

# THE JEWISH EDUCATION OF TODAY'S JEWISH LEADERSHIP:

Day Schools, Overnight  
Camps, & Other Educational  
Experiences among  
Lay & Professional Jewish  
Communal Leaders



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Sponsored by: Keren Keshet  
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Executive Summary

The American Jewish community has been making a decades-long massive investment in education, including the expansion of day schools, Jewish camping, Jewish Studies in college and educational travel to Israel. Research studies show the effectiveness of many forms of Jewish education for predicting adult involvement. This report looks beyond any particular type of Jewish education, with the goal of examining the overall contribution of education to the vitality of the American Jewish community. How were today’s Jewish leaders educated in their childhood and adolescent years? How are do the patterns differ by denomination, political identity, age, leadership sector and other characteristics?

To address these and related questions, Keren Keshet engaged Research Success Technologies Ltd. of Hanaton, Israel to undertake an Internet survey of North American Jewish communal leaders, lay and professional. The opt-in, non-random sample for this survey consists of over 2,079 respondents who are now leaders of North American Jewish organizations of all sorts, or have served in such capacities, or whose social profiles closely approximate current and former leaders. They lead schools, congregations, camps, federations, advocacy groups, women organizations, academic bodies in Jewish Studies, social service agencies, and others as well.

Jewish Education is Vital to Jewish Leadership

This report shows, with a focus on Jewish leaders, that the investment in Jewish education is vital to American Jewry’s future. Jewish education in childhood, teen and college years is a central part of the life-trajectory of almost all of those who choose to become professional and lay leaders in the

Jewish community. Significantly, the role of education is increasing.

Younger leaders are far more likely to report more intensive and wide-ranging Jewish educational experiences than older leaders, indicating that Jewish education today is more important than in the past for leading an individual to engage in an intensive manner in Jewish life. Moreover, the Jewish leaders are providing their children higher levels of Jewish education than they themselves received.

The high and growing levels of Jewish educational

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experiences among Jewish communal leaders comport with the intensification of Jewish engagement among a sizeable segment of American Jewry. These are the minority who are intensifying their Jewish involvement, and who stand in contrast with the majority who are disengaging.

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**THE ADULTS NOW IN JEWISH LEADERSHIP POSITIONS WERE WIDELY EXPOSED IN THEIR YOUTH TO NUMEROUS EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES.**

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This research speaks to larger trends. More Jews who want to lead a life of Jewish commitment have been turning to several modalities of Jewish education to enrich their own lives and to improve the chances that their children will lead committed Jewish lives as well. In doing so, they are contributing to, expanding, and sustaining schools, camps, Israel experiences, and so forth.

For those who seek a more vibrant and engaged Jewish community in the future, the lessons of the recent past should be instructive. Jewish education – be it day schools, overnight camps, Israel travel, campus engagement, or other modalities – has helped forge a committed Jewish professional leadership, as well as an engaged Jewish

public. As such is the case, Jewish education holds out hope to strengthen Jewish commitment, knowledge, connection, and participation. The more Jews who are educated today, the more Jews who will participate and lead in the years ahead.

#### *Jewish Leaders Receive a Jewish Education*

The adults now in Jewish leadership positions were widely exposed in their youth to numerous educational experiences. As many as a third went to Jewish day schools from grades K through 8, and 2/3 of them – or 23% of the total -- continued on with day schools during their high school years. In addition, 59% went to overnight Jewish summer camp. Similar numbers participated in such influential experiences as Jewish youth groups, a third in part-time Hebrew high schools, a third in high school age trips to Israel, while about half took Jewish Studies courses in college, and almost as many participated in Hillel or other Jewish campus groups.

#### *The Increasing Importance of Jewish Education over Time*

**Growing levels:** Jewish leaders' Jewish education in almost all varieties is growing over the years. Or, more precisely, younger Jewish leaders are more Jewishly educated than their older counterparts, such that the inevitable process of cohort succession means that Jewish leadership is increasingly educated as Jews, in a number of ways. Younger leaders report higher levels of Jewish education than leaders. Just a quarter of Jewish leaders between the ages of 55-64 had attended a Jewish day school, while among those twenty years their junior, the figure rises to 44 percent. For full-time Jewish high schools, the growth goes from 19% to 29%. For overnight Jewish summer camps, the same patterns hold, though not as dramatically: 56 percent of the older leaders and 65 percent of the younger ones attended a Jewish summer camp.

Other forms of Jewish education show similar patterns of growth. Triple the number of younger leaders as compared with older ones attended Jewish pre-schools; double the number attended Jewish day camps, organized teen trips to Israel and Hillel programs; and significantly more younger leaders attended Hebrew high schools, Jewish youth groups, and college courses in Jewish studies. Birthright participation also increases over the limited age span for which it has been available. The only form of Jewish education that doesn't increase from older to younger leaders is part-time Hebrew school.

#### *Generational Leaps*

Among leaders with children aged 14 or older, we find remarkable inter-generational leaps in Jewish educational participation. Day school enrollment grows from 33% among the adults to 62% among their children. For camp participation the rates go from 58% for the leaders when they were children to 73% for their children. In fact, in EVERY leadership sector, the children's rates of enrollment in day schools and camps exceed those of the parents. Moreover, all denominations display inter-generational increases for both day school and overnight camp usage.

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**RATHER, OVERNIGHT JEWISH CAMP SERVES AS THE MAJOR EDUCATIONAL PILLAR IN THEIR EARLY YEARS, LEADING TO HIGH LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION IN JEWISH STUDIES COLLEGE COURSES, CAMPUS ACTIVITY, AND ISRAEL EDUCATIONAL TRAVEL.**

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#### *Educational Pathways to Leadership*

The educational pathways – where people first engaged in what we may call intensive Jewish education – varies by denomination. The Orthodox almost always get their start with day schools. In contrast, of the leaders who identify as Conservative Jews, under a third attended day school, while more than a third attended Jewish camp without having attended day school. For most Reform leaders, overnight camp constituted their primary first entry into an educated Jewish life.

Orthodox leaders are exposed at intensive levels to almost all forms of childhood, teen and college age Jewish education. For the non-Orthodox leaders, formal, school-based education plays a relatively smaller role. Rather, overnight Jewish camp serves as the major educational pillar in their early years, leading to high levels of participation in Jewish Studies college courses, campus activity, and Israel educational travel. Almost all leaders, Orthodox and non-Orthodox, participated in overnight Jewish camping and Israel educational travel.

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Beyond day school and overnight camp, other educational experiences serve as gateways to communal leadership. About a fifth of the non-Orthodox got their start by way of youth groups or Hebrew high school. A few others turned to Jewish life when they came to campus, by way of Jewish Studies or engaging in Hillel. A small number first connected by going to Israel in the college or early adult years. So, while day schools and camps constitute the major entry points into the world of Jewish education (71% had attended one or the other or both), other subsequent opportunities account for the entry point of the remaining Jewish leaders.

#### *Lagging Liberals*

With respect to day school attendance in childhood among today's Jewish communal leaders, political conservatives report attending at least three times as often as those who are "very liberal". Day school attendance at both the elementary and secondary levels rises steadily with increased political conservatism. But here too Jewish camping is different, in that the left, right, and middle of the political spectrum report roughly equal levels of attendance.

#### *Sectoral Specialization*

Leaders in different areas of Jewish life vary in the extent to which they participate in various sorts of Jewish educational experience. Day school board chairs attended day schools – both elementary and secondary – far more than lay leaders in other sectors. For their part, camp board chairs "over"-attended Jewish camps. Volunteer heads of youth groups display high rates of participation in Israel experience programs, Jewish Studies courses in college, and day school attendance. Hillel lay leaders display all the same patterns of frequent educational participation as do the adolescent youth group leaders. Lay leaders in Israel-related organizations score high with respect to travel to Israel.

For their part, professional leaders have had a great deal of personal educational experience in the very kinds of institutions they came to lead. Day school heads went to day schools far more than others, and camp heads attended camp in their younger years far more than other leaders. Religious school heads score especially high with respect to Israel experience. Senior rabbis at congregations frequently undertook Jewish studies, most often in the years shortly before rabbinical school.

