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**The Alumni of Five Israel Experience Programs and
Their Distinctive Jewish Identity Profiles –
A Study of ...
The Nesiya Institute
The Alexander Muss High Institute for Israel Education
Livnot U'Lehibanot
The Pardes Institute of Jewish Studies
World Union of Jewish Students Institute in Arad**

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The Alliance for Educational Programs in Israel

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Executive Summary

Jews of different ages and backgrounds have participated in a variety of Israel educational experience programs over the last 20 years. These programs differ in terms of their ideological approach to Judaism, the kinds of activities they offer, and the length of the program.

This study, commissioned by the Alliance for Educational Programs in Israel, surveyed alumni from five long-established Israel education programs (Nesiya, Alexander Muss High School, Livnot U'Lehibanot, Pardes Institute, and the World Union of Jewish Students Institute in Arad), distinguished by their independent status and intensive, alternative approaches to Jewish and Israel education.

The analysis compared program participants with specially designed sub-samples of the National Jewish Population Study 2000-01 (NJPS), weighted so as to approximate the Israel program participants in terms of Jewish upbringing. The results point to several very large gaps between the higher-scoring participants and the lower-scoring NJPS quasi-control group, as follows:

1. The alumni outscored their NJPS counterparts with respect to Jewish engagement, including such matters as ritual observance, synagogue involvement, organizational belonging, charitable giving, and friendship networks. That is, in almost all instances, the levels of current Jewish involvement of the program alumni were greater than those found in comparable American Jews.
2. Of those program participants who have married, the vast majority have married Jews. Even the programs with the highest rates of intermarriage report rates that are much lower than those found among comparable Jews

who themselves had been to Israel in their adolescent and young adult years.

3. All program alumni reported high levels of attachment to Israel, marked by emotional attachment, frequent travel, and pro-Israel endorsement with friends.

While from a strict methodological perspective, it is not possible to attribute these differences solely to the Israel experience program, it is fair to say that these educational programs clearly played an important role in their participants' on-going Jewish growth that has certainly taken place before, during, and after their participation in these Israel educational programs.

Introduction

In the last two decades, thousands of Jewish youngsters from North America have visited Israel on organized, educational programs. As a direct consequence, a plethora of Israel educational programs have emerged providing diverse alternatives with respect to educational style and content, duration of program, mix of activities (touring, studying, volunteering, etc.) and Jewish ideological approach. Among the more popular programs are those that emphasize touring the country; opportunities to study Hebrew, Judaism, Israel, and academic subject matter; and volunteer frameworks such as in kibbutzim or in service to the Israeli army. Sponsoring agencies are myriad as well. They include youth movements, camps, religious denominations, JCCs, yeshivas, day schools, universities and independent agencies. Duration of the stay in Israel can be as little as ten days, or as much as a year (with possibilities for extension), with many summertime programs for teens and young adults lasting 4-7 weeks.

These programs appeal to participant populations who differ in terms of age, gender distribution, interests, and Jewish identity backgrounds. But even as they differ among themselves, as a group they also differ from other American Jews who have never been to Israel. Very simply, they are more Jewishly engaged and Israel-oriented than American Jews generally.

An extensive social scientific literature provides strong evidence that for North American Jews, time spent in Israel as an adolescent or young adult does indeed exert a significant positive impact upon adult Jewish identity (Rolnik, 1965; Bubis & Marks, 1975; London & Hirshfeld, 1989; Kafka, London, Bandler & Frank, 1990; S. M. Cohen, 1991a, b; E. H. Cohen, 1993, 1994, 1995a, b; Mittleberg, 1994; Chazan, 1997; Sales 1998; Saxe, Kadushin, Pakes, Kelner, Horowitz, Sales, & Brodsky, 2000; Saxe, Kadushin, Kelner, Rosen, & Yereslove, 2001, 2002; Saxe, Kadushin, Hecht, Phillips, Kelner, & Rosen, 2004). The studies' qualitative and quantitative findings are reasonably uniform on the following points:

- 1) Israel experience programs appeal to youngsters with relatively strong Jewish backgrounds initially, as exhibited in more observant parents, more

intensive forms of Jewish education, and more extensive patterns of institutional affiliation.

- 2) They generate high levels of satisfaction and considerable enthusiasm both about the programs specifically and toward Israel more generally.
- 3) They produce, for many, a life-long attachment to Israel, especially for those who manifest and strengthen such attachment through repeated subsequent visits to Israel.
- 4) These programs produce, net of all confounding factors, changes in several measures of Jewish engagement, although the precise outcomes and their magnitude have yet to be fully examined.

The Questions: Until now, the research has yet to examine how and why specific Israel experience programs differ in terms of either constituency or impact. That is, we have little systematic evidence (albeit lots of impressionistic testimony from sponsors and participants) as to the diversity of Israel experience participants associated with different programs. The more educationally sophisticated Israel experience programs seek not merely to enhance Jewish and Zionist identity generally, but to achieve very specific educational objectives distinctive to these programs. Moreover, by investing considerable expertise and resources in the educational experience, the more educationally sophisticated programs may well produce even more powerful effects than those produced by the more standard Israel experiences. It is these assumptions that this research seeks to examine.

