, please see Appendix A.⁴

Research Questions

- What do immersive JOFEE programs look like? How have they proliferated?
- Who participates in immersive JOFEE experiences?
- Who are the professionals delivering immersive JOFEE experiences?
- What influence have immersive JOFEE experiences had on participants and, more broadly, on Jewish organizations and communities? What are the key drivers of these outcomes?
- What opportunities and challenges should practitioners and funders consider, based on this research?

⁴ A full copy of the report with appendices and case studies is available online at hazon.org/jofee.

KEY FINDING

1

Growth

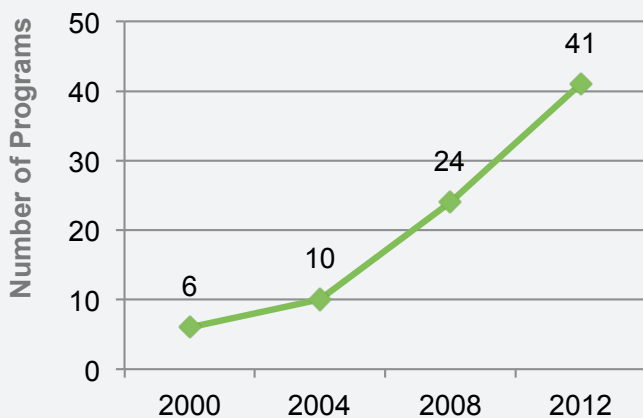
THERE HAS BEEN TREMENDOUS GROWTH in the number of immersive JOFEE experiences over the past 15 years, to the point that over 2,400 people participated in immersive JOFEE experiences in 2012. JOFEE has an even more extensive reach through additional non-immersive and local experiences, which are not addressed in this report.

While JOFEE is deeply rooted in Jewish tradition and history, there has been a proliferation of explicit immersive JOFEE experiences since the year 2000 (Exhibit 1), resulting in a roughly ten-fold increase in the number of immersive JOFEE participants from the year 2000 compared to the year 2012 (Exhibit 2). Responding to growing demand, more professionals are working in the field. (Exhibit 3). In 2012, 11 of the 41 (27%)

immersive JOFEE programs were offered multiple times during the year, such that a total of 64 immersive JOFEE experiences were offered that year. It is important to keep in mind that these numbers do not include non-immersive and more localized JOFEE experiences, participants and staff, which would significantly increase these numbers.

GROWTH OF IMMERSIVE JOFEE PROGRAMS

Exhibit 1

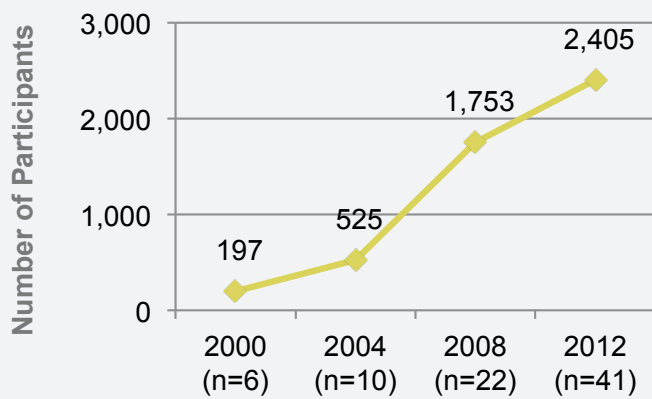


2,405 Participants	64 Experiences
41 Programs	81 Staff



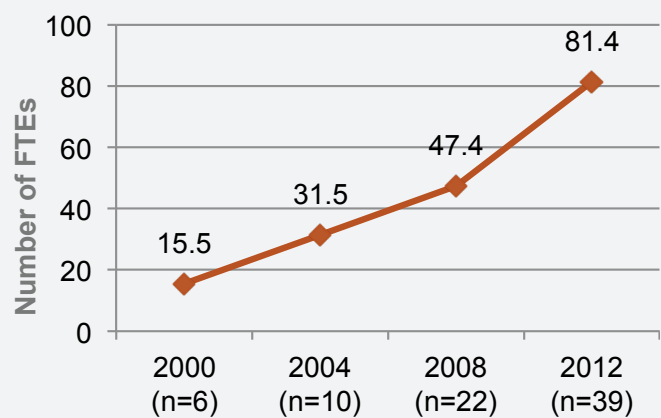
GROWTH OF IMMERSIVE JOFEE PARTICIPANTS

Exhibit 2



GROWTH IN PERMANENT IMMERSIVE JOFEE STAFF⁵

Exhibit 3



⁵ Staff data were not available for two programs in 2012. These numbers include both direct immersive JOFEE program staff as well as organizational support staff and leadership who are necessary to make the immersive JOFEE programs included in this study possible.



IMMERSIVE JOFEE PROGRAM TYPES, 2012

Exhibit 4

Program Type	Approximate Duration	Number of Programs	Number of Participants	% of all Participants
Jewish Holiday Retreats	3–5 days	5	755	31%
Retreats & Conferences	3–7 days	5	603	25%
Outdoor/Food Adventures	3 days–9 weeks	9	554	23%
Camp – Counselor/Staff	6–11 weeks	6	217	9%
Fellowship/Apprenticeship	1–18 months	12	158	7%
Other	5 days–8 weeks	4	118	5%
Total		41	2,405	100%

Program Format: There are a range of programmatic formats available among immersive JOFEE experiences (Exhibit 4).⁶ Retreats and conferences, including those designed around Jewish holidays, as well as many of the outdoor/food adventure programs (e.g., bike rides) typically last between 4 and 10 days.⁷ They account for almost half of the programs included in this study, and the vast majority (79%) of participants. Longer-term programs—typically one to four months in length, with some as long as 18 months, include fellowships and apprenticeships, summer camp staff positions, along with other trips and programs. Collectively they account for the remaining 21% of participants.

Learning: All of the immersive JOFEE programs in the study focus to greater or lesser degrees on the outdoors, food, sustainability and environmental issues, some with a greater focus on particular elements in this universe than others. Additional content (e.g., emphasis on history, theory, skill-building, practice, and/or activism) varies across programs. The nature of the Jewish learning offered includes experiential and structured formats, individual and community orientations, as well as other Jewish learning approaches such as pluralistic, spiritual, text study, etc. Almost all of these programs include some type of prayer services.

6 Appendix B provides a JOFEE field map, summarizing key characteristics of all programs included in this research. A full copy of the report with appendices and case studies is available online at hazon.org/jofee.

7 A few programs included in this research sometimes run for less than four days, but are also sometimes four days or longer, and were thus determined to meet this study's definition of immersive.

“It’s only been 15 years since [JOFEE] has come into being. If you look at the field as a whole, we’re really just leaving childhood, and it’s stunning how rapidly the field has grown.”

—JOFEE Professional

IMMERSIVE JOFEE PROGRAM & ORGANIZATIONAL BUDGETS

Exhibit 5

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Median
Program Budgets	\$3,000	\$400,000	\$89,985	\$62,500
Host Organization Budgets	\$11,000	\$16,000,000	\$2,251,269	\$2,200,000

Structure: Immersive JOFEE programs have several operational and funding structures. JOFEE is the mission of a few key organizations in the space: Hazon, Jewish Farm School and Urban Adamah; they provide multiple programs, both immersive and non-immersive. Retreat centers—Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center and Pearlstone Center—offer immersive and non-immersive JOFEE programs along with their broader, non-JOFEE offerings. Among the camp opportunities in this space, three new specialty camps focus solely on JOFEE, while two longer-standing camps included in the study have a JOFEE strand in their summer experiences.

There are also immersive JOFEE programs embedded in other Jewish communal organizations.

Financing: Individual immersive JOFEE programs have an average budget size of \$89,985, although the organizational budgets have a much broader range, reflecting the diversity of organizational structures (Exhibit 5). Approximately half of the immersive JOFEE program revenue comes from participant fees, with the other half consisting of contributions from Jewish foundations, federations, and individual donors.

KEY FINDING

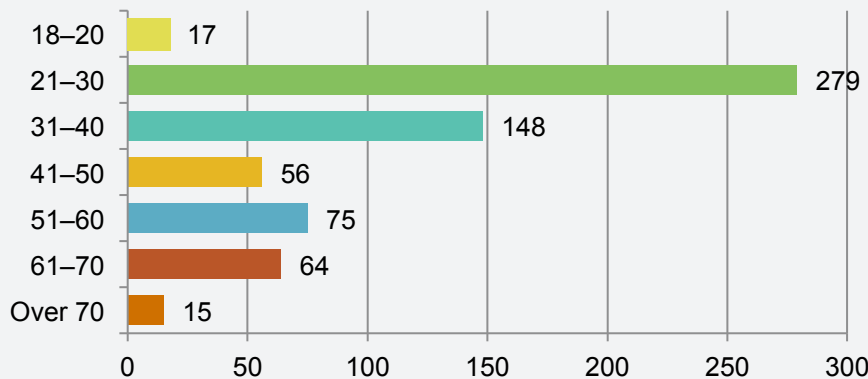
2 Engagement

IMMERSIVE JOFEE programs are important vehicles for engaging young Jews and a diverse cross-section of the Jewish community through multiple types of immersive experiences.

Key Demographics: The median survey respondent age of 32 (mean age of 38), demonstrates the appeal of immersive JOFEE programs to a younger population than the Jewish population nationally. Worthy of note is that respondents' ages were recorded in 2013 when they took the survey; therefore, people were younger when they participated in any JOFEE experiences before that year. The range in age from 18 to 84 years old shows

AGE OF IMMERSIVE JOFEE PARTICIPANTS

Exhibit 6
(n=654)

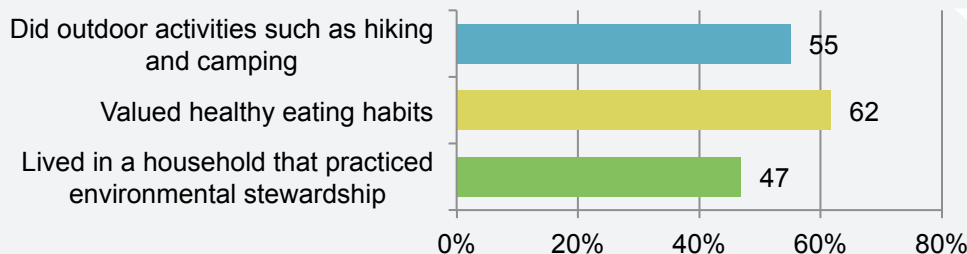


32

Median age of JOFEE survey respondents

CHILDHOOD OUTDOOR, FOOD, & ENVIRONMENTAL EXPERIENCES OF IMMERSIVE JOFEE PARTICIPANTS

Exhibit 7
(n=655)



Number of Experiences

- 24% None
- 21% One
- 24% Two
- 32% Three

* Percentages do not total 100% due to rounding

JOFEE’s appeal to all generations (Exhibit 6).^{8,9,10} Nearly all survey respondents (93%) identify their ethnicity as White/Caucasian, were born in the U.S. (89%), come from all across North America or from Israel or a handful of other countries, and speak English at home or with friends/relatives (98%).¹¹ More survey respondents indicate that they are female (65%) than male (34%).¹²

Childhood Outdoor, Food, and Environmental

Experiences: Survey respondents had varying experiences with the outdoors, food and/or environmental issues while they were growing up (Exhibit 7). Younger participants (age 30 or younger) were significantly more likely to have had more of these experiences prior to age 18 than their older counterparts.

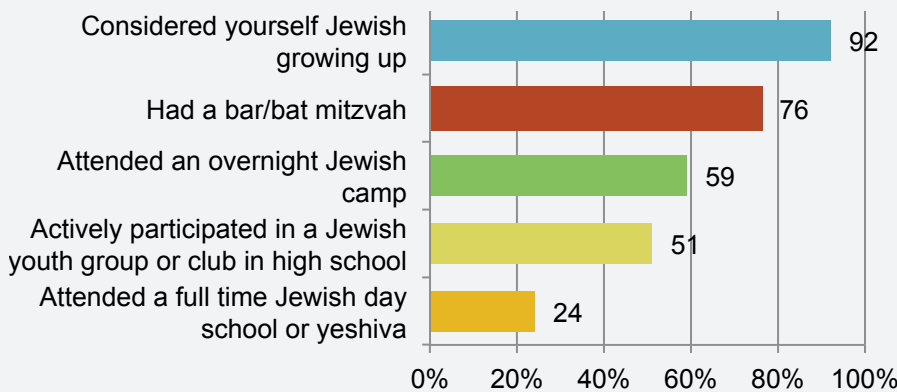
Jewish Childhood Experiences: Many JOFEE participants had a number of important Jewish experiences growing up

(Exhibit 8),¹³ similar to or higher than the rates for these experiences in the general Jewish population.¹⁴ Participants age 30 and younger were significantly more likely to have had more of these Jewish childhood experiences than those who were older.