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## Introduction

Over recent decades, Jewish educational opportunities have multiplied and become more affordable, including expanding numbers of overnight Jewish summer camps, Hillel and Chabad on Campus, Jewish day schools and yeshivas, and other educational venues. New forms of education are also emerging and taking root – Birthright, Masa, Moishe House, OneTable, PJ Library, Base Hillel, and others come to mind. At the same time, philanthropic foundations and private philanthropists subsidize and reduce the costs of these educational opportunities, and also work to enable these organizations to prosper. These mutually reinforcing efforts are leading to more educational opportunities with greater access for those who opt for Jewish engagement. This alongside minimal or diminished participation among the Jewish majority.

Patterns of Jewish engagement are moving in two major directions simultaneously. On the one hand, large numbers of moderately affiliated Jews or their children are detaching from Jewish life (and some from being Jewish altogether – as many as 12% according the 2020 Pew survey no longer identify as Jewish). At the same time, an increasing number – albeit a minority – are becoming more involved in Jewish life, including providing their children with more intensive levels of Jewish education (Cohen 2017; Pinker 2021).

Against this background, this report focuses on the lay and professional communal leadership of American Jewry and its diverse and changing participation in Jewish education. The prism of leadership serves as a looking glass into the increasingly important role of Jewish education for Jews engaging with the organized Jewish community. And, by way of inference, testifies to the contribution of day schools, camps and other forms of Jewish education to the engaged Jewish population, as exemplified by its leaders.

There is good reason to credit Jewish education with the formation and recruitment of Jewish leadership, if not the most engaged Jews in general. For half a century, social scientists of American Jewry have devoted considerable attention to assessing both the extent of various forms of Jewish education in childhood and adolescence, as well as their impact upon later adult Jewish engagement.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See for example, Bock 1976; Cohen 1974, 1995; Cohen and Kotler-Berkowitz 2004; Dashefsky and Lebson 2002; Fishman and Cohen 2015; Goldstein and Fishman 1993; Himmelfarb 1974, 1975, 1979; Ukeles 2006; Vaughan 2015.

The empirical research has largely coalesced in identifying the relatively more effective instruments of Jewish education. Among them are day schools (Kadushin et al. 2007, Schiff and Schneider 1994a, 1994b, and the literature cited above); overnight Jewish summer camps (Cohen 2017; Cohen et al. 2011, Himmelfarb 1989; Sales and Saxe 2004), part-time Jewish high schools (Fishman and Cohen 2015; Goldstein and Fishman 1993), youth groups (Cohen and Ganapol 1998; Rosov Consulting 2017, 2018; Shain et al. 2018), Birthright Israel (Saxe et al. 2013, 2004, 2008, 2012, 2014, 2017; Wright et al. 2020), as well as other Israel trips (Cohen and Kopelowitz 2010, 2014, 2015; Kopelowitz 2009; Rosov Consulting 2019, 2020). In contrast, Sunday schools and “Hebrew schools” in the pre-Bar/Bat Mitzvah years exert little long-range impact, except by way of increasing the chances that young Jews will seek Jewish educational experiences in their adolescent years (Bock 1976; Cohen 1974, 1995; Cohen and Kotler-Berkowitz 2004; Dashefsky and Lebson 2002; Fishman and Cohen 2015; Goldstein and Fishman 1993; Himmelfarb 1974, 1975, 1979; Vaughan 2015). Of the various instruments, day schools and overnight camps are particularly consequential in that they reach thousands of youngsters and they do so early in their lives, improving the odds of further Jewish educational involvement in the teen years and young adulthood.

The existing research has not paid much attention to the Jewish education of Jewish communal leaders -- the people who lead Jewish communal collective entities either as volunteers or paid professionals. One notable exception: a national survey of Jewish leaders found both high and growing levels of Jewish education (Wertheimer 2011: 62-63). That Jewish leaders receive more intensive types of Jewish education than the Jewish public at large is quite plausible (Kopelowitz and Chesir-Teran 2012). After all, parental Jewish engagement, Jewish educational experiences, and adult Jewish identity are all positively related, such that Jewish leaders derive disproportionately from Jewishly engaged homes and have experienced high levels of Jewish education.

To examine these and related issues Keren Keshet engaged Research Success Technologies Ltd. of Hanaton, Israel to survey North American Jewish leaders. The data reported draws on an Internet survey, conducted in the winter of 2021, to which more than 2,000 American Jewish communal leaders, lay and professional, responded. This report examines their Jewish educational backgrounds with special attention to Jewish day schools and overnight Jewish camping. These two particular experiences, not only exert long-term influence on adult Jewish identification, they also reach and affect large numbers of Jewish children and teens.

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 ENTITIES EITHER AS VOLUNTEERS  
 OR PAID PROFESSIONALS.**  
 — ”

## The Sample of Jewish Communal Leaders

### *Leaders, Both Lay and Professional, and Some Others*

The opt-in, non-random sample for this survey consists of 2,079 respondents who are now leaders of North American Jewish organizations of all sorts, or have served in such capacities, or whose social profiles closely approximate current and former leaders. Of them, 825 currently serve as the top professional leader, and 503 as the top lay leader of their respective organization. The two groups overlap a bit in that a small number serve as both lay and professional leaders – a day school principal might be the lay president of a congregation, for example. The 1,142 current leaders in the sample are augmented by 443 past leaders, both lay and professional.

Of the 2079, 453 do not qualify as past or present leaders. Yet, because they were drawn from similar lists of highly engaged Jews, their responses highly resembled those who strictly qualified as current or past leaders, giving good reason to merge them into the sample for the analysis. Doing so permitted more reliable findings, based on larger numbers of cases, a consideration that is especially important for smaller sub-samples.

In assembling the contact list for the survey, 15 national Jewish organizations collaborated, providing their contact lists, or sending the survey to their leadership. In addition, ReST compiled lists from publicly available resources for other national organizations. ReST also compiled a list of 271 Jewishly oriented Facebook groups and Instagram pages and contacted their administrators asking that they post the link to the survey. 43 posted, generating 364 responses. Details are found in appendix 1.

Appendix 1 also presents the major social characteristics of these leaders. Briefly, The respondents are spread throughout the age spectrum albeit with few under age 35. More respondents are women than men, particularly among those with liberal denominational identities. Denominationally, the sample is drawn from across the spectrum, albeit with what might be an under-representation of Reform and an over-representation of Reconstructionists. Of those married, very few are intermarried. Politically, the sample leans left with far more liberals than conservatives.

For a discussion of the methodological details and challenges, as well as how they were addressed, see Appendix 2.

### *Diversity of Lay and Professional Leaders*

The survey process produced a sufficient number of total cases for drawing reasonable inferences, albeit with caution. The survey also obtained sufficient numbers of cases of lay and professional leaders in different sectors of Jewish communal life. To illustrate, among the lay leaders are 142 current or former day school chairs, 436 congregational leaders (presumably synagogue presidents), 165 leading academics such as chairs of departments, 101 chairs of boards of overnight Jewish camps, and many others (see Exhibit 1).

Exhibit 1: Number of Volunteer Lay Leaders (now + in the past) in the study

	N
Day School	142
Camp	101
Academic	165
*Religious School	107
Congregation	436
Youth	137
Hillel	163
Federation	98
Philanthropy	115
Israel	163
Social Justice	109
Advocacy	205
Women's Org's	104

\*Also known as "Supplementary schools" or "Hebrew schools"

Like the lay leaders, the sample of professional leaders also draws upon a wide variety of Jewish communal sectors. Among the leading professionals, the paid current or former heads of agencies of various sorts, were 173 heads of Jewish day schools, 240 Senior Rabbis (the leading rabbi in congregations), 84 Federation Directors, 79 professional heads of overnight Jewish camps, and many others (see Exhibit 2).