In particular, with respect to those who choose various Israel experience alternatives...

- 1) What specific sorts of **Jewish identity outcomes** can be associated with participation in these diverse Israel educational experiences?
- 2) How do they differ with respect to **Jewish background**? Surely not all are equally endowed with high rates of Jewish familial, communal, and educational experiences.

Additionally, we ask:

- 3) How do they **view the programs** in which they participated?
- 4) What sorts of emotional and other **ties to Israel** do they evince after returning to their Diaspora origins?

In a variety of ways, at the heart of the mission of each of these programs is the aspiration to contribute to the growth in Jewish identities of their participants in some fashion. The programs may, for example, seek to deepen their participants' attachment to being Jewish; or to enhance their connection with Israel; or impart skills related to the practice of Judaism; or to encourage them to participate more fully in the life of organized Jewish communities. The extent to which these elements of Jewish "impact" in fact can be observed among former program participants is the central question this research seeks to address: **Did these programs indeed enhance the Jewish identities of their participants, and in what ways, and to what extent?**

The principal research strategy we adopt is to compare each of the program participants with suitably constructed and individually tailored quasi-control groups drawn from the recently conducted National Jewish Population Study (NJPS) of 2000/01, sponsored by the United Jewish Communities (see www.ujc.org/njps for more details). We examine rates of Jewish engagement measured in a variety of ways among each programs' alumni, comparing them with those reported by a subset of respondents from the NJPS. These NJPS sub-samples, in their youth or young adult years, also visited Israel and are currently about the same age as the alumni surveyed.

From a strict methodological point of view, the sort of evidence we collected from the former participants in each program can, at best, only strongly suggest, but cannot "prove," that the experience with each program actually produced growth in Jewish identity. We surveyed the respondents at only one point in time, rather than several times over a long period. Insofar as we observe unusually high levels of Jewish and Zionist identity among the alumni of given programs, in a technical sense, any of a number of factors may have contributed to these high levels. That said, we do believe the results can point to the growth in Jewish engagement that may well have occurred as a result of participation in the programs.

Five Israel Experience Programs: Elements of Distinctiveness

To address the research questions articulated above, the Alliance for Educational Programs in Israel, a consortium of independently operated Israel experience educational programs commissioned this study. The five constituent agencies that participated in this study are as follows:

- **Nesiya**
- **Alexander Muss High School in Israel (AMHSI)**
- **Livnot U'Lehibanot (or, “Livnot”)**
- **Pardes Institute**
- **World Union of Jewish Students Institute in Arad (WUJS)**

These programs vary widely in so many ways, including the character of their prime participant-constituencies, as well as in the key educational aspects of their programs. The principal age-ranges of their participant audiences range from the teen years (Nesiya and HIS) to twenty-somethings (Pardes and WUJS). The duration of their main programs may last from a few weeks (Nesiya), to a few months (AMHSI and Livnot), to a year (Pardes, WUJS). For these reasons alone we would anticipate substantial differences in the Jewish identity profiles of the alumni, both at the current time, and in their childhood years, as reported retrospectively.

The central program components and educational philosophies vary as well. In the slightly edited words of the programs themselves, drawn from their websites and publicity materials, we find the following presentations:

Nesiya

The word Nesiya means “journey” in Hebrew. The Nesiya experience (www.nesiya.org), in the view of the program, leads participants on journeys, both literally and figuratively. Nesiya’s teen-age participants, in groups of North Americans

and Israelis, explore Judaism and Israel through a combination of travel, outdoor adventure, workshops in the performing and visual arts, community service projects, and creative study. These summertime programs that last for several weeks allow participants to experience Israel in an environment that reflects the diversity and vitality of the Jewish people today.

Alexander Muss High School in Israel (AMHSI)

For eight weeks, AMHSI (www.amhsi.com), located in K'far Shmaryahu, invites junior and senior high school students to experience Israel, combining touring and classroom study. AMHSI sees itself as "synonymous with experiential academics, outdoors fun and challenges, where Israel itself is your classroom." AMHSI "offers students a chance to discover Israel and its people, learn its history in a unique, hands-on way, and have a life-changing experience while connecting with their own heritage." Students pursue their regular coursework with AMHSI faculty while experiencing Israel and connecting to Judaism.

Livnot U'Lehibanot

Livnot U'Lehibanot (www.livnot.com), with facilities in Safed and Jerusalem, means "To Build and To Be Built. Livnot accepts young Jewish adults between the ages of 21-30 with minimal to no Jewish background. Participants "discover the connection between Judaism, nature, and the environment- because we believe that there is no better way to understand our nation's past than through being intimate with the land itself." Livnot's program offerings last from a few weeks to several months and are built around four common elements: touring and hiking, studying, community service, and Shabbat. Livnot's active alumni community, maintained by intensive follow-up efforts on the part of the staff, allows participants to build upon their learning experience once they return home. It is comprised of more than 3200 people, and they continue to experience Livnot through Shabbatons, retreats, hiking, music events and solidarity missions.

