

PEJE YLD Survey findings

In December 2003, PEJE conducted a survey of the executive committee of the Young Leadership Division (22-40) of the Jewish United Fund –Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago (JUF). The purpose of the survey was to document the impact of a Jewish day school education on involvement as an adult in the Jewish community, and to learn more about day school graduates and their leadership involvement as young adults.

Our findings from the survey show that the executive committee is made up of people from many different professions. People on the committee work in development, venture capital, internet consulting, marketing/financial services, law, and consulting. The average number of years that these people have been involved in the Young Leadership Division is 5.42 years, which shows the commitment and importance they see in their volunteer work.

11 out of 11 members of the executive committee completing the survey responded:

Jewish Education experiences

- When asked what Jewish educational institutions they had attended:

Jewish day school	28%
Jewish studies courses at the university level	36%
Adult education classes	54%
Jewish summer camp	73%
Supplementary/ Synagogue based- school	73%
Jewish youth group	73%

Impact of day school education

- Those on the committee who attended Jewish day school found it made a strong impact on their lives, and led them to become involved in Jewish communal life:
“Hugely impactful. I am observant, active in my synagogue, and planning to send my children to day school. So it made being and acting Jewish an important part of my self-image.”
“Great foundation that I would have never gotten anywhere else. Learning the basics and beyond of Hebrew, Bible, Jewish holidays and being immersed daily was critical!”
“I made sure to attend a college that had a large Jewish population and then would move back to a city where I could be very involved in the Jewish community.”

Attitudes toward day school education

- When asked about their attitudes toward choosing day school education for their children:

Plan to send their child(ren) to Jewish day school	28%
Would consider sending their child(ren) to Jewish day school	28%
Do not plan to send their child(ren) to Jewish day school	11%

- Factors for why or why not committee members would choose Jewish day school for their children:

“I want the Jewish values that I received outside the home to be instilled from the day school.”

“Jewish education gives a Jew a clear picture about where he comes from and enough information to make a choice about where he want to go.”

“Cost, accessibility, other options in addition to content”

“If economically feasible”

“Supporter of public education”

Conclusion

The young leadership division in Chicago has a higher percentage of day school graduates compared to the national average, based on statistics from data from the 2000-2001 National Jewish Population Survey (NJPS). According to the NJPS, 18% of those 18-34 and 9% of those 35-49 attended Jewish day school. In Chicago, 28% of the YLD executive committee attended Jewish day school. These young leaders in part credit their day school education as their motivation for volunteering. While 28% of these leaders attended Jewish day school, **twice as many** plan to or would consider sending their children to Jewish day school. As the numbers show, the leaders of the Young Leadership division are a strong market for current and future day school parents.