Exhibit 2: Number of Professional Leaders (now + in the past) in the study

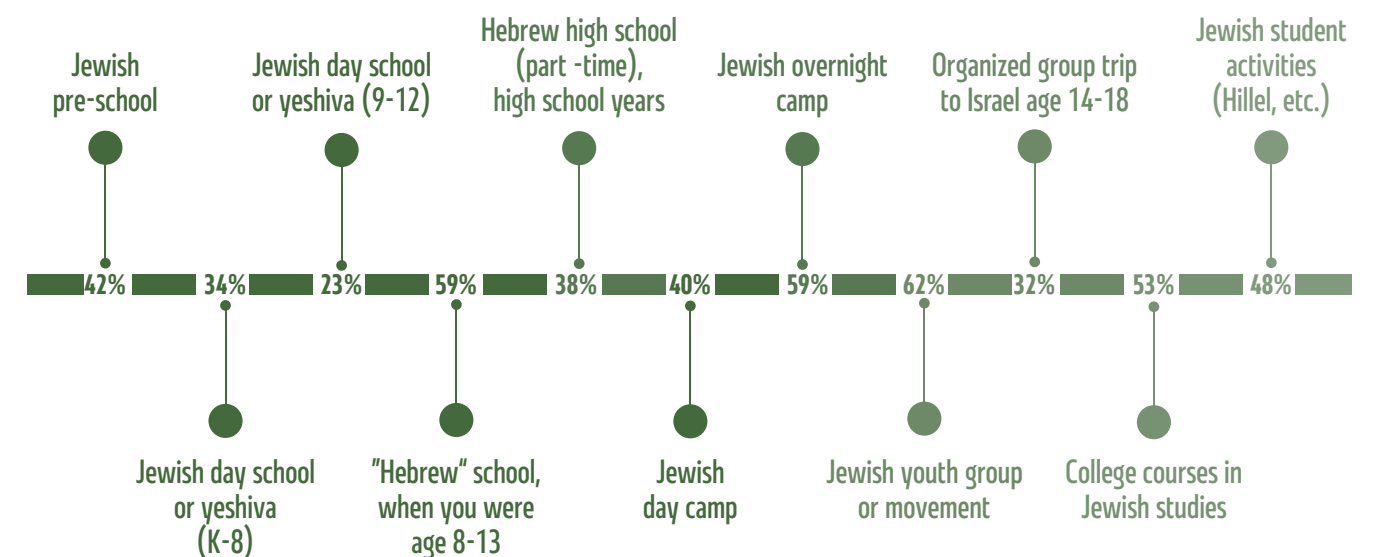
	N
Day School	173
Overnight Camp	79
Religious School	121
Senior Rabbi	240
Hillel	83
Academic	200
Federation	84
Philanthropy	91
JCC	61
Israel	81
Social Justice	53
Advocacy	82

## Major Findings

### Widespread Exposure to Jewish Educational Experiences

The survey demonstrates that the adults now in Jewish leadership positions were widely exposed in their youth to numerous educational experiences. As many as a third went to K-8 Jewish day schools, and 2/3 of them – or 23% of the total -- continued on with day schools during their high school years.

Exhibit 3: Educational experiences in rough chronological order



In addition, 59% went to overnight Jewish summer camp, that is one not only with Jewish campers, but one with a Jewish educational mission and non-profit Jewish sponsorship. Similar numbers participated in Jewish youth groups, a third in part-time Hebrew high schools, while about half took Jewish Studies courses in college, and almost as many participated in Hillel or other Jewish campus groups.



## Increasing Generational Levels of Jewish Education

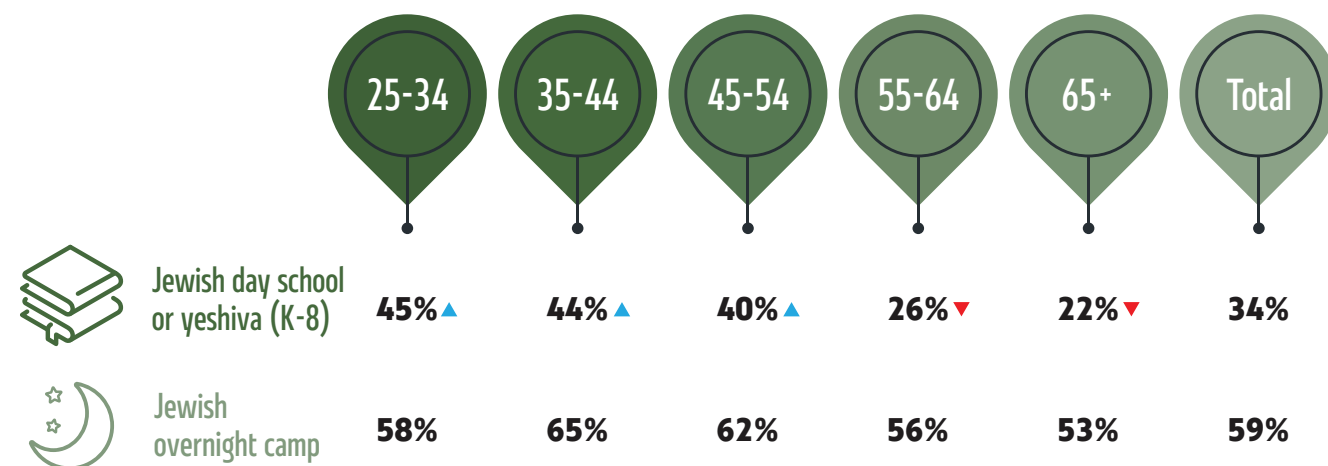
### Younger Leaders Report Higher Childhood Jewish Education

Jewish leaders' Jewish education in almost all varieties has been growing over the years. Younger Jewish leaders are more Jewishly educated than their older counterparts, such that the inevitable process of cohort succession means that Jewish leadership is increasingly educated as Jews, in a number of ways.

Over the course of the past half century, Jewish educational opportunities have multiplied and have become more affordable. Not surprisingly, then, just a quarter of Jewish leaders between the ages of 55-64 had attended a K-8 Jewish day school, while among those twenty years their junior, the figure rises to 44%. For full-time Jewish high schools, the growth goes from 19% to 29%. For overnight Jewish summer camps, the same patterns hold, though not as dramatically: 56% of the older leaders and 65 %of the younger ones attended a Jewish summer camp.

As for other forms of Jewish education, we see similar patterns of growth over time. Those 25-34 lead those age 65+ in having attended Jewish pre-schools (61% vs. 20%), Hebrew high schools (44% vs. 33%), Jewish day camp (51% vs. 24%), Jewish youth group (63% vs. 55%), organized trips to Israel, age 14-18 (39% vs. 18%), Jewish Studies courses (67% vs. 41%), Hillel or other Jewish campus activities (70% vs. 35%), and Chabad House involvement (23% vs. 3%).

Exhibit 4: Jewish day school or yeshiva (K-8), Jewish day school or yeshiva (9-12), Jewish overnight camp by Age



**Note:** Starting with the table above, figures which are noteworthy because they are high in context are marked with **blue** up arrow, while those which are noteworthy because they are low are marked with a **red** down arrow.

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**TRIPLE THE NUMBER OF YOUNGER LEADERS AS COMPARED WITH OLDER ONES ATTENDED JEWISH PRE-SCHOOLS; DOUBLE THE NUMBER ATTENDED JEWISH DAY CAMPS, ORGANIZED TEEN TRIPS TO ISRAEL AND HILLEL PROGRAMS; AND SIGNIFICANTLY MORE YOUNGER PEOPLE ATTENDED HEBREW HIGH SCHOOLS, JEWISH YOUTH GROUPS, AND COLLEGE COURSES IN JEWISH STUDIES.**  
 ” —

In other words, triple the number of younger leaders as compared with older ones attended Jewish pre-schools; double the number attended Jewish day camps, organized teen trips to Israel and Hillel programs; and significantly more younger people attended Hebrew high schools, Jewish youth groups, and college courses in Jewish studies. Birthright participation also increases over the limited age span for which it has been available. The only form of Jewish education that doesn't increase from older to younger leaders is part-time Hebrew school.