Jewish Identification: There have been some shifts in how respondents identify themselves Jewishly now, compared to when they were growing up, with more identifying now as “Just Jewish” and “Renewal” and fewer identifying as “Reform” and “Conservative” (Exhibit 9). This is similar to a broader shift in the Jewish population where 30% of American Jews do not identify with a particular denomination¹⁵ and it likely represents the decline in denominational identification researchers have observed over the past few years, both within and outside the Jewish community.¹⁶

JEWISH CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES OF IMMERSIVE JOFEE PARTICIPANTS

Exhibit 8
(n=655)



Number of Jewish Childhood Experiences

- 7% None
- 8% One
- 17% Two
- 26% Three
- 29% Four
- 13% Five

* Percentages do not total 100% due to rounding

8 The survey targeted individuals over the age of 18 who participated in immersive JOFEE programs. While most respondents identify currently as Jewish, a few respondents indicate that they are affiliated with another religion or no religion.
 9 The Rose Community Foundation reports that younger generations are building connections to Judaism through interpersonal relationships, further engaging (or re-engaging) them in Jewish life. This is a shift from older generations. Ari Y. Kelman and Eliana Schonberg, Legwork, Framework, Artwork: Engaging the Next Generation of Jews, A Report on the Rose Community Foundation’s Next Generation Initiative (2008).
 10 48% of the national Jewish population is 18–49 years old, while 75% of JOFEE participants are 18–49 years old. Pew Research Center, Religion & Public Life Project, A Portrait of Jewish Americans: Findings from a Pew Research Center Survey of U.S. Jews (October 1, 2013).
 11 94% of the Jewish population identifies their ethnicity as White, non-Hispanic; 86% were born in the U.S. Ibid.
 12 49% of the Jewish population is male; 51% is female. Ibid.
 13 Appendix A describes how the Jewish childhood experiences composite was calculated. A full copy of the report with appendices and case studies is available online at hazon.org/jofee.
 14 These are all on par with or higher than in the national Jewish population—51% of the national Jewish population had a bar/bat mitzvah, 38% attended Jewish overnight camp, and 23% attended Jewish day school or yeshiva. Pew Research Center, Religion & Public Life Project.
 15 In the national Jewish population, 35% identify as Reform, 18% as Conservative, 10% as Orthodox, 30% as no denomination, and 6% as other. Pew Research Center, Religion & Public Life Project.
 16 Source: U.S. Religious Landscape Survey of The Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life and the 2012 report, Nones on the Rise

Immersive JOFEE Participation Trends: Individuals often come back for more JOFEE experiences—be it the same or a different immersive JOFEE program from their first (Exhibit 10).¹⁷

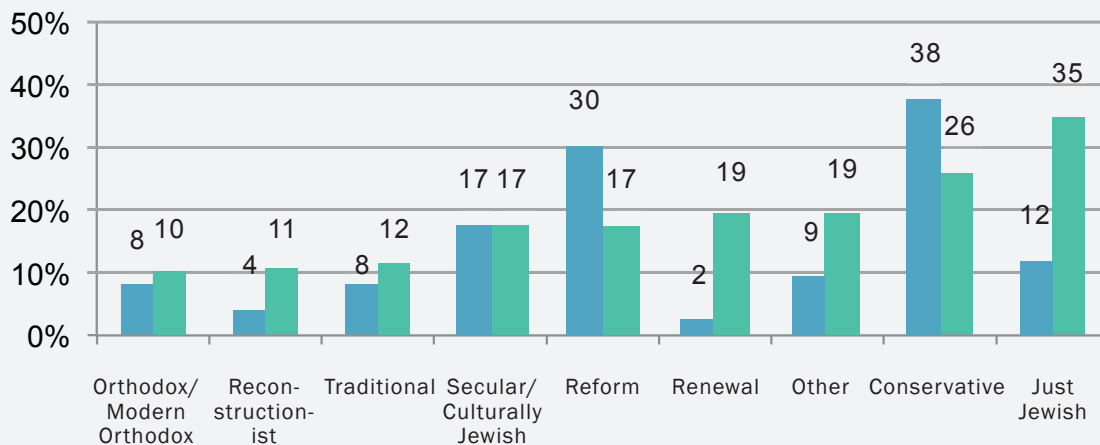
Participation Patterns – Program Length: Through repeat participation and exposure to multiple programs, survey respondents have participated in an average of 90 days of immersive JOFEE experiences over the course of their lifetimes. About half (52%) of participants have only done shorter-term immersive JOFEE experiences—e.g., people who go to a retreat, conference or bike ride once or year after year. Two in ten (19%) have only done longer-term immersive JOFEE programs, and three in ten (29%) have done a mixture of both shorter- and longer-term immersive JOFEE programs. This latter group accounts for the individuals who have had the greatest experience with JOFEE in terms of number of experiences and total days of immersive JOFEE experiences over the course of their lifetimes (Exhibit 11).

“[JOFEE programs] have been incredibly important in allowing me to pursue my interest in the environment and makes Judaism more relevant in my life. Building a community around these issues has brought together like-minded people who range in Jewish practice and belief to create a much more diverse and interesting Jewish community.”

–JOFEE Participant

RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION OF IMMERSIVE JOFEE PARTICIPANTS

Exhibit 9
(n=655)



■ Growing up (n=655) ■ Currently (n=655)

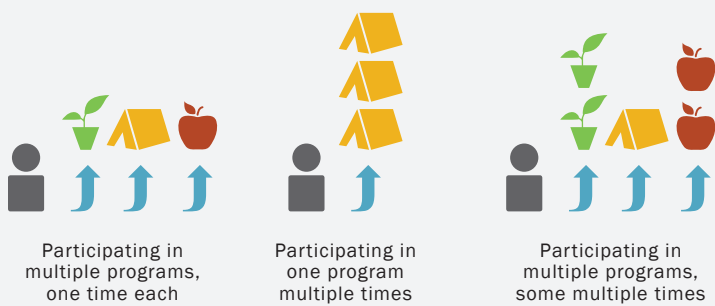
* Percentages do not total 100% since respondents could select more than one option

¹⁷ Participants' return to JOFEE programming is reflective of recent research suggesting that young Jews are engaging in de-centralized communities and opportunities that are more personal, informal and episodic, compared to generations that put synagogue life at the center of Jewish life. The young Jews' choices are based more on common interests than personal identities. Ukeles Associates, Incorporated, Young Jewish Adults in the United States Today (2006).



PARTICIPATION TRENDS IN IMMERSIVE JOFEE EXPERIENCES

Exhibit 10

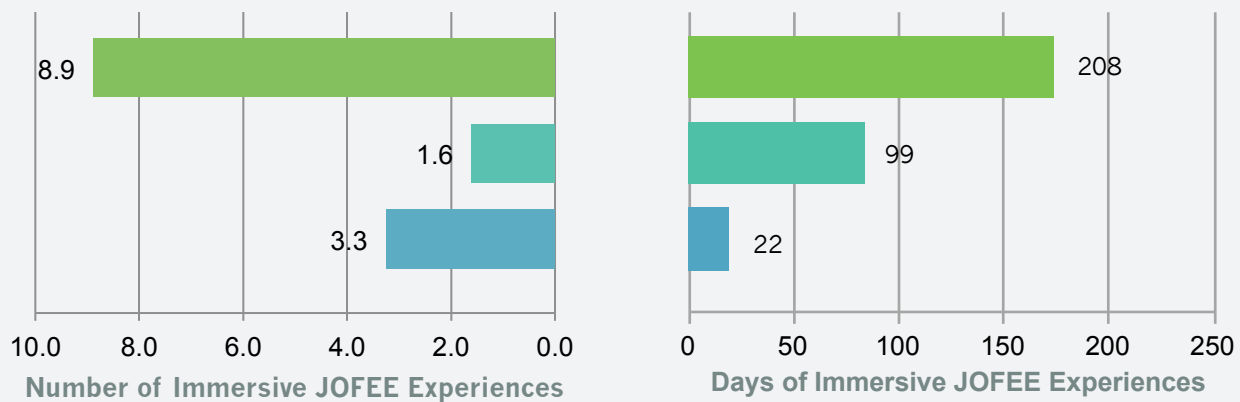


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Average number of JOFEE experiences per participant over their lifetime

NUMBER & DAYS OF IMMERSIVE JOFEE EXPERIENCES, BY LENGTH OF EXPERIENCE

Exhibit 11



■ Both Shorter & Longer (n=188)
 ■ Exclusively Longer (n=125)
 ■ Exclusively Shorter (n=342)

KEY FINDING

3 Reconnection

IMMERSIVE JOFEE programs have provided a meaningful place for disengaged or alienated Jews to reconnect Jewishly.

At some point in their lives, 63% of survey respondents report they felt disconnected with Jewish life for a variety of reasons, of which the most common were negative experiences (Exhibit 12). Nearly all (95%) of these disconnected respondents subsequently found a way to reconnect to Jewish life. One-third (32%) report that a JOFEE experience was a top reason they reconnected with Jewish life (Exhibit 13).

“I was impressed at the Hazon [Food] Conference at the number of formerly disconnected from their Jewish roots young people in their 20s that really connect to Judaism through the food movement. I think this is really amazing and exciting for the American Jewish community.”

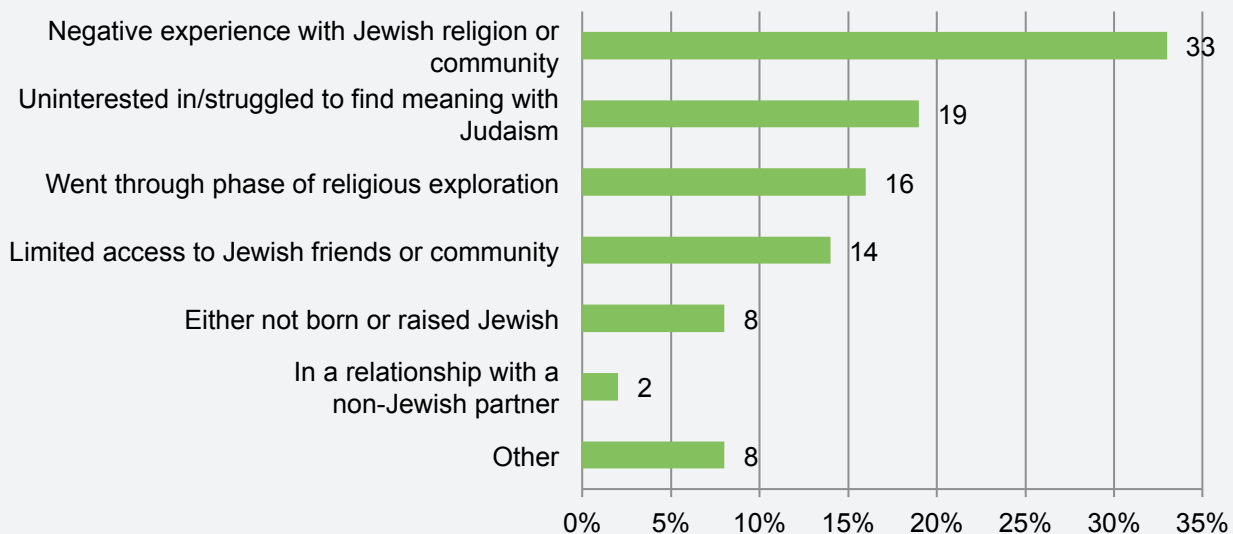
—JOFEE Participant

32%

Participants who reconnected to Jewish life due to JOFEE

TOP REASONS WHY PEOPLE DISCONNECTED FROM JEWISH LIFE

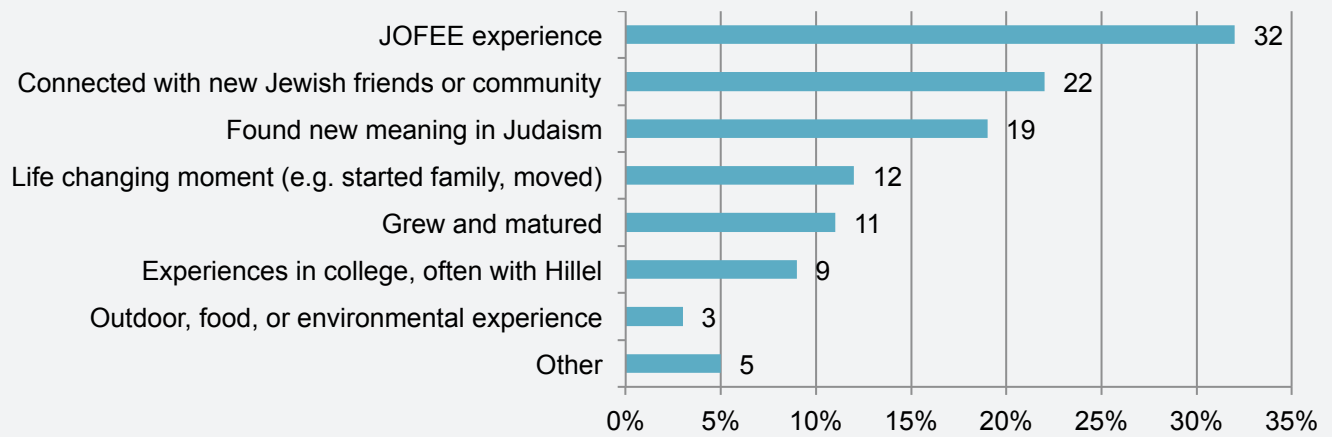
Exhibit 12
(n=415)



TOP REASONS WHY PEOPLE HAVE SINCE RECONNECTED WITH JEWISH LIFE

Exhibit 13

(n=393)



KEY FINDING

4

Intersection & Integration

THE MERGING OF JEWISH TRADITION

and learning with the outdoors, food and environmental issues is a major reason why people participate in immersive JOFEE programs and what they take away from their experiences.