Pardes

Pardes (www.pardes.org.il) offers participants the opportunity to engage in serious text study in Israel, focusing upon Torah, Talmud, Halacha and Jewish philosophy. Pardes describes itself as "much more than a co-ed yeshiva. Pardes in Jerusalem offers a variety of educational Israel programs for post-college young people interested in Jewish studies in an open environment." Pardes, whether in summer programs lasting a few weeks or in its "flagship" program lasting a year (or more, for those who so elect), is committed to giving its students the skills for in-depth Jewish learning through religious text study. It seeks to challenge students to grow as individuals, as well as members of the Jewish community, in a religiously diverse and tolerant atmosphere.

WUJS

The World Union of Jewish Students (www.wujs-arad.org) provides a learning-and-living experience in Arad (an isolated town in the Negev) where young Jewish adults, many of whom may be contemplating immigrating to Israel, with an ulpan (Hebrew instruction immersion experience) and extensive courses in Jewish and Israel studies over the period of several months. WUJS offers "young Jewish graduates and professionals from all over the world an opportunity to come and experience Israel in the most exciting and creative manner possible." Its stated aim is to "foster the unity of Jewish students worldwide and to strive to ensure their participation in the fulfillment of the aspirations of the Jewish people, its continuity, and the development of its religious, spiritual, cultural and social heritage."

In light of the very different feeling-tones these statements convey, one would not be surprised to learn of differences in the Jewish life experiences of respective programs' participants, of different reactions to the programs, and different outcomes in Jewish identity measures. At the same time, given the overall common themes in research on Israel experience programs in the past, we would also expect certain shared characteristics that distinguish these programs' participants in the aggregate from other American Jews, even those who have been to Israel in their young adult years.

Methods

The Survey and Sample

The survey questionnaire consisted of items covering a wide range of areas:

- Social and demographic characteristics (gender, age, family status, education)
- Jewish identity indicators from childhood and adolescence, replicating many found on the 2000/01 National Jewish Population Study (to allow for comparison with NJPS quasi-control groups)
- Current indicators of Jewish involvement (also to allow for comparison with NJPS quasi-control groups)
- Questions relating to inter-dating and inter-marriage, both attitudes and behaviors
- Measures of Israel attachment
- Perceptions of the strengths and drawbacks of the Israel experience program
- Evaluation of program components
- Reports of ongoing contact with the programs after their formal conclusion.

We administered the survey via the Web. Each of the participating programs assembled e-mail addresses for their participants extending back several years. We then repeatedly contacted these participants, seeking their cooperation in completing the Web-based survey.

We received 2,254 completed and usable survey questionnaires in all. For the purposes of the analysis, we assigned 2,155 (96%) to the program they last attended, with 99 (or 4%) unassigned due to incomplete information.

A small number of respondents participated in two programs. Most notably, about 17% of those who first attended a Livnot program went on to participate in Pardes, WUJS, or other programs (to which they were assigned for the purposes of analysis). While their inclusion with the Livnot participants for tabulation purposes would hardly affect the Livnot results statistically, we should note that they do represent prime examples of ongoing Jewish growth among alumni of Livnot and other programs in which they participated.

All analyses presented are conducted separately and in parallel for the five groups. The results reported below for the total population reflect the usable responses from all 2,254 respondents, while those results specific to the five programs are limited to the 2,155 respondents who could be identified unambiguously with one of the five programs.

Program Most Recently Attended

		Frequency
Valid	Nesiya	93
	AMHSI	644
	Livnot	641
	Pardes	344
	WUJS	433
	Total	2155
Missing		99
Total		2254

The programs' varying coverage of their participants e-mail addresses is incomplete and non-uniform. Their records were far more complete and more accurate for recent participants than for those who participated in the more distant past, generating more returns from the more recent alumni. Over time, the program graduates, obviously, move, change their e-mail addresses and increasingly lose contact with the programs. Insofar as programs undertake efforts to stay in touch with their alumni (such as by way of newsletters, reunions, or other programs), they do work to maintain and refresh their

lists. However, they do so in a way that is inevitably selective, retaining contact with those who are more favorably inclined toward the program, as some alumni make sure to retain contact with their former programs, just as others may, for whatever reason, want nothing to do with them. In addition, to an unknown extent, we would expect that Israel-based alumni would probably stand a better chance of appearing on the e-mail lists than those living elsewhere (about 20% of the respondents who most recently attended Pardes and WUJS were living in Israel as compared with fewer than 3% for the other three groups). On an impressionistic basis, Livnot, of all the groups, seems to invest the greatest effort in maintaining e-mail contact with its alumni, and, in addition, made special efforts to update its lists for this study.