### The Next Generation

Day school and camp experiences are not only more frequent among younger leaders, as compared with their elders, the growth trends continue to their children. Among respondents with children age 14 or older, we find remarkable inter-generational leaps in Jewish educational

participation. Day school enrollment grows from 33% among the adults to 62% among their children. For camp participation the rates go from 58% for the leaders when they were children to 73% for their children. In fact, in detailed inspection of sector of leaderships, in EVERY comparison, the children's rates of enrollment in day schools and camps exceed those of the parents.

Exhibit 5: : Leaders' vs. their children's levels of Jewish day school or yeshiva (K-8) & Jewish overnight camp usage by Age. (Only leaders with children age 14 and over.)

	☀ DAY SCHOOL		🌙 OVERNIGHT CAMP	
	👤 Jewish day school or yeshiva (K-8)	👤 Jewish day school or yeshiva (K-8)-oldest child 14+	👤 Jewish overnight camp	👤 Jewish overnight camp- oldest child 14+
<b>65+</b>	23%	<b>52% ▼</b>	51%	<b>65% ▼</b>
<b>55-64</b>	27%	61%	54%	73%
<b>45-54</b>	43%	70%	60%	78%
<b>35-44</b>	65%	<b>82% ▲</b>	70%	<b>90% ▲</b>

Further evidence of the turn toward day schools and camps in the next generation can be seen in the age-specific patterns. For each age group, leaders are sending / have sent their kids to Jewish day schools and Jewish overnight camps substantially more often than they themselves experienced in their own childhoods. As can be seen, all age cohorts show inter-generational leaps in Jewish educational usage. Moreover, the youngest show slightly bigger leaps than did older cohorts.

#### Denominational Differences in Children's Education

As for the relationships of children's Jewish education with denomination, the same contours appear for the children as for the leaders themselves. The Orthodox lead, the Reform-identified leaders trail, and the Conservatives are positioned between the two other large denominations. The analysis shows the same rank-ordering with respect to children and leaders' camp attendance. All denominations display inter-generational increases for both day school and overnight camp usage. The inter-generational growth in Jewish educational participation is consistent and universal.

Exhibit 6: Leaders' vs. their Children's Levels of Jewish day school or yeshiva (K-8) & Jewish overnight camp usage by Denomination

	☀️ DAY SCHOOL		🌙 OVERNIGHT CAMP	
	👤 Jewish day school or yeshiva (K-8)	👤 Jewish day school or yeshiva (K-8)-oldest child 14+	👤 Jewish overnight camp	👤 Jewish overnight camp-oldest child 14+
<b>Orthodox</b>	72%	97% ▲	65%	84% ▲
<b>Conservative</b>	27%	68%	58%	73%
<b>Reform</b>	10%	28% ▼	55%	68% ▼
<b>All other</b>	21%	46%	47%	64% ▼

#### Pathways in Jewish Education

Jewish education in childhood, and over the life course, is a sequential matter; one sort of experience often accompanies or leads to another. For example, youngsters who enter Jewish day schools (at around age 5 or 6) stand a good chance of going to Jewish overnight camp (starting for most at

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**ALL DENOMINATIONS DISPLAY INTER-GENERATIONAL INCREASES FOR BOTH DAY SCHOOL AND OVERNIGHT CAMP USAGE. THE INTER-GENERATIONAL GROWTH IN JEWISH EDUCATIONAL PARTICIPATION IS CONSISTENT AND UNIVERSAL.**  
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ages 9-11). Those with day school or camp experience in turn stand a good chance of participating in Jewish teen activities, such as youth groups or Hebrew high school (if they're not in day school). Next in the chronological sequence is the campus experience – Hillel engagement and/or enrollment in Jewish Studies courses. Finally, for those who become Jewish leaders but who have participated in none of the other more impactful Jewish education experiences, one or more trips to Israel may be the way they enter the more impactful Jewish educational world.

The sequential model constructed here focuses on those experiences generally shown to leave lasting and more powerful effects on adult Jewish engagement. This approach allows us to get a sense of when and where future Jewish leaders get “on board” with their more influential Jewish educational experiences

Exhibit 7: Earliest Form of Intensive Jewish Education by Denomination

		Orthodox	Conservative	Reform	All other	Total
Earliest Jewish education	Day School, K-8	72% ▲	31%	11%	29%	34%
	Camp overnight	12%	36% ▲	52% ▲	34%	34%
	Youth group or Hebrew high	8%	20% ▲	22% ▲	18%	17%
	Campus group or courses	3%	6%	4%	10% ▲	6%
	Israel experience	2%	3%	5%	4%	4%
	None checked	2%	4%	7%	10%	6%
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

So, how do the educational pathways vary? For one thing, denomination makes a difference. The Orthodox almost always (74%) get their start with day schools. In contrast, of the leaders who identify as Conservative Jews, under a third attended day school, while more than a third attended Jewish camp without having attended day school. As for most Reform leaders, overnight camp constituted their primary first entry into an educated Jewish life, as hardly any had attended Jewish day school.

Beyond day school and overnight camp, other educational experiences serve as gateways to the type of Jewish life that leads to communal leadership. About a fifth of the non-Orthodox got their start in reasonably intensive Jewish education in their teens – either by way of youth groups or Hebrew high school. A few others apparently turned to Jewish life when they came to campus, by way of courses in Jewish Studies or engaging in Hillel or other campus groups. And a small number first connected by going to Israel in the college or early adult years.

So, while day schools and camps constitute the major entry points into the world of Jewish education (71% had one or the other or both), other subsequent opportunities account for the entry point of the remaining Jewish leaders.



### Jewish Educational Background of Lay Leaders

Leaders in different areas of Jewish life vary in the extent to which they participated in various sorts of Jewish educational experience in their childhood and adolescent years. Presented below are several major educational experiences for lay and professional leaders in different sectors of Jewish life.<sup>2</sup>

Quite striking is the extent to which overnight camps, Jewish Studies courses, campus involvement, and Israel experiences characterize large majorities of most sectors of lay leaders. That said, we also see some distinctive patterns by sector.

Day school board chairs attended day schools – both elementary and secondary – far more than lay leaders in other sectors. For their part, camp board chairs “over”-attended Jewish camps, but they also frequently attended Jewish day schools.

*Exhibit 8: Jewish Educational Experience by Sector of Lay Leaders, past & present  
(Entries are percentages)*

	Jewish pre-school	J day school, yeshiva (K-8)	J day school, yeshiva (9-12)	Jewish overnight camp	College courses in J Studie	J student activities (Hillel, etc.)	Israel trip (teen, Birthright, other)
Day School	55% ▲	50% ▲	38% ▲	57%	49%	42% ▼	72%
Camp	47%	37%	25%	75% ▲	54%	49%	78%
Academic	44%	40%	32%	63%	56%	55%	77%
Religious School	36%	27%	25%	55%	58%	46%	70%
Congregation	31% ▼	27%	19%	55%	43% ▼	43% ▼	62% ▼
Youth	45%	26%	20%	72%	64% ▲	65%	84% ▲
Hillel	45%	25%	19%	62% ▲	64% ▲	83% ▲	87% ▲
Federation	35%	26%	16%	51% ▼	50%	49%	76%
Philanthropy	36%	30%	23%	57%	50%	46%	76%
Israel	37%	30%	25%	57%	59%	55%	80%
Social Justice	32%	18%	10% ▼	58%	54%	61%	79%
Advocacy	35%	27% ▼	21%	58%	58%	57%	77%
Women's Org'n	37%	31%	20%	55%	48%	40% ▼	69%

Volunteer heads of youth groups display high rates of participation in Israel experience programs, reflecting their youth group involvement, or inclination toward Israel travel nurtured by their youth

<sup>2</sup> Preliminary analysis found that past and present leaders in the same sector exhibit very similar educational patterns. This finding allowed us to combine the past and present leaders into groups with larger case sizes and hence more reliable results. As a result, there are larger numbers of cases in each category, as well as many respondents who appear in more than one leadership category.