Motivation: Connecting Jewish content with the outdoors, food, and environmental issues is the leading reason why people choose to participate in immersive JOFEE experiences; learning more about components within JOFEE are also key drivers of their participation (Exhibit 14). Beyond the content, many people come to JOFEE to be in a community of like-minded people.

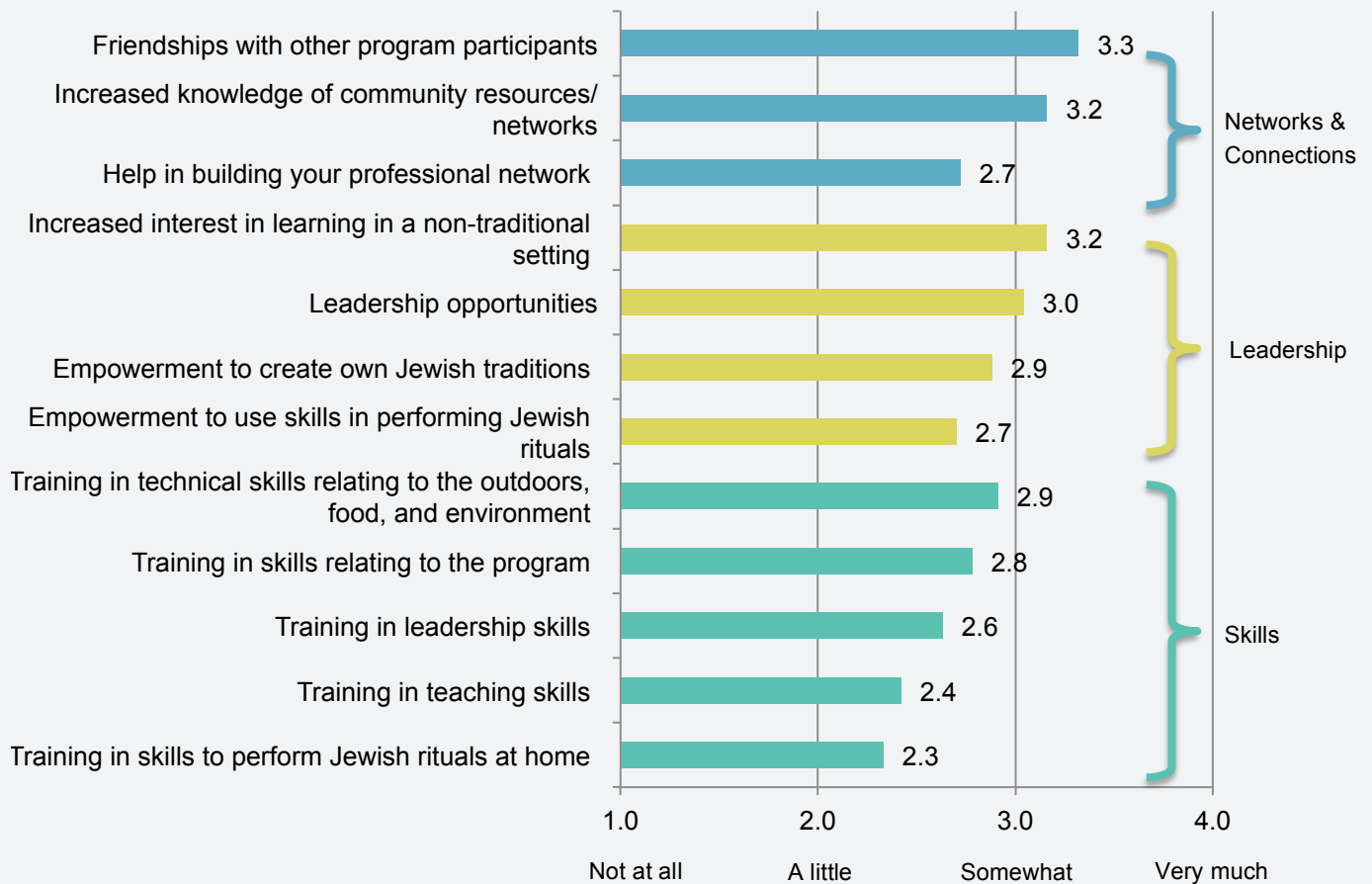
MOTIVATIONS FOR PARTICIPATING IN IMMERSIVE JOFEE EXPERIENCES

Exhibit 14
(n=597-651)



DID IMMERSIVE JOFEE PROGRAMS PROVIDE YOU WITH ANY OF THE FOLLOWING?

Exhibit 15 (n=615–650)



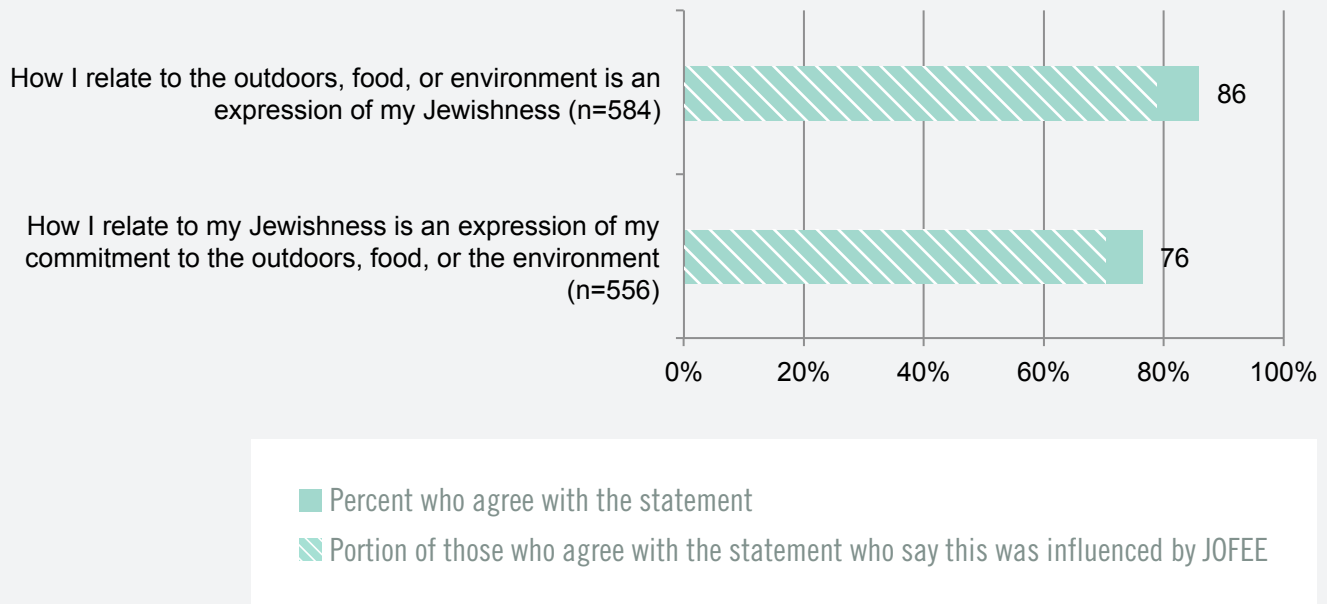
Program Design: The reasons people are drawn to immersive JOFEE programs dovetail with program objectives and what participants report they learn or gain from their immersive JOFEE experiences, suggesting good alignment between expectations and programmatic offerings. (Exhibit 15)

Immersive JOFEE programs provide new knowledge, skills, networks and personal connections, with increased empowerment to use them. The common learning goals identified by JOFEE programs for their participants include:

- Understanding the connection between modern environmentalism and Jewish tradition or culture
- Pursuing a personally relevant and meaningful Jewish journey
- Learning about various aspects of Jewish history, life, culture and tradition
- Building specific food, environment or outdoor skills
- Building specific teaching skills
- Building leadership capacity
- Building Jewish spirituality and skills in ritual-making
- Learning environmental and sustainable changes people can make in their own communities
- Personal growth or having a transformative experience
- Understanding the environmental issues and innovations in Israel
- Understanding the scope of JOFEE, the Jewish food movement and/or eco-Judaism
- Building community and connections with other like-minded people

INFLUENCE OF IMMERSIVE JOFEE EXPERIENCES ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JEWISH AND THE OUTDOORS, FOOD, OR ENVIRONMENT

Exhibit 16



Outcomes: Nearly all respondents agree that their immersive JOFEE experiences influenced the integration of their Jewishness and their relationship to the outdoors, food, and the environment (Exhibit 16). Of the 86% of respondents who agree that how they relate to the outdoors, food, or the environment is an expression of their Jewishness, 91% say this was influenced by their immersive JOFEE experiences. The results are similar for their Jewishness being an expression of their commitment to the outdoors, food, or the environment.

They also report that immersive JOFEE experiences influenced their perceptions around how these issues are related, and the meaning they make from that interrelationship (Exhibit 17). Participants who have more immersive JOFEE experiences and more total days of JOFEE show a significantly greater influence of their JOFEE experience on these items. These very positive findings speak to the heart of what JOFEE is all about: the intersection of Jewish life and the outdoors, food, and environmental issues.

“Before my JOFEE experience, I didn’t know that how I relate to the outdoors could even BE an expression of my Jewishness—the program opened my eyes to that.”

—JOFEE Participant

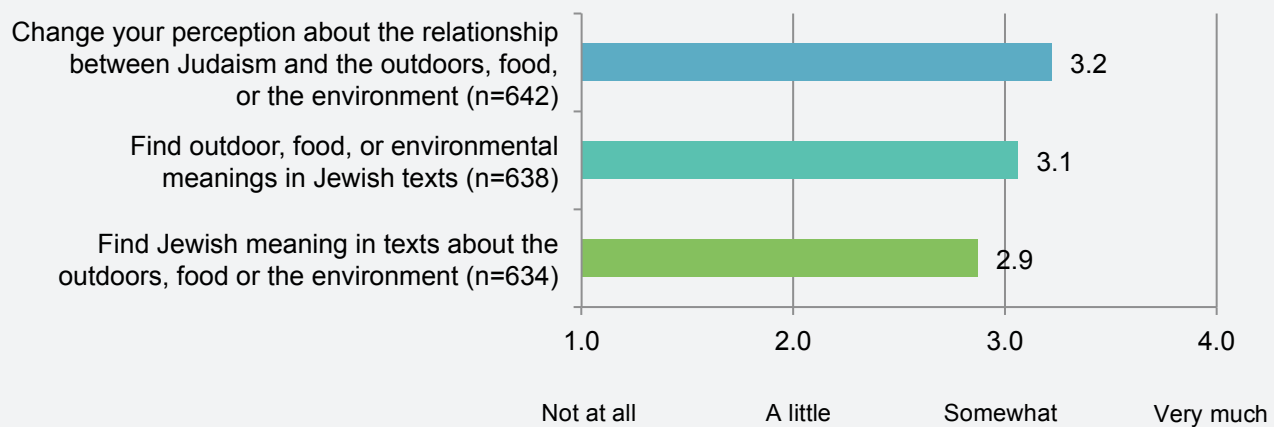
“[JOFEE programs] bring a voice and perspective to environmental education that allows for a wellspring of ritual and for culture to help people in a way that the strictly secular field science does not.”

—JOFEE Participant



TO WHAT EXTENT DID YOUR IMMERSIVE JOFEE EXPERIENCE CAUSE YOU TO...