These considerations suggest a sample bias whose extent and precise nature is unknown. Sample coverage is, as noted above, weighted toward more recent participants. We can also assume that it is also weighted to those who have been somewhat less mobile (and thereby maintaining more constant e-mail addresses over time), as well as toward those who are more interested in maintaining contact with their programs (perhaps reflecting a more positive view of their Israel experience specifically or of their orientation to Israel or being Jewish more generally).

An Analytic Strategy: Comparisons with the NJPS “Control” Groups

To address the first two (more critical) research objectives outlined above, this analysis addresses two fundamental questions of the data. To re-state these two questions in data-analytic terms:

- 1) With respect to Jewish engagement (measured in terms of communal affiliation, ritual observance, and subjective identity), how do alumni from each of the five programs differ from other American Jews who have been to Israel in their adolescence and young adult years? Here we are seeking to measure and extract **“selection bias,”** the extent to which participants already experienced a Jewish identity “head start” by virtue of choosing to come to Israel in the first place.

- 2) More critically, how do they differ in terms of Jewish identity outcomes – are they, in fact, more Jewishly engaged than comparable individuals, with similar Jewish upbringing? Here we are asking the question of **“impact,”** or more precisely the extent of Jewish identity growth associated with each program. As noted, the one-shot nature of the survey (we assessed respondents at only one point in time), we cannot truly assess impact. Rather, given the methodological constraints, this study can only approximately discern the extent of Jewish growth that is associated with the experience in each group.

In the ideal world of research, we would have selected a group of test subjects some thirty or forty years ago and randomly divided the group in two. We would have assigned one half (the “treatment” groups) to participate in Nesiya, AMHSI, Livnot, Pardes or WUJS, and assigned the other half (the “control” group) to travel to Israel in their young adult years in some other capacity. We would then compare treatment groups (program alumni) with the control group (Israel visitors) to assess the Jewish identity impact of attending one or another program.

Of course, we lack the ability either to reconstruct history or, for the sake of good social science, to control young people’s Jewish educational experiences. Instead, we approximate the controlled experiment in another way. The National Jewish Population Survey of 2000/01, which interviewed 4,523 Jewish adults across the country, ascertained which adult Jewish respondents had traveled to Israel in their younger years. Accordingly, we selected an artificially constructed quasi-control group consisting of respondents sharing two characteristics:

- they had **been to Israel** (whether on an organized trip or not) between the ages of 14-26; and,
- they were **between the ages of 18 and 49** at the time of the survey (an age distribution roughly comparable to that found among the alumni).

By virtue of having been to Israel as adolescents and young adults, this NJPS sub-sample differs sharply from other American Jews. They derive from more observant Jewish homes, attended more extensive and intensive Jewish educational experiences, and maintained more friendships with Jews in those years. As a direct consequence of these differences, in turn, as well as perhaps the very fact that they traveled to Israel when age 14-26, they also report higher levels of Jewish engagement than other Jews as contemporary adults. It is this group (or, more precisely, somewhat adjusted versions of this group, as we explain below) that will serve as the source for benchmark comparisons with the program alumni. Insofar as the Israel program alumni differ from the NJPS sub-sample who had also been to Israel in their younger years, we can impute evidence of Jewish growth associated with participation in the respective program. (Of course, to reiterate a point made earlier and one we shall make several times again, that Jewish growth may itself be part of the reason why participants selected the program as well as ensuing directly from their experience in the program and in subsequent developments.)

By comparing the Israel program graduates with the NJPS visitors to Israel, we are, in effect, stripping away the impact of a youthful visit to Israel per se. We are asking NOT how the alumni differ from American Jews in general. Rather, we are asking how the alumni now differ from those who earlier in their lives chose to visit Israel, but not necessarily in an educationally intensive program such as those sponsored by the five programs in this study.

The NJPS sub-sample presents a rather demanding basis for comparison against which to assess the program alumni. By virtue of having traveled to Israel at least once in their youth, they tend to emerge as relatively engaged in Jewish life years later, as adults. In addition, the NJPS respondents are, on the whole, both older and more likely to be married with children than the typical alumni in our sample. Since age, marriage, and parenthood are all associated with higher rates of Jewish involvement, the NJPS benchmarks are set at even higher levels than they would be otherwise.

As will be demonstrated presently, alumni surveyed differ with respect to their Jewish upbringing. Participants in some programs report higher levels of home observance, Jewish education, and Jewish friendship circles than those in other programs. This circumstance means that the NJPS control group may only approximate the Israel

program participants in terms of Jewish upbringing. It cannot precisely match the distinctive distributions associated with each program.

To more finely tune the comparisons between the alumni and NJPS control groups, we weighted the NJPS data for each of five comparisons, so that the Jewish upbringing of the NJPS control groups would approximate the Jewish upbringing of the appropriate program for which it is serving as a baseline.