### — “ — OVERNIGHT CAMPS, JEWISH STUDIES COURSES, CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT, AND ISRAEL EXPERIENCES CHARACTERIZE LARGE MAJORITIES OF MOST SECTORS OF LAY LEADERS. — ” —

groups. They also report rather high levels of accessing Jewish Studies courses in college, no doubt a consequence of their high Jewish engagement in high school. And they report relatively high levels of day school attendance, suggesting a relationship between school attendance and subsequent youth group leadership.

Hillel lay leaders display all the same patterns of frequent educational participation as do the adolescent youth group leaders. As we'd expect, lay leaders in Israel-related organizations score especially high with respect to one sort of Jewish educational activity: travel to Israel.

Leaders of academic Jewish Studies, religious schools, congregations, Federations, other philanthropic endeavors, advocacy organizations, social justice work and women's organizations report fewer Jewish educational experiences

than those detailed above. For example, the social justice leaders are distinguished by low rates of attendance as Jewish day schools, a feature they share with congregational lay leaders and philanthropists. However, to be sure, social justice leaders exhibit far higher levels of Jewish education than the Jewish public, especially political liberals, the sector inhabited by most Jewish social justice leaders.

### Professional Leaders' Jewish Education

Professional leaders tend to have had a great deal of personal educational experience in the very kinds of institutions they came to lead. Day school heads went to day schools far more than others, and camp heads attended camp in their younger years far more than other leaders.

Religious school heads score especially high with respect to Israel experience. While senior rabbis at congregations frequently undertook Jewish studies, most often in the years shortly before rabbinical school. Federation heads are noteworthy for their relative lack of attendance at Jewish day schools.

Exhibit 9: Jewish Educational Experiences by Sector of Professional Leadership  
(Entries are percentages)

	Jewish pre-school	J day school, yeshiva (K-8)	J day school, yeshiva (9-12)	Jewish overnight camp	College courses in Jewish Studies	J student activities (Hillel, etc.)	Israel experience
Day Sch	62% ▲	63% ▲	51% ▲	65%	58%	41% ▼	76%
Camp	52% ▲	32%	18%	85% ▲	54%	53%	81% ▲
Religious School	35%	25%	17%	61%	64%	55%	83% ▲
Senior Clergy	38%	27%	18%	60%	72% ▲	65%	79%
Hillel	47%	29%	19%	61%	67%	76% ▲	86% ▲
Academic	44%	44%	34%	58%	60%	46%	75%
Federation	31% ▼	17% ▼	12% ▼	63%	60%	65%	81% ▲
Philanthropy	34%	29%	14%	58%	53%	48%	70% ▼
JCC	44%	26%	16%	67%	57%	46%	80% ▲
Israel	32% ▼	35%	22%	56%	62%	57%	77%
Social Justice	34%	23%	11% ▼	53% ▼	42% ▼	43% ▼	68% ▼
Advocacy	31% ▼	28%	17%	52% ▼	52%	43% ▼	71% ▼

The senior rabbis and cantors of congregations report very high rates of having taken college courses in Jewish studies, as well as high rates of participation in Jewish student activities. Beyond these very widely shared experiences, they display considerable denominational variations in day school and camp attendance. Orthodox rabbis attended Jewish day schools far more than their non-Orthodox colleagues, and they also were slightly more likely to have attended overnight Jewish summer camps. Conservative rabbis were more likely to have attended Jewish day school than their Reform counterparts. But the pattern is reversed when it comes to camps, where Reform clergy take the lead. Again, the results point to the importance of summer camp for nurturing Reform Jewish leaders, as well as the larger role played by college courses, campus activities and Israel experiences in the educational background of non-Orthodox rabbis.

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**AGAIN, THE RESULTS POINT TO THE IMPORTANCE OF SUMMER CAMP FOR NURTURING REFORM JEWISH LEADERS, AS WELL AS THE LARGER ROLE PLAYED BY COLLEGE COURSES, CAMPUS ACTIVITIES AND ISRAEL EXPERIENCES IN THE EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF NON-ORTHODOX RABBIS.**  
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Exhibit 10: Day School and Overnight Camp among Clergy by the 3 Largest Denominations

Denomination of Clergy	Jewish day school or yeshiva (K-8)	Jewish day school or yeshiva (9-12)	Jewish overnight camp
Orthodox	75% ▲	75% ▲	80% ▲
Conservative	30%	21%	63%
Reform	16% ▼	0% ▼	67%

### Denominational Patterns of Jewish Education

Denomination is strongly related to Jewish educational participation in the population at large. So too are there substantial denominationally linked variations among leaders. Orthodox leaders are exposed at intensive levels to almost all forms of childhood, teen and college age Jewish education. For the non-Orthodox leaders, formal, school-based education plays a relatively smaller role. Rather, overnight Jewish camp serves as the major educational pillar in their early years, leading to high levels of participation in Jewish Studies college courses, campus activity, and Israel educational travel. Almost all leaders, Orthodox and non-Orthodox, participate in overnight Jewish camping and Israel educational travel.

Among leaders, the Orthodox vastly outpace all other denominational groups in the percentage who attended Jewish day schools; and that gap is even more pronounced for the high school years. The vast majority of future Orthodox leaders who attended Jewish day school in the grade school years continued into the high school years, as compared half the Conservative Jews, and a third of the small number of Reform Jews who had been to elementary day schools.

Exhibit 11: Jewish day school or yeshiva (K-8) Jewish day school or yeshiva (9-12) Jewish overnight camp by Denomination

Denomination	Jewish day school or yeshiva (K-8)	Jewish overnight camp
Orthodox	72% ▲	66% ▲
Conservative	31%	61%
Reform	11% ▼	58%
Other denominations	24%	52%
Total	100%	100%

Orthodox leaders slightly out-pace the others with respect to having attended overnight Jewish summer camps, but the denominationally linked differences are far smaller – 66% for the Orthodox, vs. 61% for Conservative leaders, and 58% for the Reform.

Leaders who are Conservative far out-pace their counterparts who identify with Reform and with other denominations with respect to day school enrollment. The gaps in day school attendance between Conservative and Reform leaders actually exceed those between Orthodox and Conservative – meaning that among leaders, Conservative Jews are at least as different from Reform Jews as they are different from Orthodox Jews.

The relative prominence of overnight camping among Reform Jews points to a larger trend evident in this report. The three major denominations present distinctive educational patterns. Experiential education – such as camps, youth groups, campus activities, and Israel travel – play a vital role in nurturing leaders who identify as Reform, Reconstructionist, and Conservative, if not non-denominationally as well.

#### Age and Denomination

Earlier this paper reported higher rates of day school and camp attendance among younger leaders as compared with their elders. Does this relationship with age extend to all denominations?

*Exhibit 12: Jewish day school K-8 and 9-12, and Jewish overnight camp by Age and Orthodox, Conservative or Reform Denomination*

Denomination	Age	Jewish day school or yeshiva (K-8)	Jewish day school or yeshiva (9-12)	Jewish overnight camp
Orthodox	25-34	86% ▲	76% ▲	59%
	35-44	82% ▲	70% ▲	79% ▲
	45-54	76%	69% ▲	71%
	55-64	66%	61%	56% ▼
	65 or older	56% ▼	56% ▼	58% ▼
Conservative	25-34	48% ▲	20% ▲	67% ▲
	35-44	42% ▲	24% ▲	66% ▲
	45-54	39%	16% ▼	59%
	55-64	21% ▼	13% ▼	58%
	65 or older	21% ▼	8% ▼	55%
Reform	25-34	10%	3%	71%
	35-44	19%	6%	60%
	45-54	12%	3%	56%
	55-64	8%	2%	56%
	65 or older	7%	0%	57%

Orthodox and Conservative Jewish leaders display the same patterns: younger leaders experienced more Jewish day schools and overnight camping than did their elders. For example, about one-fifth of Conservative leaders attended elementary day schools, whereas nearly half of those 25-34 years old attended.