Exhibit 17



KEY FINDING

5

Jewish Life, Learning, & Meaning

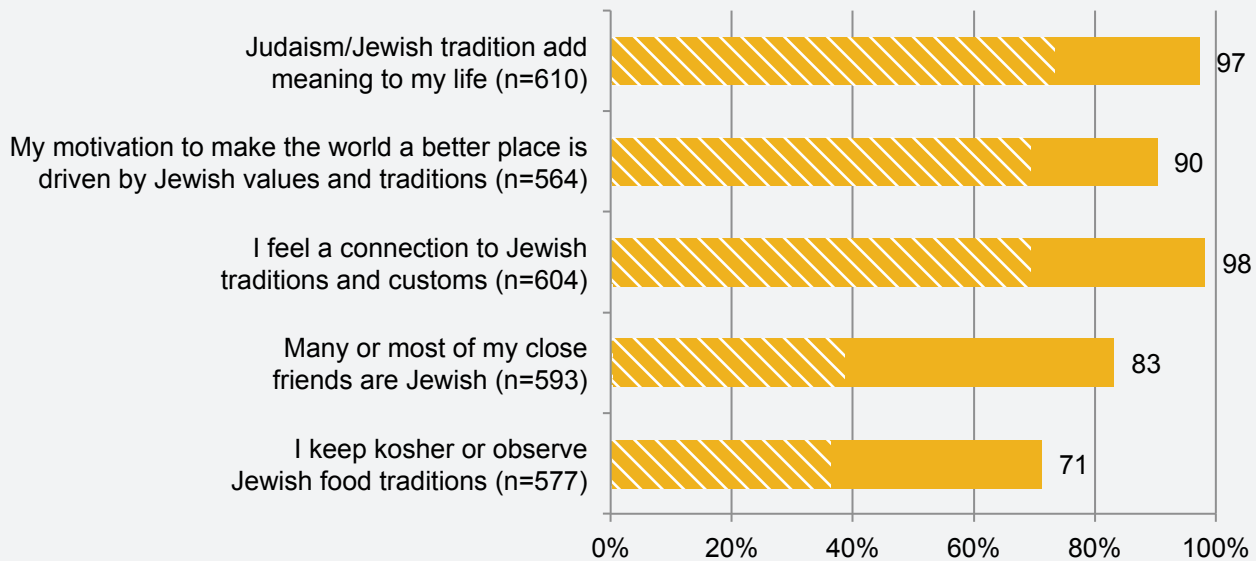
PARTICIPATING IN IMMERSIVE JOFEE PROGRAMS inspires a positive connection to Jewish life, learning and meaning, particularly among participants who are younger, and had fewer Jewish childhood experiences and have had more immersive JOFEE experiences.

“As I embraced my own identity, I was able to find a Jewish community and a Jewish life that made sense with who I was.”
—JOFEE Participant

Immersive JOFEE experiences influence a participant’s connection to Jewish values, traditions, customs, learning and meaning in a variety of ways, matching some of the key programmatic intentions described earlier (Exhibit 18).

INFLUENCE OF IMMERSIVE JOFEE EXPERIENCES ON CONNECTION TO JEWISH TRADITIONS & LIFE

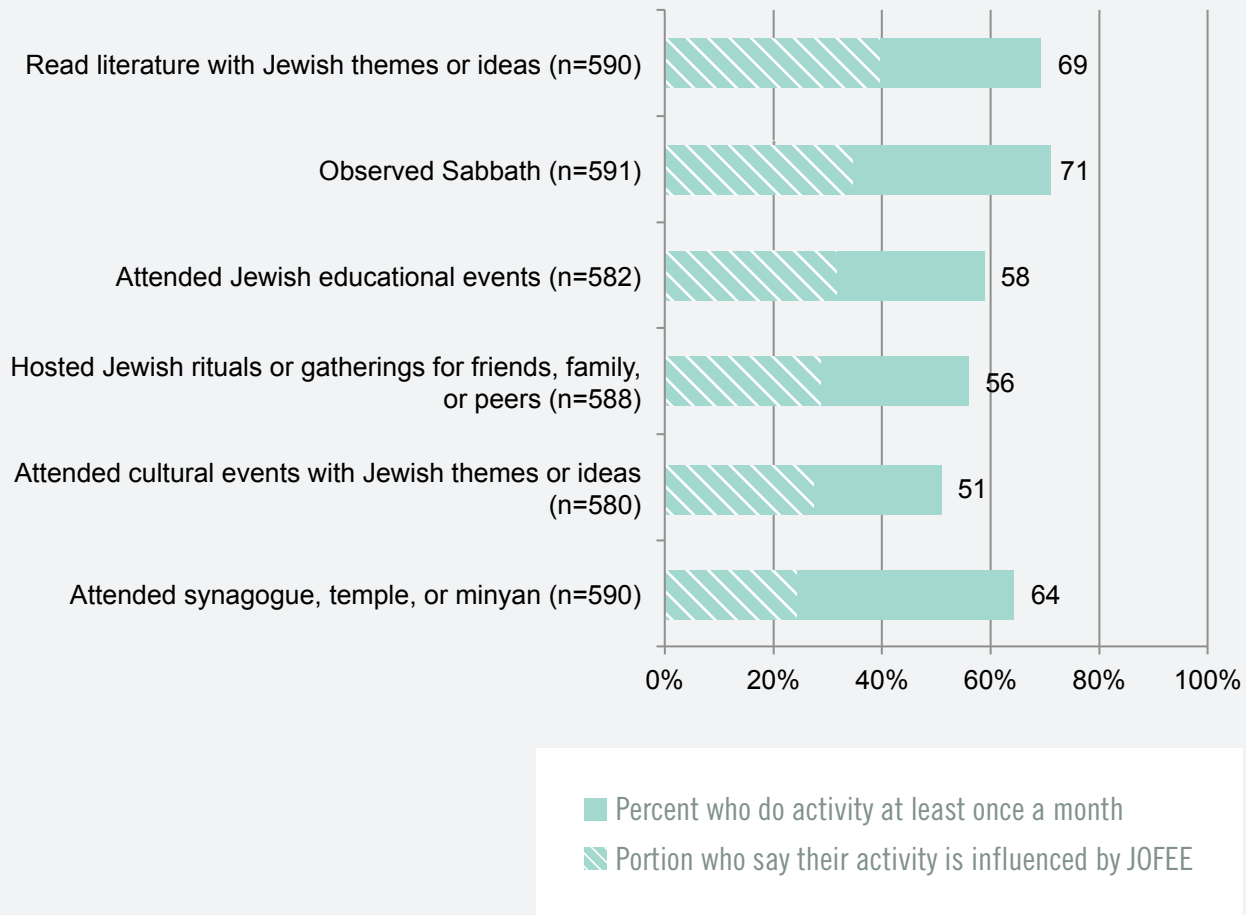
Exhibit 18



■ Percent who agree with the statement
▨ Portion of those who agree with the statement who say it was influenced by JOFEE

INFLUENCE OF IMMERSIVE JOFEE EXPERIENCES ON DOING JEWISH ACTIVITIES AT LEAST ONCE A MONTH

Exhibit 19



For example, almost all (97%) respondents agree that Judaism/Jewish tradition adds meaning to their life, 76% of whom say this was influenced by their immersive JOFEE experiences; 90% agree that their motivation to make the world a better place is driven by their Jewish values and traditions, 77% of whom say this was influenced by their immersive JOFEE experiences.

Somewhat fewer respondents report that JOFEE programs influence them to do various Jewish activities at least once a month (Exhibit 19). For example, 69% report that they read literature with Jewish themes or ideas at least once a month, 56% of whom say this is influenced by their immersive JOFEE

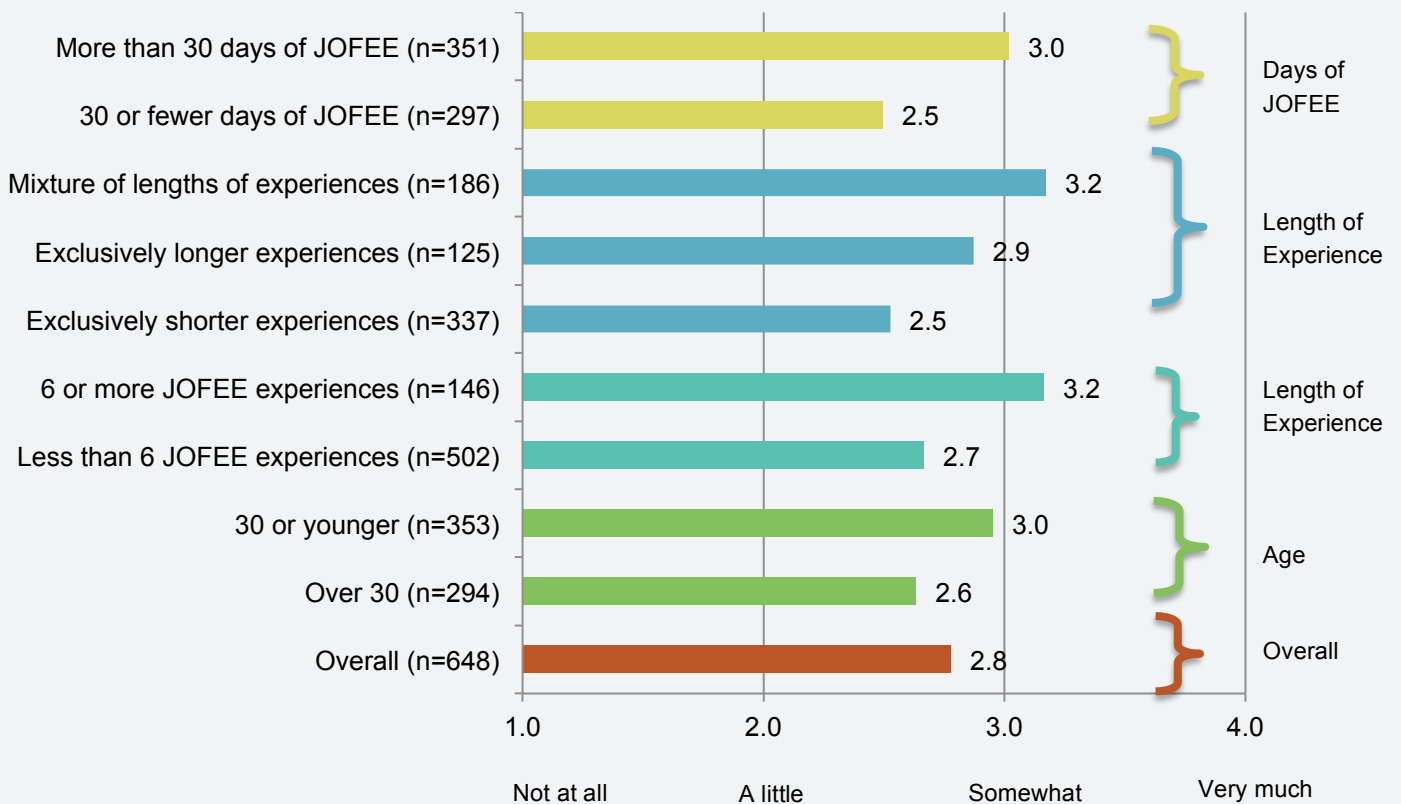
experiences. This level of frequency may be due to intentional choices about whether or not to participate in these particular Jewish activities, or how frequently the events occur. JOFEE does have a positive influence on these choices.

“Before my JOFEE experience, I didn’t know that how I relate to the outdoors could even BE an expression of my Jewishness—the program opened my eyes to that.”

—JOFEE Participant

INFLUENCE OF IMMERSIVE JOFEE EXPERIENCE ON JEWISH ATTITUDES & BEHAVIORS

Exhibit 20



The level of exposure to immersive JOFEE experiences, age, and to some extent Jewish childhood experiences are all important contributors to increased impact of immersive JOFEE experiences on Jewish attitudes and behaviors (Exhibit 20¹⁸).¹⁹

- The more types of JOFEE programs and the more days participants spend in immersive JOFEE experiences are significantly related to reporting a greater influence on Jewish-related changes in participants’ life, work and community. This is a positive indication that immersive JOFEE experiences have a continually increasing cumulative influence on a participant’s Jewishness.
- Younger participants (30 or younger) also report a significantly greater influence of JOFEE programs on

themselves Jewishly, which may be a function of the process of developing their Jewish journey.

- There is also a small difference in ratings based on Jewish childhood experiences—those with fewer Jewish childhood experiences report significantly greater outcomes of JOFEE than those with more such experiences on a few select items:
 - My motivation to make the world a better place is driven by Jewish values and traditions
 - Judaism/Jewish tradition add meaning to my life

¹⁸ Data in exhibit 20 are based on a composite of the following six items: To what extent did your JOFEE experiences cause you to... (1) connect more to your local Jewish community; (2) change your philanthropic or charitable giving practices; (3) change your perception about the relationship between Judaism and the outdoors, food or the environment; (4) find outdoor, food or environmental meanings in Jewish texts; (5) find Jewish meaning in texts about the outdoors, food or the environment; and (6) explore Jewish career options.