To illustrate, the Livnot participants reported the least intensive levels of Jewish upbringing of all five groups in terms of Jewish schooling, observance, and Jewish friends in childhood and adolescent years. In contrast, Nesiya alumni reported the most intensive such Jewish socialization experiences. To take account of these variations (and those for each of the five groups), we constructed program-specific weights for the NJPS controls. In effect, when analyzing, say, the Livnot results, we gave more weight (or “votes”) to those NJPS respondents raised in less intensive Jewish environments. For the comparisons with Nesiya alumni, on the other hand, the weighting procedure gave more weight to the NJPS respondents who reported more numerous and more intensive Jewish socialization experiences in their younger years. Thus, Livnot alumni are compared with NJPS adults who experienced a weaker Jewish socialization than did those use in comparisons with the Nesiya alumni. As will be explained in further detail, NJPS synthetic and specifically weighted control groups were similarly constructed for the alumni of AMHSI, Pardes, and WUJS.

Findings

Demographic Background Characteristics

Preliminary to the analysis is an understanding of the basic socio-demographic contours of the respondents.

Demographic Characteristics

Program	Male	Mean Age	Married	Children	Graduate Degree
Nesiya	27	21	7	0	14
HIS	38	28	41	26	41
Livnot	43	29	39	4	54
Pardes	41	36	60	8	78
WUJS	46	41	73	57	63
Total	41	32	48	22	54

Standard gender differential- predominantly female: Women outnumber men by almost a 3:2 ratio overall (more precisely, 41% are men, and 59% women), and they predominate in every program. Only among WUJS participants is the gender balance nearly even (but women still pre-dominate). At the other extreme we find Nesiya alumni (27% male; 73% female).

These five Israel programs are no exception to larger patterns and a significant body of research. These findings are consistent with a wide range of studies demonstrating that women out-score men with respect to religious participation and piety in the West, in the United States, and in American Judaism. The only area in Judaism where men outscore or outnumber women is in the performance of certain gender-related practices among the Orthodox, and in positions of governance, communal leadership, and liturgical leadership. In these areas we find more Jewish men, despite the predominance of women in adult education, synagogue activities, communal volunteering, and the mid-to lower ranks of professional and educational service. Even more specifically related to the point at hand, previous examinations of American Jewish youth have found more girls than boys in youth groups and Israel experience programs.

Young adults: At the time of the survey, respondents averaged 32 years of age, with fairly wide variations in the average age of alumni from the five groups. Nesiya graduates were the youngest (mean age= 21), and WUJS the oldest (average = 41). Current age (at time of survey) is a function both of the number of years that have elapsed since participation in the program, as well as the average age of participants at the time they attended the program. Nesiya and AMHSI are the two programs geared for teenagers, but AMHSI respondents are older owing to predominantly more responses from alumni who participating years prior to administration of the survey.

Half married, most without children (yet?): Less than half the respondents (48%) are married, and less than half of these (or 22% of the total) have children at home. These patterns reflecting both the respondents' age distribution as well as the tendency for American Jews, especially the most highly educated, to delay family formation.

In this regard, of special note are the family formation patterns among the Pardes alumni who, more than others, report a wide gap between the proportion married (60%) and the number who have already had children (8%). In other words, most Pardes alumni are married without children, a figure more than double that of participants in the other programs. Notably, Pardes alumni report the highest levels of ("secular") educational achievement of all five programs (and who, anecdotally, are reported by Pardes staff to have studied disproportionately at highly selective institutions of higher learning).

Methodological implications: The relative absence of children is of methodological interest for this analysis in that it can be said to exert a "downward drag" on the Jewish identity indicators among alumni of the five programs. That is, over time, as more of these respondents marry and have children, we can reasonably expect their Jewish engagement to rise. Accordingly, in the comparisons presented below, contrasting the alumni with respondents from the National Jewish Population Survey, the relatively small number of parents among the alumni constitutes a conservative bias, that is, it produces lower levels of Jewish engagement than would otherwise be the case were children present in their homes. Nevertheless, as we shall soon see, the alumni do, in fact, display significantly higher rates of Jewish engagement than those displayed by the NJPS respondents who function as a simulated control group.

Jewish Identity Indicators in the Childhood and Teen Years

Somewhat weaker Jewish upbringing: How intensive were the Jewish home and community environments of the program alumni and NJPS respondents when they were growing up? To address this question, we focus on eight indicators of Jewish socialization. On four of these (High Holiday service attendance at age 10-11, day school attendance in the elementary years, Jewish youth group participation, and dating only Jews in high school), the alumni in the aggregate (taking all of them together), approximate the levels found in the NJPS sub-sample. On the other four measures (entailing day school attendance at the high school level, Jewish friendships, service attendance, and Sabbath observance as a child), the alumni surveyed actually trail the NJPS sub-sample. For example, while 52% of the NJPS sub-sample attended Sabbath services at least monthly at age 10-11, just 30% of the Israel program participants did so. That is, in general, the alumni actually experienced somewhat weaker Jewish socialization experience than did the “average American Jewish counterpart” who visited Israel in their younger years.