Reform Jewish leaders display no such age-related pattern for day school enrollment, but they do exhibit rising rates of attending summer camps. In fact, the differences between the oldest and youngest cohorts in camp attendance are a bit greater for the Reform leaders than for the Conservative or Orthodox counterparts. The overall tendency for Jewish education to grow among future leaders is expressed more by way of camp attendance for the Reform population than for the Conservative and Orthodox segments. More broadly, the finding speaks to the vital role of experiential education of all sorts in nurturing Jewish leadership, especially among the non-Orthodox.

#### Political Conservatives and Liberals and their Jewish Education

In the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, liberals, moderates, and conservatives almost equally participated in religious (i.e., Christian) communities. In recent years, political conservatives largely sustained their levels of religious engagement, both in terms of their identities and activities. In sharp contrast, political liberals have tended to abandon their religious identities, congregational affiliations, and public prayer. Today, more conservatives than liberals identify with a religion, belong to churches, and attend prayer services (Pew 2007, 2015). American Jews (the rank-and-file) display parallel trends. For example, in the Pew 2013 survey liberals score lower than conservatives on ritual practice, communal affiliation, importance of being Jewish, attachment to Israel, and on and on.

These politically based patterns find roughly comparable tendencies with respect to Jewish education among communal leaders. In terms of day school attendance conservatives are high-scoring, liberals low-scoring, and moderates in-between.

*Exhibit 13: Jewish day school or yeshiva (K-8 and 9-12), Jewish overnight camp by Political identity*

Political views	Jewish day school or yeshiva (K-8)	Jewish day school or yeshiva (9-12)	Jewish overnight camp
Very liberal	21% ▼	11% ▼	58%
Liberal	27%	16% ▼	59%
Moderate	42%	29%	56%
Conservative	65% ▼	54% ▲	64%

With respect to day school attendance in childhood, political conservatives report attending at least three times as often as those who are the most liberal (those who answered, “very liberal”). Day



school attendance at both the elementary and secondary levels rise steadily with increased political conservatism. But such is not the case for Jewish camping where the left, right, and middle of the political spectrum report roughly equal levels of attendance.

To some extent, the gaps in day school attendance between political liberals and conservatives are due to the association of political identity with denomination. Specifically, the Orthodox are more politically conservative, and the Orthodox are frequent users of day schools. As a result, conservatives may score high on day school attendance because they are frequently Orthodox.

This reasoning offers only a partial explanation for the political variation in day school enrollment. The table below demonstrates that even within the Orthodox, as well as within the highly variegated non-Orthodox segment, political identity still bears a strong relationship with both elementary and secondary Jewish day school attendance in the early years.

Both among the Orthodox and among the non-Orthodox, those who see themselves as “very liberal” attended Jewish day school less frequently than those who identify politically as conservative. The relationship between politics and day school enrollment does persist even after separating the Orthodox from all the others.

*Exhibit 14: Jewish day school or yeshiva (K-8 and 9-12) Jewish overnight camp by Political views for Leaders who are Orthodox and non-Orthodox*

Orthodox	Political views	Jewish day school or yeshiva (K-8)	Jewish day school or yeshiva (9-12)	Jewish overnight camp
Non-Orthodox	Very liberal	20% ▼	9% ▼	58% ▲
	Liberal	23% ▼	11% ▼	58% ▲
	Moderate	28	14	54
	Conservative	38% ▲	16% ▲	48% ▼
Orthodox	Very liberal	50	50	64
	Liberal	73	68	68
	Moderate	71	61	61
	Conservative	77	71	71

One possible reason for the link between political ideologies and day school attendance is that something about the day school experience exerts conservatizing effects upon young people’s emerging political identities. After all, the students are in the company of conservative-leaning counterparts and Jewish studies teachers. In addition, the families who send their children to Jewish day schools are not only religiously traditional, but, by reasonable inference, more politically conservative.

### Far Less Jewish Education among Intermarried Leaders

The few lay leaders who are intermarried report far lower levels of day school, and somewhat lower levels of Jewish camp attendance, than the in-married. These patterns among leaders replicate what is also evident in the larger population.

*Exhibit 15: Jewish day school or yeshiva (K-8, and 9-12) Jewish overnight camp by Intermarriage Status*

	Jewish day school or yeshiva (K-8)	Jewish day school or yeshiva (9-12)	Jewish overnight camp
Intermarried	7% ▼	3% ▼	49% ▼
Inmarried	37% ▲	25% ▲	60% ▲

### Inter-generational Gains among In-Married Couples

The in-married report a rather pronounced leap in day school attendance: of the in-married parents, 35% had attended in their childhood years, but as adult parents 66% enrolled their own children. For camp usage, the rates go from 60% to 79%.

*Exhibit 16: Jewish day school or yeshiva (K-8) --oldest child 14+, Jewish overnight camp Jewish overnight camp--oldest child 14+ for In-married and Intermarried Leaders*

	Jewish day school or yeshiva (K-8)	J day school or yeshiva (K-8) -- oldest child 14+	Jewish overnight camp	Jewish overnight camp--oldest child 14+
In-married	35%	66% ▲	60%	79% ▲
Intermarried	8%	9% ▼	47%	43% ▼

Among the intermarried, though, there’s no real increase in day school use – from 8% in their childhood years to 9% who then send their children to day schools. Inter-generational overnight camp usage actually falls by four percentage points. In short, the intermarried largely fail to participate in the intergenerational intensification of Jewish education. These findings suggest that the intermarried, even these leaders, are not particularly committed to the intensive Jewish education of their children. Day school enrollment rates are low for intermarried leaders, and Jewish camp participation among their children falls below their own levels of attendance, unlike the in-married.

## Conclusion

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**JEWISH EDUCATION  
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and other Israel travel among them.

Not only are the levels high, but they are also growing. Younger leaders report more Jewish education than their older counterparts. And leaders' children received more Jewish education than did their parents.

Patterns of Jewish education vary dramatically by denomination. For leaders who identify as Orthodox, day school education in their childhood and teen years is quite widespread. For the non-Orthodox, overnight Jewish camping played an especially prominent and consequential role, as did other Jewish educational experiences such as campus engagement, Jewish Studies classes, and Birthright or other Israel educational travel.

By inference from the growth in the leaders' Jewish education, the educational background that leads to Jewish leadership is increasing. For someone to consider leadership today, that person increasingly has a more serious educational background than was the case for older generations of Jewish leaders.

While leaders are far more Jewishly educated than non-leaders, leaders' Jewish educational experiences differ by the types of institutions they lead. Those who lead day schools and camps score higher on Jewish educational participation than others, especially with regard to having attended day schools and camps.

Several socio-demographic characteristics are associated with higher levels of Jewish education among the leaders. Orthodox leaders score especially high, followed by those who identify as Conservative, such that different denominations pursue distinctive paths of Jewish education. Day schools are central to Orthodox community and family life today. But the findings argue that Jewish overnight camps are especially critical for the formation of Reform Jewish leadership. Experiences

The analysis of the national survey of over 2,000 respondents – Jewish leaders, lay and professional, present and past – has shown conclusively that Jewish education levels among Jewish communal leaders are high in comparison with the Jewish public. That generalization holds true for Jewish day school enrollment as well as overnight Jewish camp attendance – the two forms of Jewish education to which this analysis paid special attention. But this study also found high rates of participation in a wide variety of other Jewish educational experiences – Hebrew high schools, youth groups, Hillels, Jewish studies courses, Birthright,

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**PATTERNS OF JEWISH  
EDUCATION VARY  
DRAMATICALLY BY  
DENOMINATION**  
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in adolescence and the college years come into play, especially for those other than the Orthodox.

Another key finding concerns leaders who identify as political liberals, especially the most liberal, who score far lower than political conservatives on Jewish educational participation. The finding is consistent with parallel tendencies in the American public, as in these observations by leading Gallup pollster Frank Newport: “The indisputable fact [is] that there are fewer Americans today who are both highly religious and liberal than there are Americans who are both highly religious and conservative” (Newport 2019). Nevertheless, among Jewish leaders, the analysis found that even among the liberals, there is a committed leadership for whom Jewish education played a formative role.