¹⁹ Furthermore, research shows that among non-Orthodox Jews, “voluntary experiences”—or making active, conscious choices to engage in Jewish opportunities—after childhood are the strongest predictors of Jewishness. These Jews are open to the influence of the experiences and opportunities they consciously choose, and, although there is a decrease in ritual practice over time, the importance of being Jewish increases. Bethamie Horowitz, *Connections and Journeys: Assessing Critical Opportunities for Enhancing Jewish Identity* (2000).



KEY FINDING

6

Commitment to Outdoor, Food, & Environmental Issues

IMMERSIVE JOFEE experiences have played an important role for many participants in their connection with the outdoors, food, and the environment and the importance of these issues in their lives.

Immersive JOFEE experiences play an important role in shaping participants' strong attitudes around environmental stewardship, food sustainability, and related issues (Exhibit 21). To illustrate, almost all (98%) agree that they care about how their food is produced and prepared, 83% of whom say this was influenced by their immersive JOFEE experiences.

In terms of making outdoor, food, and environmental changes in their life, work and community, however, on average, survey respondents say their JOFEE experiences have had "little" to "somewhat" of an impact (Exhibit 22, overall row ²⁰).

Looking collectively across a number of outdoor, food, and environmental attitudes and behaviors, it is clear that more exposure to JOFEE leads to greater influence; the influence of immersive JOFEE programming is significantly higher for respondents who (Exhibit 22):

- Have participated in more days of immersive JOFEE experiences over their lifetimes
- Have participated in more JOFEE experiences
- Are younger (30 or younger)

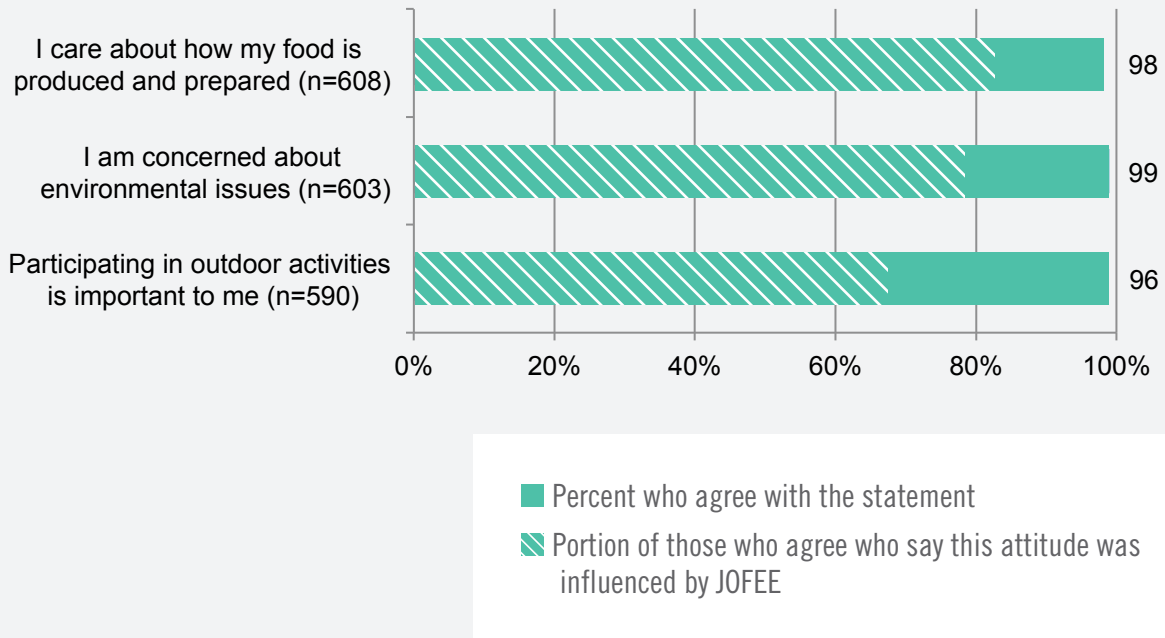
“When it comes to the environment, I want the Jewish community to see itself as part of the solution.”

—JOFEE Professional

²⁰ Data in exhibit 22 are based on a composite of the following 10 items: To what extent did your JOFEE experiences cause you to (1) change how you personally relate to the outdoors, food or environment; (2) make or suggest outdoor, food or environmental changes within organizations in your community; (3) make or suggest outdoor, food or environmental changes at your workplace; (4) make or suggest outdoor, food or environmental changes at home; (5) volunteer for activities or organizations relating to the outdoors, food or the environment; (6) start a program, organization or business relating to the outdoors, food or the environment; (7) become more civically engaged (e.g., contacting officials, signing petitions) on issues relating to the outdoors, food or environment; (8) explore further education on topics relating to the outdoors, food or the environment; (9) explore career options relating the outdoors, food or the environment; and (10) explore career options related to education.

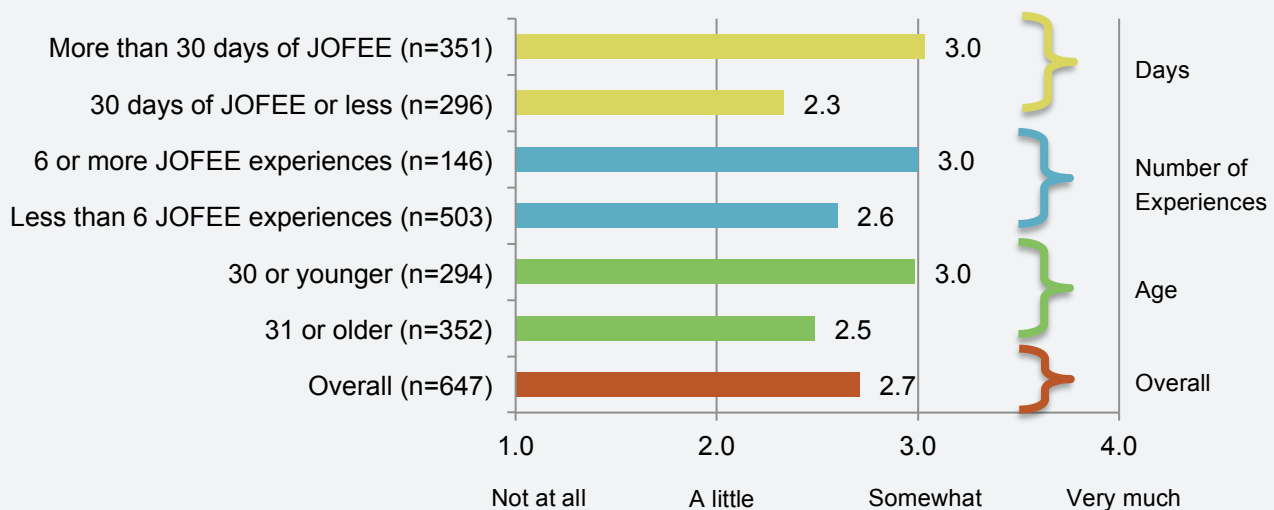
INFLUENCE OF IMMERSIVE JOFEE EXPERIENCES ON OUTDOOR, FOOD, & ENVIRONMENTAL ATTITUDES

Exhibit 21



OVERALL INFLUENCE OF IMMERSIVE JOFEE EXPERIENCE ON OUTDOOR, FOOD, & ENVIRONMENTAL ATTITUDES & BEHAVIORS, WITH COMPARISONS

Exhibit 22



KEY FINDING

7

Catalyst for Wider Jewish Leadership

LARGE NUMBERS of immersive JOFEE participants see themselves as leaders in the Jewish community and are actively creating Jewish experiences in their communities.

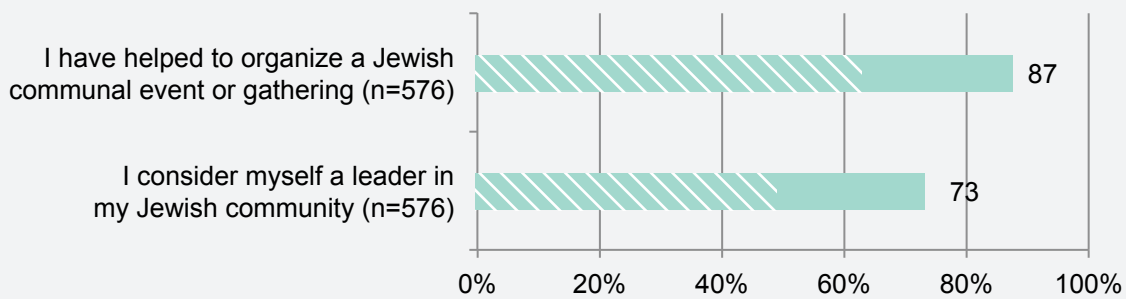
The vast majority (87%) of immersive JOFEE participants have helped to organize a Jewish communal event or gathering, two-thirds (63%) of whom say this was influenced by their immersive JOFEE experiences. Similarly, three-quarters (73%) consider themselves to be a leader in their Jewish community, two-thirds (67%) of whom say that their immersive JOFEE experiences influenced this (Exhibit 23). These are positive markers signaling the ongoing and ripple effect of immersive JOFEE experiences on reinforcing ongoing Jewish communal life.

“JOFEE is a perfect intersection of my values, and my personal and professional goals and strengths, experience and background.”

—JOFEE Participant

IMMERSIVE JOFEE INFLUENCE ON JEWISH COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Exhibit 23



■ Percent who agree with the statement
▨ Portion of those who agree with the statement who say it was influenced by JOFEE



Examples of Immersive JOFEE Experiences Catalyzing Jewish Leadership

“I started my own holistic nutrition business where I catered, taught, and consulted on various nutritional needs. I also created a Jewish home with my housemates where we clean the house before Shabbat, we do holidays together, and grow a garden in the backyard.”

“I arranged a tree planting for Tu B’Shvat with Trees Atlanta, attracting over 50 people (adults and kids from synagogues, Hillels etc.) and we planted over 45 trees in suburban Atlanta. The plan is to make this an annual event, enlarge the planning group from one person (me) to many, and get funding to support this.”

“I have started a small pickle business, taught about food preservation through secular and Jewish venues, started an interfaith community farm in Detroit, am on the board of my local synagogue and chair the ‘education and social action committee’ which I created ... and I’m going to grad school this fall to study Jewish experiential education.”

“I have continued to study topics relating to the environment, Judaism, and spirituality. I know I want to be a leader in this arena.”

KEY FINDING

8

Professional Leadership

JOFEE BRINGS NEW EDUCATORS AND PROFESSIONALS into the Jewish community. Over half of the passionate, skilled Jewish people working in JOFEE were drawn to a job in Jewish life through their interest in the broader areas of the outdoors, food, or the environment.

“I love working in a field that prizes awe, gratitude, responsibility and action.”
—JOFEE Professional

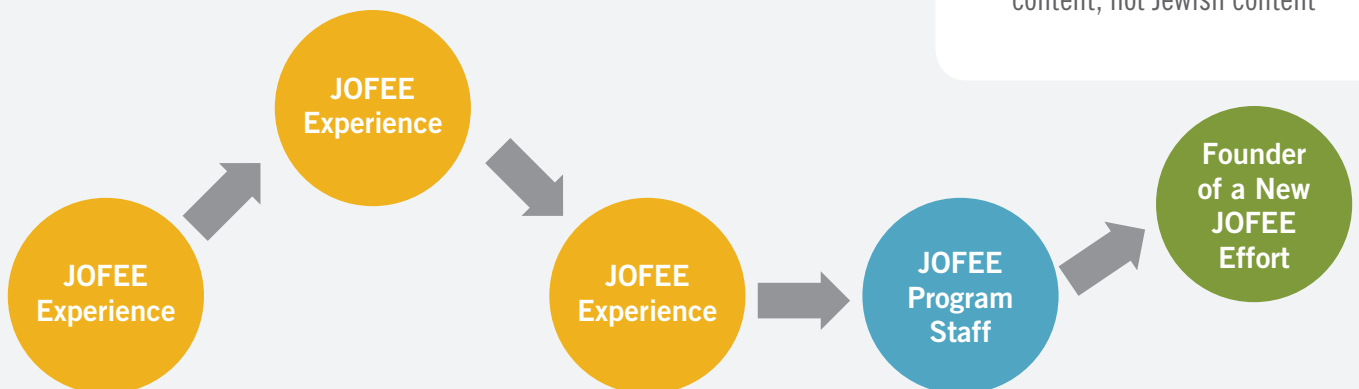
Professionals are the backbone of JOFEE; their inspiration and dedication have made JOFEE what it is today. Program leaders are described as visionary, dedicated, passionate and charismatic innovators who possess a can-do attitude with practical problem-solving skills. JOFEE professionals describe their work as meaningful for many reasons, including being in a community of like-minded peers, influencing the Jewish community, working outdoors and in nature, offering transformative experiences, and connecting Judaism to the issues and values of outdoor appreciation, food justice, and environmental sustainability.