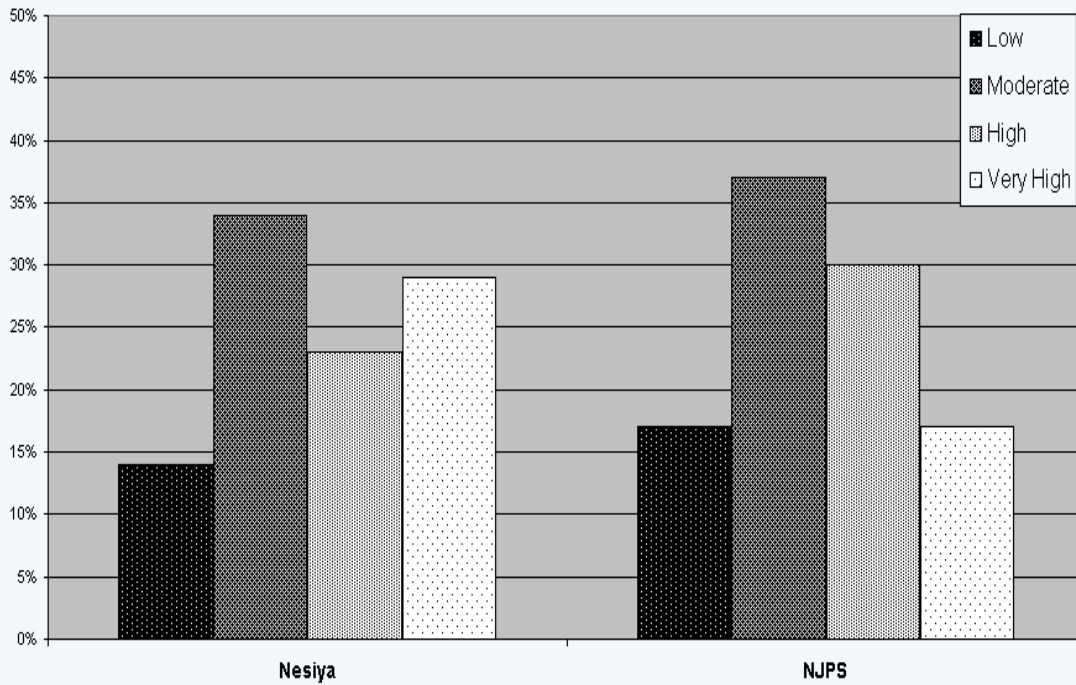
Selected Jewish Identity Indicators found in NJPS							
	Program most recently attended						
	Nesiya	HSI	Livnot	Pardes	WUJS	Total	NJPS
Attended HiHoliday Services, 10-11	97	95	86	92	87	90	90
Went to Jewish Youth group as teen	55	68	35	57	55	53	47
Most friends Jewish, 10-11	46	48	28	47	43	41	49
Sabbath candles always lit, 10-11	43	32	18	38	36	30	45
Services more than monthly, 10-11	46	35	16	36	33	30	52
Dated only Jews in HS	39	20	10	30	21	20	24
Attended day school	42	18	8	18	11	15	18
Day School High School	26	4	2	9	5	5	19

Variations in Jewish upbringing: Nesiya emerges as the program whose participants were most Jewishly engaged in their childhood years. As many as 42% of Nesiya participants attended day school on the elementary level, as contrasted with 15% for the entire alumni sample. Livnot alumni, in contrast, uniformly score lower than all other groups' participants on all eight measures. For example, just 18% of the Livnot graduates reported Sabbath candles lit in their home, as contrasted with from 32% to 43% among the other groups. AMHSI alumni are distinguished by rather high rates of Jewish youth group involvement and rough equivalence with the other alumni on all other measures. The Pardes alumni report Jewish socialization experiences whose frequencies are slightly higher than those reported among the other groups, though resembling the NJPS sub-sample. (For example, Sabbath candle lighting at age 10-11 reaches 30% for all five groups, 38% for the Pardes alumni, and 45% for the NJPS sub-sample.) The WUJS participants report levels very similar to the five groups taken as a whole.