The high and growing levels of Jewish educational experiences among Jewish communal leaders' augment and comport with major trends in American Jewish life over the past several decades: The intensification of Jewish engagement among a sizeable segment of American Jewry. The minority who are intensifiers stand in contrast with the larger number who have been disengaging. As many as 12% of those raised Jewish are no longer Jewish, and the level of departures is even greater for the younger cohorts than the population overall (Pew 2021).

Against the background of widespread Jewish disengagement, this study details some encouraging developments. It points to the increasing educational background and commitment of Jewish leaders – and, by extension, others who are engaged in a more intensive Jewish life. We learn that Jews who choose involvement in organized Jewish life are more frequently turning to diverse modes of Jewish education to enrich their own lives and to improve the chances of their children's Jewish involvement. In doing so, they are contributing to, expanding, and sustaining schools and other educational institutions. While most American Jews may be diminishing their Jewish engagement, a minority are building and growing more schools, camps, Israel experiences, and so forth.

In sum, day schools, camps, and numerous other forms of Jewish education, academic and experiential, are critical to the formation of Jewish communal leaders, both lay and professional. If anything, the contribution is growing as younger communal professionals show increasing evidence of Jewish education in their childhood and adolescent periods. It can be readily surmised that Jewish education, broadly conceived, is critical to the formation of Jewish commitment and engagement, particularly in an age when many major trends are moving in the contrary direction.

Those concerned with promoting a rich and vibrant Jewish future would do well to recognize the many modalities of Jewish education – day schools, camps, Israel travel, Jewish Studies, Hillels and more that are an integral part of the pathways to Jewish leadership.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Characteristics of this Sample of Jewish Communal Leaders

This section discusses several key socio-demographic characteristics of the sample of Jewish communal leaders, namely, age, gender, denomination, in-marriage/intermarriage, and political identity. The analysis focuses on two related questions. First, in what ways might the sample accurately or inaccurately represent the universe of Jewish communal leaders? Second, which characteristics – if any – are associated with producing more or fewer leaders?

The tables compare the Keren Keshet sample with the 2013 Pew study, A portrait of Jewish Americans, used to distinguish a “likely leader” cohort. Their operational definition combines all five of the following characteristics: They belong to a Jewish organization, donate financially to Jewish causes, have mostly Jewish close friends, feel a special responsibility to assist Jews in need around the world, and feel that their being Jewish is very important to them. The analysis excluded Haredim (as they made up a very small portion of the Keren Keshet sample) and limited to age range to 25-74.

By this working definition, 6% of the non-Haredi adult Jews age 25-74 in the Pew survey qualify as members of the “Pew likely leader cohort.” Where possible, the results for the Keren Keshet leader sample results were compared with the results of the Pew likely leaders. Notably, the results for having attended day schools are remarkably close: 34% for Keren Keshet and 30% for the Pew likely leaders. As for overnight Jewish camp we have 59% vs. 62% respectively. The repeated similarities in findings from two very different survey segments lends confidence and credibility to the findings.

#### Leaders are found in all age groups, but with a tilt toward older years

The age distribution of the Keren Keshet sample is fairly even, albeit with relatively few leaders under age 35. In comparing the age distribution of the three groups – the Keren Keshet sample, the Pew leader cohort and the Pew rank-and-file Jews – the analysis finds that the two leader samples largely resemble each other, and both are considerably older than those in the non-leader, rank-and-file cohort. For example, those 25-34 comprise 8% among the Keren Keshet respondents, 9% among Pew likely leader cohort members, and 22% among the rank-and-file cohort. For the oldest group (age 65+), the table reports 22%, 23%, and just 15% respectively. In other words, by all indications, Jewish leaders are older than non-leaders.

Exhibit 17: Age Distribution

	Keren Keshet Sample	Pew Likely Leader Cohort	Pew rank-and-file cohort
65 or older	22%	23%	15% ▼
55-64	24%	35%	28%
45-54	25%	21%	20%
35-44	21%	13%	15%
25-34	8%	9%	22% ▲
Total	100%	100%	100%

The under-representation of those under 35 – with a parallel in the Pew likely leader sample – reflects the fact that leadership does occur later in life. Those under 35 are simply less likely to serve as top leaders of Jewish collectivities or to have done so in the past.

#### More women than men are Jewish communal leaders

Women out-number men, 56% to 44%, in the Keren Keshet leadership sample, and by a nearly identical margin – 57% to 43% -- in the Pew likely-leader cohort.

The similarity in gender distribution among Keren Keshet leaders and Pew’s likely leaders does offer some re-assurance as to the veracity of the inference that women noticeably exceed men among Jewish communal leaders, lay and professional, past and present. The patterns here are consistent with the general observation that women are more active than men in American religious life generally (for one example of very many: Pew 2018).

Exhibit 18: Gender Distribution

	Keren Keshet Sample	Pew Likely Leader Cohort	Pew Rank-and-file Cohort
Male	44%	43%	50%
Female	56%	57%	50%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Going beyond the gender variations for the entire sample, the analysis shows that the gender imbalance differs by denomination. There’s a 53%/47% male-to-female split among the (Modern) Orthodox, as compared with 57% to 43% in favor of women among Conservative-identifying leaders, and 72% to 28% in favor of women (a nearly 2-to-1 ratio) among Reform leaders. Again, the Pew likely-leaders cohort analysis parallels the Keren Keshet results – lending some confidence in the findings and some credibility to the overall sample.



In both Keren Keshet and Pew leader samples, more traditional religiosity is associated with more men in leadership, while in moving “left” religiously toward less traditionalism, the preponderance of women grows dramatically. The denominational differences in gender balance parallel differences in gender-related traditionalism in each denomination’s religious culture.

### Denominational Diversity

About a fifth of the Keren Keshet sample are Orthodox, and so are almost as many Reform leaders in the sample. Conservatives amount to almost a third of the sample’s leaders, slightly more than the number who espouse other denominational identities, including none.

Exhibit 19: Denominational Distribution

	Keren Keshet Sample	Pew Likely Leader Cohort	Pew Rank-and-file Cohort
Orthodox	20%	21%	3%
Conservative	32%	34%	19%
Reform	19%	34%	39%
Other	29%	11%	40%
Total	100%	100%	100%

When compared with likely Jewish leaders in the Pew survey, the Keren Keshet sample has similar numbers of Orthodox and Conservative respondents. However, the Keren Keshet sample under-represents the Reform, while over-representing the others, including Reconstructionists.

### Little intermarriage among Jewish communal leaders

Fully 94% of the Keren Keshet sample’s married leaders are in-married. This figure compares with 96% of the married adult Jewish population of likely leaders in the Pew 2013 survey. In contrast, of Pew’s rank-and-file respondents, just 44% are in-married. We learn that in-married Jews are far more likely to emerge as Jewish communal leaders owing, in part, to their higher levels of Jewish engagement.

Exhibit 20: Intermarried or Inmarried

	Keren Keshet Sample	Pew Likely Leader Cohort	Pew Rank-and-file Cohort
Intermarried	6%	4%	56%
In-married	94%	96%	44%
Total	100%	100%	100%

### Lopsidedly Liberal

This leadership sample leans heavily to the left, with liberals outnumbering conservatives by more than five to one. In fact, those identifying as “very liberal” are twice as numerous as those calling themselves “conservative” or “very conservative” (of which there are none).

Overall, the Keren Keshet leader sample is even far more liberal than the Pew likely leadership cohort (65% vs. 42%), constituting the single departure from the several points of similarity seen heretofore. Since, as the analysis has shown, liberal leanings are associated with less Jewish educational achievement, the liberal bent of the Keren Keshet sample works to understate a central finding of this research, namely that Jewish communal leaders, as a group, have obtained high levels of Jewish education. If the sample is biased in a liberal direction, then, the results presented in this report should tend to under-state the great extent to which Jewish leaders are Jewishly educated.