JOFEE Experiences – The Path of JOFEE Professionals:

Today’s JOFEE professionals often came to these positions from having participated in immersive JOFEE opportunities themselves. Those experiences triggered their professional interest. A number of key JOFEE leaders can cite an intricate story of how their participation in one JOFEE experience led to another, which led to working in another, and then founding or leading yet another. This repeat involvement also provided them with the foundational JOFEE knowledge and skills that they use today. Today’s JOFEE program leaders have been in their positions for a median of 5 years (average of 4.5 years), ranging from 1 to 20 years on the job.

Motivation: When asked to describe what drew them to JOFEE, professionals most frequently (56%) mention their outdoor, food and environmental issues, citing particular

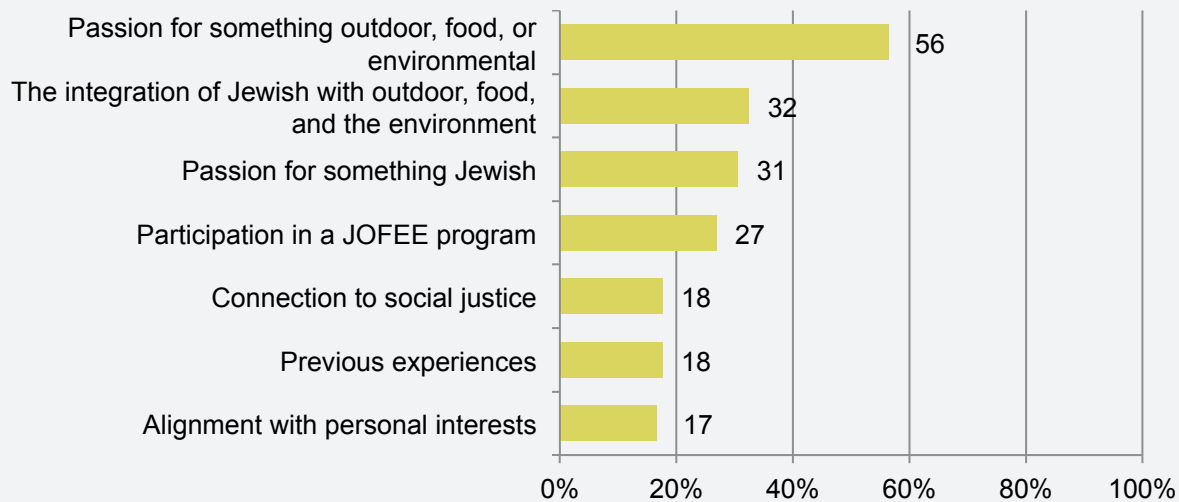
THE JOFEE PROFESSIONAL PATH



MOTIVATION OF PROFESSIONALS FOR JOFEE WORK

Exhibit 24

(n=108)



interests such as sustainable food, farming, being outside, environmental education, and addressing global climate change. (Exhibit 24). Almost a quarter (23%) of the 108 professionals responding to the JOFEE survey, did not mention a Jewish component of why they chose JOFEE work. This indicates that JOFEE is bringing a cadre of individuals into Jewish professional life who would likely not otherwise find their livelihood in the Jewish community.

“I love relating with participants who have never thought about the connections between Judaism and the environment.”

—JOFEE Professional

For many professionals, however, the integration of all JOFEE content areas, or the Jewish aspects in particular, are a primary draw for this work. Additionally, many describe their motivation for this work as a meeting of the personal and the professional, one often inspired by an intention to create and be part of a community while facilitating “aha moments for other people,” helping “people create meaning in their lives” and making “systemic, positive change in the world.”

Jewish Experiences & Expression: Nearly all of the JOFEE professionals surveyed (90%) had multiple Jewish childhood experiences, slightly higher than immersive JOFEE

participants overall. In their current Jewish practice, though, they do not fit neatly within traditional North American Jewish denominational movements. Four in ten (42%) identify as “Just Jewish,” and an additional two in ten (21%) identify as “other.” Many identifying themselves as “other” identify as post-denominational, non-denominational or pluralistic, and some simply say that the labels just “don’t fit.”

Professional Backgrounds: JOFEE professionals come to this work from a variety of backgrounds and have strong content knowledge for JOFEE work. Some have academic training in Jewish-related fields (e.g., Rabbinics, Jewish studies) and others are trained in fields related to the outdoors, food and the environment (e.g., ecology, urban studies, nutrition). Few enter the field with management and operational experience or skills.

The JOFEE Professional Network: There is a tight network of leaders at the heart of the JOFEE space. They have “come of age together” and have now become long-time friends who have worked side-by-side in all types of JOFEE programs, as participants and professionals. This network, though, is sometimes perceived as exclusive by aspiring JOFEE professionals, newcomers to the work and other observers. It has resulted—intentionally or not—in what might seem to be a somewhat insular network which could also benefit from looking beyond their circles.



Support JOFEE Professionals Provide One Another

.....

- Organizational strategy
- Idea sharing
- Fund development / funder relationships
- Program design
- Cross-marketing
- Staff hiring
- Participant recruitment
- Mentorship

Collaboration: JOFEE professionals are perceived as collaborative, creative and empathetic. The content of much JOFEE work, which requires these qualities, reinforces a culture of collaboration and teamwork within and across JOFEE programs. Individuals in the network of JOFEE professionals share how they are inspired by one another and can provide numerous examples of ways in which they support one another. This happens largely informally, at face-to-face gatherings (at the Hazon Food Conference, Green Hevra, and other national and regional JOFEE events), or in calls or e-mails.

They are able to share the “joys and frustrations” of their work with colleagues who understand the nature of JOFEE, which also enables them to feel “part of something bigger.”²¹

.....

“When I find myself challenged, I have people to contact, lots of social support and connections. I use my network for marketing, staff planning, programming, and to collaborate on fundraising.”

—JOFEE Professional

.....

21 The camaraderie felt by JOFEE professionals is supported by research that shows immersive outdoors group programming and experiences strengthen relationships and build community within a group, in addition to increasing communication and trust amongst group members. Leo McAvoy and Alan Ewert, *The Effects of Wilderness Settings on Organized Groups: A State-of-Knowledge Paper (2000)*. Andrew Bobilya, Lynn Akey, and Donald Mitchell, *Outcomes of a Spiritually Focused Wilderness Orientation Program (2011)*, *Journal of Experiential Education*, 33 (4) pp. 301-322.



Challenges

- Long hours
- Relatively low wages
- Expansive roles for individual staff
- Integration of professional and personal personas
- Organizational instability

Needs

- Higher salaries to attract and retain staff
- Increased professional development across all staff
- Management skills and talent
- Fundraising
- Business planning
- Navigation of the Jewish institutional landscape
- Human resources
- Marketing and Communications

That said, one of professionals' leading aspirations for JOFEE going forward is increased collaboration. While there is strong collaboration within the JOFEE network, there is an appreciation that there are greater collaborative opportunities in the broader landscape to serve more people more effectively. Professionals suggest different types of collaborations, from cross-organizational staff trainings and certifications, to mergers and consolidations as appropriate. Most focus on the importance of integrating JOFEE within existing Jewish institutions. They often cite increasing "mainline" interest from day schools, synagogues, JCCs, and federations. There are existing efforts, such as Jewish Farm School and the Jewish Greening Fellowship (see box on p. 27) that serve as useful models for the outward direction of JOFEE work.

Needs of JOFEE Professionals: JOFEE professionals cite a typically common set of challenges in their work which can lead

to professional burnout, but they also offer concrete examples of opportunities to address many of these challenges and support organizational sustainability and growth.

"Due to low salaries, which often result in staff housing as part of the compensation package, staff burn-out and turnover are quite high. Without consistency on staff, it's difficult to grow programs effectively. Without competitive salaries, it's difficult to attract people in advanced stages of their career to work for more than 2–3 years at the organization."

—JOFEE Professional

"There are very few jobs in this field; and even fewer (if any) well-paying jobs on which one can make a livelihood and support a family."

—JOFEE Participant

KEY FINDING

9

Community & Social Ties

JOFEE IS A POWERFUL Jewish community builder for participants, professionals and mainstream Jewish organizations at local, regional, and national levels. JOFEE partnerships are modeling a collaborative approach of working and learning together.

“It’s been exciting with congregations—the overlap of Jewish issues and issues of our time. Congregants can see that the synagogue is aware. The youth group is excited about it. People are feeling like it’s a positive direction for the congregation.”

—JOFEE Professional

JOFEE Proliferation in Communities: Interview informants overwhelmingly report that Jewish organizations throughout their communities are offering more and more diverse JOFEE experiences—not necessarily immersive—than they were even 5 or 10 years ago.²² This work is being supported by JOFEE organizations, which help develop and deliver JOFEE content, whether that be teaching JOFEE classes, providing spaces for JOFEE experiences (e.g., offering a farm site for an event or building a Jewish community garden on-site for an organization), supporting the greening changes in organizational policies and practices, or distributing educational materials.

Building and Supporting Constituencies: Anecdotally, interviewees note that Jewish organizations embrace JOFEE practices and programming because they are important to the organization’s current and potential constituents. Some Jewish organizations are more naturally inclined to JOFEE due to consistent interests, focus of existing programming or the broader community’s environmental and food-related interests. Others see it as a branding and marketing opportunity to broaden their reach. JOFEE professionals and other community leaders frequently report that JOFEE efforts

provide meaningful ways to engage constituents and help create a welcoming environment, while also providing rich Jewish experiences. As one JOFEE professional shared, “We find a lot of folks not interested in institutional settings. Here it is very casual, an easy-going atmosphere, an informal setting where families themselves can do their own form of personal education.”

Collaborations: Nearly all JOFEE programs collaborate with at least one other organization, be it a synagogue, JCC, day school, federation, camp, or social service agency, as earlier examples of JOFEE efforts brought to local communities and organizations suggest. These collaborations and relationships help in recruiting participants and building interest in their work. They sometimes serve a programmatic purpose and occasionally facilitate the sharing of resources. While it is likely too early to make definitive conclusions, it is possible that these JOFEE relationships are modeling a collaborative approach in which Jewish programs and organizations are increasingly working together and learning from each other.

“It is amazing how many synagogues have gotten on board with JOFEE over the last 10 years. There’s been a sea-change—composting, recycling, saving resources, community gardens, nature hikes...I think it does translate to one more avenue of engagement. Even the ones who don’t love it enjoy it enough to still come.”

—JOFEE Professional

²² Community outcomes shared in this section draw primarily upon interview and focus group data, with particular focus on Colorado and New York sources, as well as more limited survey and program data, when available. Due to the limited availability of data on this topic, it may still be relatively early for assessing the institutional and community outcomes that JOFEE is having.



Examples of JOFEE Efforts Brought to Local Jewish Organizations & Communities

.....

Outdoors

- Building gardens that are utilized in programming across an institution
- Organizing nature hikes
- Building nature learning spaces and outdoor classrooms in early childhood education centers to keep up with the growing trend of experiential education

Environment

- Introducing new Jewish environmental rituals, such as blessings for planting
- Composting, recycling, and resource-reduction at synagogues, JCCs, Hillels, Day Schools and other Jewish communal institutions
- Organizing one-time youth educational programs and field-trips focusing on the critical importance of saving the environment in their generation
- Revitalized congregational environmental Task Forces or Green Teams to establish more environmentally friendly practices
- Introducing an educational program for youth summer camp curricula that is integrated with a community composting program
- Creating new JOFEE programs on college campuses

Food

- Hosting food festivals at JCCs and synagogues across the country that celebrate the intersection of Jewish tradition and food
- Initiating Jewish Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs which bring local produce directly from a farm to Jewish institutions across the country
- Honoring Global Hunger Shabbat to broaden awareness about global food insecurity
- Participating in a Food Audit, an assessment and guide developed by Hazon for institutions to help make the practice of creating more sustainable communities more accessible
- Utilizing *Food for Thought*, a source book from Hazon, in a synagogue program

Emerging Factors for Effectively Supporting JOFEE Experiences in Communities

- The presence of **committed, charismatic champions**, individuals passionate about infusing JOFEE within the Jewish community and capable of generating community support and enthusiasm
- The presence and active **support of local leadership**, including rabbinic leadership and leaders in local Jewish organizations
- The ability to **train local leaders**, from educators to lay leaders, to run JOFEE programs independently
- **Access to resources**—financial and non-financial—to support local efforts
- An **openness to innovation** for the development of programs and other JOFEE efforts

As organizations and communities consider the role of JOFEE in their futures, the key themes shared by interviewees as necessary preconditions for JOFEE success (see box) are important considerations, including a champion, support of local leadership, access to resources, access to training opportunities and an openness to innovation. Given that many JOFEE efforts are collaborations, co-sponsored events, and shared initiatives, it is critical that key players strategically, proactively and thoughtfully navigate roles and ownership, and appropriately acknowledge contributions made. This goes a long way to fostering trust and building a base for future collaborations.