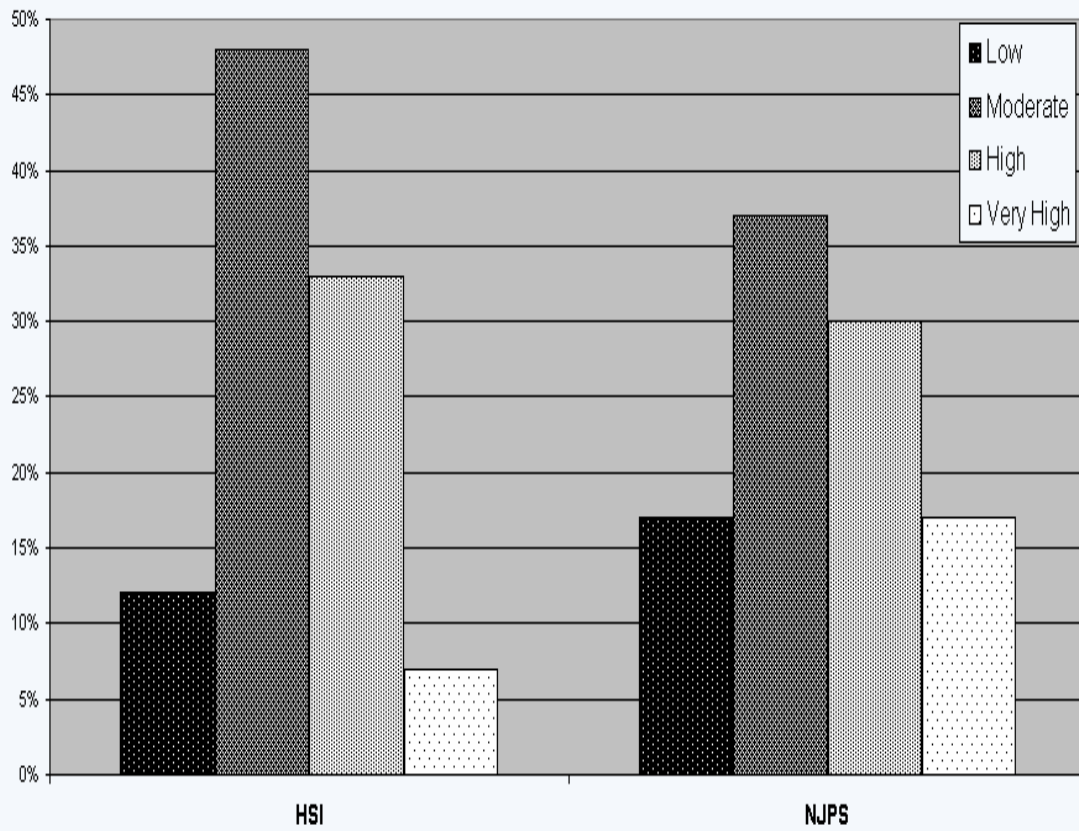
We combined the eight Jewish socialization indicators to form an aggregate index of Jewish socialization ranging in value from 0 to 8. By stratifying into four layers ranging from “low” to “very high,” we can appreciate the differences between and among the five groups, as well as their differences with the NJPS sub-sample. For example, among the low-scoring Livnot alumni, 42% rank low on the index and just 3% qualify as “very high.” In contrast are the respective scores for the NJPS (17% for both the low and very high strata) and Nesiya (14% low and 29% very high).

Summary Index of Jewish Identity Indicators, Programs vs. NJPS								
		Program most recently attended					Total	NJPS
		Nesiya	AMHSI	Livnot	Pardes	WUJS		
Jewish Socialization as a Youngster	Low	14%	12%	42%	20%	22%	24%	17%
	Moderate	34%	48%	46%	39%	45%	45%	37%
	High	23%	33%	10%	27%	24%	23%	30%
	Very High	29%	7%	3%	14%	9%	8%	17%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

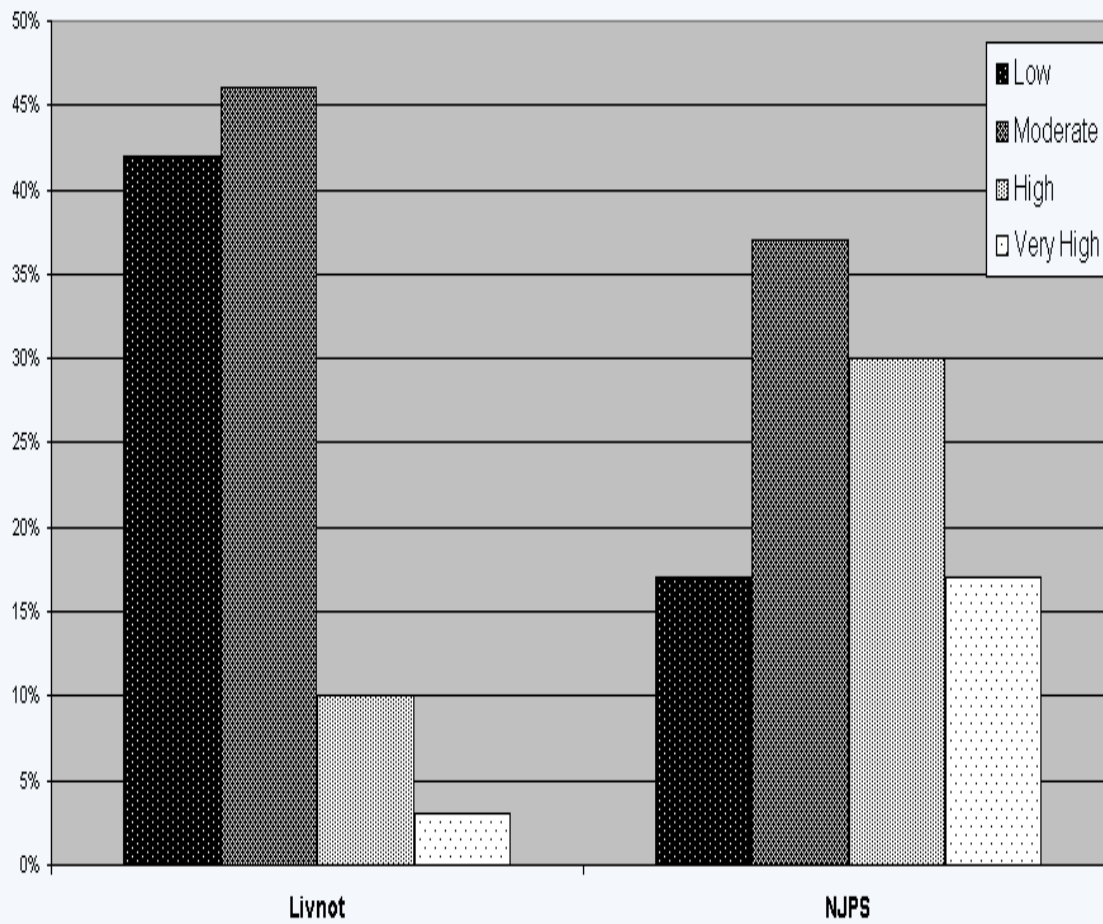
Summary Index of Jewish Identity Indicators,
Nesiya vs. NJPS