Exhibit 21: Political views by Denomination

	Orthodox	Conservative	Reform	All other	Total	Pew Likely leader
Very liberal	3% ▼	13%	26%	39%	21%	9%
Liberal	19%	52% ▲	56% ▲	44% ▲	44%	35%
Moderate	39% ▲	28%	16%	14%	24%	38%
Conservative	39% ▲	6% ▼	3% ▼	3% ▼	11%	18%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

The decidedly liberal leaning characterizes every denominational group save one: the Orthodox. As many as 40% of the Orthodox leaders identify as politically conservative, contrasting very sharply with the very small number of political conservatives among the other denominations -- Conservative Jewish leaders at 7%, Reform leaders (2%) and others (4%).

## Appendix 2: Methodology

### Survey Sampling

As with studies of “elites” in society, this research lacks a precise definition of “Jewish leader,” let alone a comprehensive list of Jewish leaders. To sample leaders for this study, Research Success Technologies turned to a variety of sources of leadership lists. Several Jewish umbrella organizations gave us direct access to their leaders, allowing us to send them e-mail requests and follow-up reminders. Among them are the Avi Chai Foundation, the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations, and others. A larger number of agencies publicized the Keren Keshet survey with their contacts. Among them: the Wexner Foundation, the Union for Reform Judaism, the Reconstructionist Foundation, the Foundation for Jewish Camping, International Hillel, the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, the Society for Humanistic Judaism, the Association for Jewish Studies, and others. (See full list below.) The sample also drew upon people found on LinkedIn personal lists who appeared to have high chances of qualifying as a Jewish communal leader.

To be sure, the sampling lacks methodological rigor. It works with necessarily imprecise definitions of Jewish leader and of the organizations they lead. The sampling draw upon a happenstance assortment of lists with differential access. Response rates differed widely across the lists to which were accessible.

### Comparisons with Pew

This research addresses the methodological challenges by using the 2013 Pew survey of Jewish Americans for comparison purposes. While the Pew survey did not directly identify Jewish leaders, a combination of its questions allows for the construction of a rough approximation of Jewish leaders, to be referred to as, the “Pew likely leader cohort.” Where possible, the results for the Keren Keshet leader sample results are compared with the results of the Pew likely leaders. The repeated similarities in findings from the two very different survey segments does lend some confidence and credibility to the findings.

## Jewish Communal Agencies that Participated in the Study

Research Success and Keren Keshet thank the organizations and social media sites whose support, in providing lists or sending the survey to their members made this report possible.

*Exhibit 22: Organizations participating in Leadership survey.*

The organizations shared lists or sent the survey to their constituents. Where noted Research Success (ReST) assembled the list from publicly available sources.	Response
Association for Jewish Studies	15
Association of Jewish Libraries	15
Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations (ReST assembled)	25
Day Schools (AviChai Foundation List)	592
Foundation for Jewish Camp	104
Hillel International	58
Jewish Community Association of North America (JCCA)	76
Jewish Federations (ReST assembled list)	33
Jewish Funders Network	47
Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies	56
Reconstructing Judaism	214
Research Success created list of potential leaders	686
Social Justice Organizations (ReST assembled)	21
Society for Humanistic Judaism	74
Synagogue Educators Network	10
Union for Reform Judaism (URJ)	14
United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (USCJ)	125
Wexner Fellowship Alumni	90

### Social Media Participation

ReST compiled a list of 271 Jewishly oriented Facebook groups and Instagram pages and contacted their administrators asking that they post the link to the survey. 43 posted, generating 364 responses. The following are groups that generated 3 more responses.

	Responses
Directors of Jewish Youth Choirs	186
Hebrew Moves Me! A group for Hebrew Through Movement	57
Early Childhood Jewish Educators	27
JTEEN	10
Jewish Artists Initiative	9
Tablet Magazine	9
Behind the News - Stand with Israel	7
J-LEARN: Jewish Librarians, Educators, Archivists, Researchers and Nerds	6
Joyfully Jewish Holy Sparks	5
Jewish Women's Yoga Network (KinneretYoga)	4
Best-Day Adventures	3
Channeling Jewish History Group	3
Jewish Books	3

### Appendix 3: Periodical Reading – General and Jewish

The survey asked the leaders about which of a select list of periodicals they read frequently, complementing the analysis of their Jewish educational experiences in childhood and adolescence. The data on Jewish periodical reading provide some insight as to how Jewish leaders inform themselves about the Jewish world and the world around them.

Among those of more general interest, the *New York Times* is the most widely read, with the *Washington Post* a distant second. Among the American Jewish periodicals that they read, *The Forward* came in first in size of readership, closely followed by JTA. And among the Israel new sources, the *Times of Israel* far outpaced *Ha'aretz* and the *Jerusalem Post*.

Exhibit 23: Percent of all leaders who frequently read selected periodicals

New York Times	75% ▲
Washington Post	40%
Atlantic	28%
New Yorker	21%
Wall Street Journal	18%
The Forward	41% ▲
JTA	33% ▲
Tablet	26%
Jewish Review of Books	8%
Mosaic	6%
Commentary	5%
Times of Israel	36% ▲
Ha'aretz	25%
Jerusalem Post	22%



### Periodicals read frequently by Denomination

In terms of denomination, the major distinction is between the Orthodox and the other denominations. Orthodox leaders are less likely to read ... the New York Times, Washington Post, Atlantic, *The Forward* and *Ha'aretz*. More of them than others read the *Wall Street Journal*, *Times of Israel*, and the *Jerusalem Post*. These tendencies can be explained in part by political inclinations.

*Exhibit 24: Periodicals read frequently by Denomination  
(Entries are percentages)*

	Orthodox	Conservative	Reform	All other
New York Times	51% ▼	79%	81%	80%
Washington Post	22% ▼	43%	44%	46%
Atlantic	22% ▼	30%	23%	34%
New Yorker	18%	27% ▲	19%	18%
Wall Street Journal	37% ▲	18%	11%	10%
The Forward	22% ▼	47%	43%	46%
JTA	27%	40% ▲	28%	31%
Tablet	25%	28%	24%	25%
Jewish Review of Books	13% ▲	9%	5%	7%
Mosaic	11% ▲	6%	3%	5%
Commentary	10% ▲	6%	2%	3%
Times of Israel	49% ▲	42% ▲	26%	28%
Ha'aretz	19% ▼	26% ▼	22%	29%
Jerusalem Post	41% ▲	23%	12%	16%

### Periodicals read frequently by Political views

The readerships of the various publications differ sharply in their political identities. To take a few dramatic examples: Conservatives are more than eight times as likely as the “very liberal” leaders to read the *Wall Street Journal*. The comparable ratio is 4+:1 for *Mosaic*, *Commentary* and the *Jerusalem Post*.

Liberals have their favorite publications as well. Those where the liberal readers far outpace conservatives include the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Atlantic*, *The Forward*, and *Ha'aretz*.

*Tablet* is the only publication where readers are balanced both in terms of their politics and their religious denominations.

*Exhibit 25: Periodicals read frequently by Political Identity  
(Entries are percentages)*

	Very liberal	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
New York Times	89% ▲	83% ▲	67%	24% ▼
Washington Post	54% ▲	45% ▲	30%	10% ▼
Wall Street Journal	6%	11% ▼	31%	45% ▲
New Yorker	26% ▲	24% ▲	17%	6% ▼
Atlantic	39% ▲	31%	23%	8% ▼
The Forward	55% ▲	44%	35%	12% ▼
JTA	33%	33%	35%	21% ▼
Tablet	22%	28%	29%	22%
Jewish Review of Books	6%	9%	9%	8%
Mosaic	3% ▼	6% ▼	8%	11% ▲
Commentary	3% ▼	2% ▼	8%	14% ▲
Ha'aretz	30% ▲	27%	21%	12% ▼
Times of Israel	23% ▼	34% ▼	50% ▲	44% ▲
Jerusalem Post	9% ▼	17% ▼	32% ▲	46% ▲

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