Networks: While building personal connections is an important part of the immersive JOFEE experience and is a key takeaway for participants, there is yet to be a strong, broad-reaching JOFEE network. The connections that participants make with one another during their programs are often powerful for them. Large regional and national events—such as food conferences—are places to connect with like-minded, passionate Jews, often on a recurring basis. JOFEE alumni

report having built lasting individual connections from their JOFEE experiences, beyond a core, but they typically do not identify as part of a larger JOFEE network. This may be because the JOFEE community may not be large or strong in their home community. There is interest in the development of more supports for connections, including listservs and more frequent, varied and short-term program opportunities in order for people to remain involved with JOFEE while maintaining careers and families. In addition, part of this may also be because until this study, there has been no phrase or acronym to encompass this emerging movement.

Examples of Community Approaches to JOFEE: The following two vignettes describe the approaches taken by Jewish communities in Colorado and New York to utilize JOFEE in supporting Jewish life. They are offered as illustrative examples for communities to learn from. Please see the companion case studies to this report for a fuller story on the JOFEE efforts in these two communities.

“The only hope for the Jewish community is if we create experiences that create depth, meaning and joy. Without these, we’re sunk. These qualities define all my JOFEE experiences.”

—JOFEE Participant

Building A Jewish Food Movement in Colorado: A Multi-Faceted Grassroots Strategy

Leading funders supporting Jewish life and community in Colorado identified a challenge: many Jewish people in Greater Denver and Boulder are not connected to local Jewish institutions even though most report that being Jewish is important to them. Aware of an emerging food movement in Colorado and that Coloradans prioritize an environmentally sustainable lifestyle, the funders came to the conclusion that integrating these interests with Jewish life and culture was a potentially game-changing strategy for creating a more welcoming and vibrant Jewish life in Denver and Boulder.

Rose Community Foundation and the Oreg Foundation, later joined by the 18 Pomegranates Foundation, have collaboratively responded to this challenge, with different levels of funder involvement over the course of multiple years. Hazon was brought in for their content knowledge and to play a key role in developing and facilitating the strategy. The effort, marked by funder collaboration, partnership between funders and grantees, and deep attentiveness to community needs, included several key components:

- **Leveraging the Hazon Food Conference to spark local efforts and build a network of local change-makers:** Approximately 50 diverse participants from Colorado received a scholarship to attend this national conference and committed to applying their learnings by planning food-related events or programs in their communities. This first cohort—followed by others—was one of the first coordinated efforts to create a local movement in Colorado. During the conference, participants connected with national leaders and began building a peer-network. Upon their return from the conference, they were convened locally to plan diverse, local efforts, including:
 - Initiating Jewish Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs;²³
 - Creating Jewish gardens at JCCs and other community locations; and
 - Developing new Jewish learning programs.
- **Establishing a Hazon Colorado Office to support networking and build local leaders:** The presence of a national JOFEE organization—Hazon—supporting local initiatives was piloted in Colorado utilizing a multi-pronged approach:
- **Providing professional supports and expertise:** This support focused on infusing Jewish tradition into local efforts, weaving networks among and across local practitioners and facilitating networking and learning between Colorado practitioners and JOFEE leaders across the nation. Hazon Colorado has also worked to increase awareness of and interest in JOFEE within Jewish institutions in the area and to introduce a local advisory board that supports local leader development and grassroots community engagement.
- **Developing a mini-grant program to build a Jewish food movement in Colorado:** With support from funders, Hazon Colorado has allocated more than \$60,000 in grants of \$1,000–\$4,000 to more than 30 community projects and initiatives since 2010. Mini-grant recipients are strengthening the Jewish food movement across Colorado in many different ways, such as:
 - Expanding programming at a sustainable dairy goat farm to bring more people into Jewish life;
 - Developing a co-op to provide local, sustainably raised and humanely slaughtered kosher chickens, and, in turn, to educate the community about eco-kashrut; and
 - Developing two week long day camps for youth focusing on farm-based Jewish learning.
- **Hosting an annual community-wide Colorado Jewish Food Festival:** This food festival, in fact, has evolved into a national model for Jewish Food Festivals in other regions.

Overall, in responding to grassroots interests, this strategy has created new and expanded JOFEE activities in the Denver and Boulder communities, connected practitioners to each other, and built local program capacity around JOFEE. And as a result, the roll up of efforts is developing the Jewish Food Movement in Colorado.

²³ A CSA is a regularly-scheduled produce pickup from a local farm, delivered to a central location. A Jewish CSA uses the CSA model as a platform for inspiring Jewish education and community building. For example, Jewish CSA programs often include educational programs and a farm trip, so that members and their families come together to learn about food through the double prism of Jewish tradition and contemporary life.

The research for this section came from *Building a Jewish Food Movement in Colorado: A Case Study of The Influence of Jewish Outdoor, Food, and Environmental Education*, which is available online at hazon.org/jofee.

Sparking Environmental Change Within Jewish institutions: The Jewish Greening Fellowship

Since 1993, the UJA-Federation of New York's Commission on Jewish Identity and Renewal (COJIR) has been funding a range of efforts—including JOFEE programs—that aim to inspire a passion for life and learning in the Jewish community and to assure that the next generations are engaged by a dynamic Jewish community that is open and welcoming. One of COJIR's largest JOFEE investments, over \$1.3 million over six years, has been in the unique and noteworthy Jewish Greening Fellowship (JGF), originally a program of the Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center and now a program of Hazon.

The mission of JGF is to generate meaningful responses to climate change and to strengthen Jewish life. With support from UJA-Federation of New York, 77 fellows—senior professional and lay leaders from local beneficiary agencies, synagogues and Jewish day schools—have participated in an 18-month cohort-based leadership training program that empowers them to engage their constituents in Jewish environmental education, make their organizational operations more sustainable, and increase the energy efficiency of their facilities. Now in its third cohort, the JGF Network consists of fellows from 55 community centers, summer camps, congregations (across denominations), day schools, and social service organizations.

The JGF fellows, their organizations and the environment have experienced a range of positive outcomes—outcomes that are catching the attention of Jewish institutions across Metropolitan New York and raising awareness about the environment within the Jewish community. Key outcomes are as follows:

- **JGF fellows are making small and big changes in their organizations, bringing the environment and sustainability to the forefront of Jewish institutions.** They are shifting organizational policies and practices and creating JOFEE learning and engagement opportunities across their organizations. They have made energy-efficient updates, conducted energy audits and instituted green cleaning procedures. Additionally, they are developing and expanding Jewish environmental educational programming for a range of audiences, from family education to youth education to senior programs. While some of these shifts come at a substantial financial cost and require significant shifts in norms, JGF organizations are seeing a return, and indeed financial savings, from their investments.
- **JGF fellows and organizations are leveraging new and different sources of funding to support their greening efforts.** Since the JGF was launched in 2009, JGF organizations have raised over \$3.3 million for greening projects. Grants received by JGF organizations have come from government, foundations, businesses and individual donors and range in size from \$500 to over \$1 million. For example, one JGF organization received a capital grant from the City of New York for new windows and another received funding from the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority for lighting upgrades.
- **JGF is building the Jewish identity of participants,** for whom integrating their mutual passions for Jewish life and the environment brings great meaning.
- **JGF outcomes in the Jewish community are reverberating beyond the fellows' workplaces. Most alumni are leveraging their roles as lay leaders in congregations, members of JCCs, and parents in Jewish schools to spur environmental change in the Jewish community.** JGF organizations are developing new relationships and collaborations. Greening projects are frequently resulting in relationships between Jewish institutions, such as JCCs and synagogues, as well as neighborhood-based collaborations.

The research for this section came from *The Influence of Immersive Jewish Outdoor, Food, and Environmental Education: A Case Study of Programs Supported by UJA-Federation of New York*, which is available online at hazon.org/jofee



KEY FINDING

10 Hope

PARTICIPATION in immersive JOFEE experiences has increased participants' sense of hope for the future of the Jewish people.

Overall, 84% of survey respondents agree that their JOFEE experiences increased their sense of hope for the Jewish people.²⁴ Participants describe this in multiple ways, including:

- Having an understanding of a larger, more inclusive Jewish community;
- Being more hopeful for the continued “evolution” of Jewish tradition and Jewish life; and
- An increased sense of hope in having an open-minded, learning community.

84%

Participants with increased sense of hope for the Jewish people

“ I feel more hopeful for all people—for the world—that a caring, creative, incredible group of people are being taught how to change the world through [JOFEE]. ”

—JOFEE Participant

²⁴ This finding is similar to results from other surveys conducted by Hazon between 2007–2010 of participants at four food conferences and two bike rides, which show approximately 88% agreement with the statement.





Opportunities & Challenges for the Field

BY CONSIDERING the implications of the findings from this study, funders, JOFEE program professionals, and members of the broader Jewish community have an opportunity to develop JOFEE to its fullest potential.

This study, the first of immersive JOFEE programs, provides a view into a leading element of the JOFEE landscape. The findings suggest a number of opportunities and challenges for consideration by funders, JOFEE programs and their professionals, and the Jewish community more broadly about the broader JOFEE landscape—not just immersive JOFEE programming—going forward. The issues shared below largely are both opportunities and challenges at the same time. They present areas that can be explored more deeply, but which may also pose some stumbling blocks along the way. These ideas, along with the considerations offered for funders and practitioners which follow, are offered in the spirit of mutual ongoing learning.

“[JOFEE opportunities] will grow on steroids if the Jewish funding world decides to make it a priority.”

—JOFEE Professional

“It would be awesome if [JOFEE] wasn’t a separate field, but rather just a part of what is done.”

—JOFEE Professional



While there are shared core tenants of JOFEE, there are also divergent perspectives on some aspects of JOFEE intentions. JOFEE program leaders and their stakeholders will need to engage in direct, proactive conversations to ensure that they have common expectations, or, alternatively, an understanding of where their perspectives and interests are shared and where they deviate, to ensure effective partnerships.

Areas of multiple perspectives identified in this research include:

- **JOFEE's relationship to the Jewish community** – Should JOFEE focus/be focused on facilitating “mainstream” Jewish organizations (e.g., synagogues, JCCs, Hillels) to do more JOFEE programs?, Does JOFEE provide a “Jewish alternative”? Or can it be both? What are the tradeoffs and benefits of taking one particular approach or exploring multiple alternatives?
- **The balance of programmatic components within JOFEE** – There can be a tension around which of the elements within JOFEE programming should have greater prominence within a program (e.g., greater focus on personal development versus addressing social justice issues). In reality participants and funders can be (and sometimes are) involved in JOFEE programs for slightly varying reasons.
- **Ground-up and top-down approaches** – While some communities are benefiting from incorporating national models into their local work, others prefer grassroots, homegrown models.



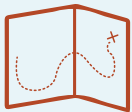
JOFEE straddles several other fields both within and beyond the Jewish community, from Jewish camping, Jewish family engagement, and Israel programs, to secular learning in the outdoors, food and environmental spheres, and social justice and advocacy work. How JOFEE is defined – a field unto itself, a theme that can be woven into many existing aspects of Jewish communal life, or something else – creates implications for how JOFEE can be supported to grow.



As interest in JOFEE grows, there is a need to ensure program quality. JOFEE professionals, in particular, note that perceptions of quality – what quality programming looks like and where it is evident across the current JOFEE landscape – vary. There is work to be done to define what quality means, how it may differ in various manifestations of JOFEE, and creating mechanisms to support quality.



Financial sustainability eludes nearly all JOFEE programs. Practitioners and funders alike repeatedly note that JOFEE organizations are under-resourced, often with limited staff capacity. Professional staff, while strong in JOFEE content, are typically weaker in the management and operational skills necessary for sustainability and strategic growth. A top stakeholder concern is the financial sustainability of JOFEE organizations. Some wonder whether this field can reduce its dependency on philanthropy and expand earned-income models to grow opportunities.



Some perceive a need for greater efficiencies across the JOFEE programs and organizations. There is a perception of preventable redundancies (e.g., missed opportunities for shared learning, resource sharing and coordination), despite the recent Hazon/Isabella Freedman/Teva merger. Given limited resources, an overarching, compelling strategy for JOFEE could address funder and community leader interests in exploring mergers and scaling.



The interconnectedness of the professional community has built a strong JOFEE core. For JOFEE to expand, however, established leaders need to continue to welcome new people into roles of leadership. In addition, current and future leaders need to pay attention to developing productive relationships with existing Jewish institutions.



Considerations for Practitioners

- Explore the relationship between JOFEE experiences (immersive and non-immersive) and broader Jewish community life to consider new ways to connect communities and JOFEE. JOFEE is not a one-size-fits-all strategy, but rather a cross-cutting strategy which can be customized to accomplish different purposes and engage a diverse range of audiences.
- With individuals interested in working in JOFEE and yet limited positions available, consider strategies that provide opportunities for these individuals to help grow JOFEE, such as through developing cohorts of individuals to create localized events and programs.
- Collaborate in developing a core set of JOFEE outcomes for participants and programs, as well as metrics for those outcomes, and begin collecting data to inform practice and document accomplishments and impact.
- Continue to promote JOFEE—to participants and potential professionals—as an open door, welcoming to all.
- Pursue organizational collaborations, alignment and possible mergers to increase operational efficiencies and promote quality programming.



Considerations for Funders

- Recognize that given the size and scope of JOFEE, investments of many different sizes in the field can make an important contribution in helping to expand Jewish life and learning through JOFEE, especially to people who have previously been disconnected from Jewish life.
- Consider ways to promote JOFEE concepts and approaches with existing grantee portfolios, on local, regional, national or international levels, as well as in new grantmaking efforts.
- Support the development of professionals in the JOFEE space to build the capacity needed for JOFEE to reach its potential.
- Build upon the promising financial models, in which participants are paying to participate, and look for ways to support the financial sustainability of JOFEE.
- Promote opportunities to enhance the network of JOFEE participants and professionals in order to catalyze sector growth.
- Support further research to explore unanswered questions from this study, such as programmatic return on investment and the overall impact of JOFEE programs (immersive and non-immersive) on Jewish communities.
- Support market research to better understand the needs, interests, and constraints of JOFEE participants and potential participants.



New York, NY
Food Conference Exec '06, NY Ride,
Hazon CSA



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Members included:

Adina Dubin Barkinskiy, The Morningstar Foundation

Judith Belasco, Hazon

Adam Berman, Urban Adamah

Seth Cohen, Schusterman Family Foundations

Lisa Farber Miller, Rose Community Foundation

Lisa Gerton, The Morningstar Foundation

Jon Marker, Jim Joseph Foundation

Josh Miller, Jim Joseph Foundation

Naomi Rabkin, Leichtag Family Foundation

Vladimir Ronin, UJA-Federation of New York

Nigel Savage, Hazon

Melanie Schneider, UJA-Federation of New York

Charlene Seidle, Leichtag Family Foundation

Nili Simhai

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By investing in promising Jewish education grant initiatives, the Jim Joseph Foundation seeks to foster compelling, effective Jewish learning experiences for young Jews in the United States. Established in 2006, the Jim Joseph Foundation has awarded \$300 million in grants to engage, educate, and inspire young Jewish minds to discover the joy of living vibrant Jewish lives.



Leichtag Foundation strives to alleviate human hardship, advance self-sufficiency, and promote tolerance and understanding, reflecting the Leichtags' pride in their Jewish heritage.



The Morningstar Foundation is a private family foundation primarily dedicated to strengthening the Jewish community in the Greater Washington, D.C. area, throughout the United States, and in Israel. Additional areas of focus for The Morningstar Foundation include enhancing educational opportunities for disadvantaged young people, protecting the environment, promoting the development of civil society in Israel, and safeguarding individual rights.



Rose Community Foundation uses leadership, grantmaking and donor engagement to invest in strategic and innovative solutions to enduring problems and emerging issues. The Foundation has granted more than \$200 million since it was founded in 1995.



The Schusterman Family Foundations is a global enterprise that supports and creates innovative initiatives for the purpose of igniting the passion and unleashing the power in young people to create positive change for themselves, the Jewish community and the broader world.



The world's largest local philanthropy, United Jewish Appeal - Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of New York, Inc. cares for Jews everywhere and for New Yorkers of all backgrounds, connects people to their Jewish communities, and responds to crises — in New York, in Israel, and around the world.



Hazon means vision. We work to create a healthier and more sustainable Jewish community, and a healthier and more sustainable world for all.



Informing Change is a values driven strategic consulting firm that partners with foundations and nonprofit organizations to improve effectiveness, inform learning and increase impact.

Appendices

Appendix A: Research Considerations & Clarifications

Appendix B: Immersive JOFEE Field Map

APPENDIX A

Appendix A

Research Considerations & Clarifications

This research focuses only on immersive JOFEE programs at least four days in length. There may be other JOFEE programs that also meet these criteria but are not included in the study due to limited knowledge of their existence. Also, there are shorter-term and episodic JOFEE experiences (e.g., an afternoon family-centered farm festival, an overnight retreat, a multi-week JOFEE-focused class) that are part of the broader JOFEE arena, but since they are not immersive by this definition, they were not included in this research.

Data were collected from immersive JOFEE programs using a Program Data Form. In some cases organizations provided estimates of total participants, program days, budgets, etc., and some of these data were unavailable for some programs.

Total immersive JOFEE participation numbers are the sum of participants from each program during a given year. Therefore, they do not take into account the fact that some individuals may have participated in more than one immersive JOFEE program within any given year.

Survey respondents were asked about the overall influence of their immersive JOFEE experiences on various knowledge, attitudinal, and behavioral issues. Because many survey respondents have participated in more than one type of immersive JOFEE program, the analysis cannot separate out the unique effects of each program on participants.

The survey included non-participant respondents to create a comparison group. Due to questions about the selection of those respondents, their relationship to JOFEE and the meaning of the comparison, this report does not include analysis of non-participant data. It only reports on survey responses of participants and responses of professionals, some of whom are also immersive JOFEE participants.

Available data have some limitations in addressing certain research questions. In particular, data collection for the New York and Colorado case studies focused on networks and the influence of JOFEE on the Jewish community and organizations. Therefore, findings presented in this report related to broader community outcomes place greater weight on the information collected about those particular communities.

The research design and data collection were conducted by The Improve Group in the first half of 2013. Informing Change was engaged in October 2013 for Phase II of this research process to assist with analysis and making meaning of the research. As a result of this transition, Informing Change does not have access to all of the original data (e.g., some interview and focus group transcripts are not available), and is working from decisions made by others during the research design and data collection processes.

Appendix B

Immersive JOFEE Field Map

This field map lists key information about each immersive JOFEE program included in this study. All data are for 2012. In some cases, these data provided by programs are estimates.

Program Name	Number of Participants	Program Length	Number of Times per Year	Program Type	Program Location	Program Budget	Year Program Began
Adamah Adventures	15 [§]	6 weeks	1	Camp	Georgia	\$300,000 [^]	2010
American Jewish University: Experiential Fellowship	3	12 weeks	2	Fellowship/ Apprenticeship	California	\$30,000	2005
Amir Project: Amir Farming Fellowship	15	8 weeks	1	Fellowship/ Apprenticeship	Israel, U.S.	\$135,000	2011
Burning Bush Adventures	20	3–7 days	5	Outdoor/Food Adventure	Maine, New Hampshire, New York, Pennsylvania, Vermont	N/A	1990
Camp Newman: Kibbutz Yarok– staff program	2	7 weeks	1	Camp	California	\$20,000	2009
Camp Tawonga: Wilderness Department	15	11 weeks	1	Camp	California	N/A	1985
COEJL Conferences*	0	3–4 days	1	Retreat/ Conference	N/A	N/A	1995
Derech HaTeva/Teva Adventure [†]	0	2–4 weeks	3	Outdoor/Food Adventure	Israel	N/A	2003
Eco-Activist Beit Midrash*	0	4–5 weeks	1	Fellowship/ Apprenticeship	Israel	\$6,000	2005
Eco-Israel Semester Program	25	5 months	2	Fellowship/ Apprenticeship	Israel	\$120,000	2008
Eco-Israel Summer Program	2	1 month	2	Fellowship/ Apprenticeship	Israel	\$3,000	2012
Eden Village Camp	110 [§]	8 weeks	1	Camp	New York	\$1,300,000 [^]	2010
GreenFaith Fellowship Program	2	18 months	1	Fellowship/ Apprenticeship	Europe and U.S.	\$130,000	2008
Hazon: Adamah Apprenticeship at the Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center	3	7–9 months	1	Fellowship/ Apprenticeship	Connecticut	\$300,000	2007
Hazon: Adamah Farm Vacations (previously Berkshire Farm Stay 2012) at the Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center	80	5 days	2	Retreat/ Conference	Connecticut	\$30,000	2008

[§] Counselors or staff.

[^] Organizational budget.

* This program is no longer in operation.

[†] This program did not have participants in 2012, but is still in operation. It does not run every year.

Program Name	Number of Participants	Program Length	Number of Times per Year	Program Type	Program Location	Program Budget	Year Program Began
Hazon: Adamah Fellowship at the Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center	26	3 months	3	Fellowship/ Apprenticeship	Connecticut	\$300,000	2003
Hazon: Golden Gate Ride	131	4 days	1	Outdoor/Food Adventure	California	\$85,000	2010
Hazon: Cross-USA Ride	56	9 weeks	1	Outdoor/Food Adventure	U.S.	N/A	2012
Hazon: Hazon Food Conference	220	4 days	1	Retreat/ Conference	Connecticut	\$75,000	2006
Hazon: Arava Institute Hazon Israel Ride	60	7 days	1	Outdoor/Food Adventure	Israel	\$400,000	2003
Hazon: Israel Sustainable Food Tour	18	6 days	Less than 1/x year	Other	Israel	\$25,000	2009
Hazon: Jewish Greening Fellowship	20	2–4 day retreats and several 1-day gatherings over 18 months	1 cohort every 18 months	Fellowship/ Apprenticeship	New York	\$352,000	2009
Hazon: New York Ride	209	4 days	1	Outdoor/Food Adventure	Connecticut, New York	\$91,000	2001
Hazon: Shavuot Retreat at the Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center	180	3–5 days	1	Jewish Holiday Retreats	Connecticut	\$70,000	2007
Hazon: SukkahFest at the Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center	200	3–5 days	1	Jewish Holiday Retreats	Connecticut	\$70,000	2005
Hazon: Teva at Henry Kaufman Campgrounds	5 [§]	8 weeks	1	Camp	New York	\$25,000	2008
Hazon: Teva Residential Programs	13 [§]	4 months	2	Fellowship/ Apprenticeship	Connecticut	\$215,000	1994
Hazon: Teva Seminar at the Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center	123	5 days	1	Retreat/ Conference	Connecticut	\$29,500	1994
Jewish Farm School: Farm Apprenticeship	5	6 months	1	Fellowship/ Apprenticeship	New York	\$100,000	2010
Jewish Farm School: Organic Farm Alternative Break	70	1 week	5	Other	New York	\$100,000	2008
Jewish Farm School: Seminar in Organic Agriculture and Educational Gardening	30	4 days	1	Retreat/ Conference	New York	\$5,000	2006
Pearlstone Center: Alternative Spring Break Program	20	7 days	1	Other	Maryland	\$15,000	2011
Pearlstone Center: Beit Midrash	150	3–4 days	1	Retreat/ Conference	Maryland	\$30,000	2009

[§] Counselors or staff.

Program Name	Number of Participants	Program Length	Number of Times per Year	Program Type	Program Location	Program Budget	Year Program Began
Pearstone Center: Chesapeake Watershed Pilgrimage	20	5 days	1	Other	Maryland	\$10,000	2007
Pearstone Center: Integrated Sustainability Apprenticeship	4	7 or 8 months	1	Fellowship/ Apprenticeship	Maryland	\$70,000	2012
Pearstone Center: Summer Farm Kollel	8	6–8 weeks	1	Retreat/ Conference	Maryland	\$15,000	2010
Pearstone Center: Sukkot Retreat	35	3–5 days	1	Jewish Holiday Retreats	Maryland	\$15,000	2012
Ramah Outdoor Adventure	70 [§]	9 weeks	1	Camp	Colorado	\$876,000 [^]	2010
Torah Trek Guides Track	10	Set of 3 1-week retreats	1	Outdoor/Food Adventure	California, New Mexico	\$70,000	2011
Torah Trek Retreats	50	4–7 days	3	Outdoor/Food Adventure	California, New Mexico, Wyoming	\$8,000	2000
Urban Adamah Fellowship	40	3 months	3	Fellowship/ Apprenticeship	California	\$660,000 [^]	2011
Wilderness Torah Retreats: Passover in the Desert	130	4 days	1	Jewish Holiday Retreats	California	\$55,000	2008
Wilderness Torah Retreats: Sukkot on the Farm	210	4 days	1	Jewish Holiday Retreats	California	\$55,000	2007

[§] Counselors or staff.

[^] Organizational budget.



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A full copy of the report with appendices and case studies is available online at hazon.org/jofee.

For questions regarding the report, please contact jofee@hazon.org.