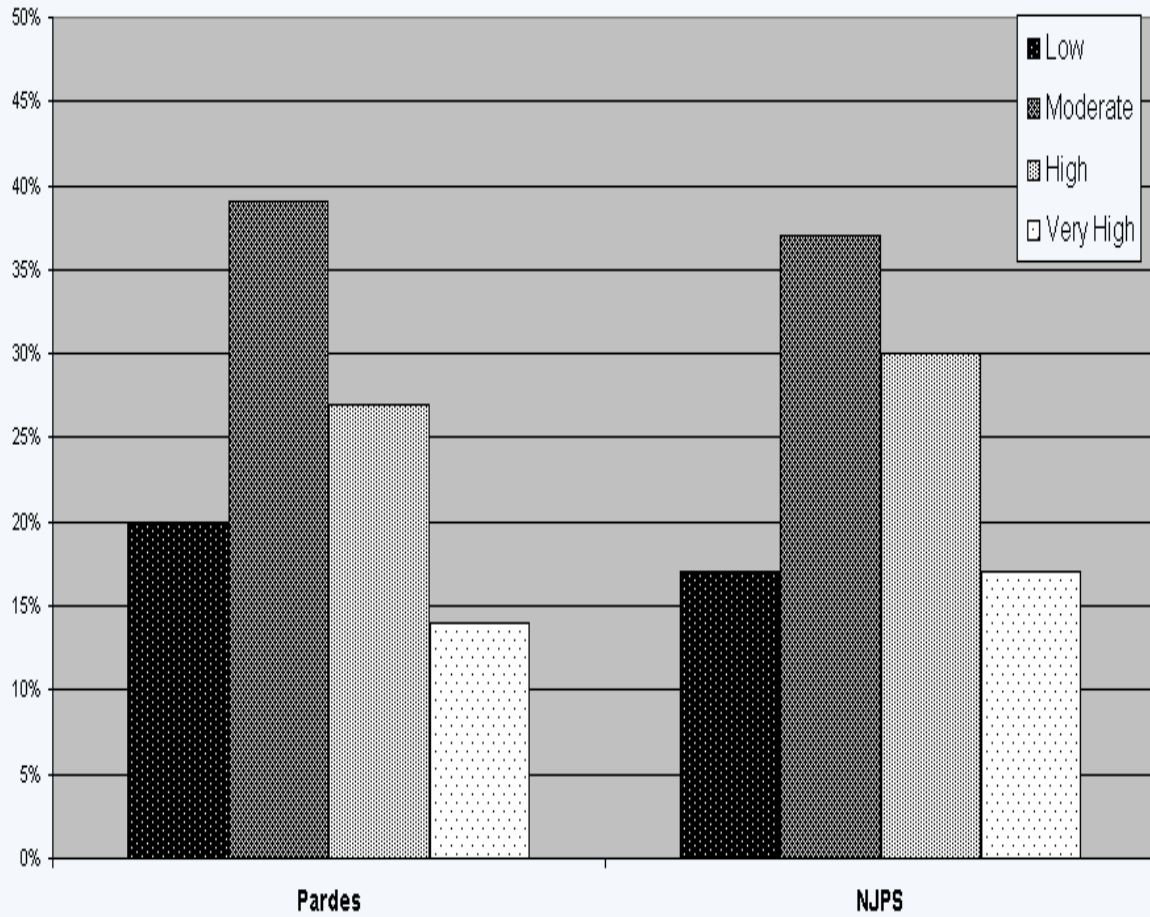
Summary Index of Jewish Identity Indicators,
HSI vs. NJPS



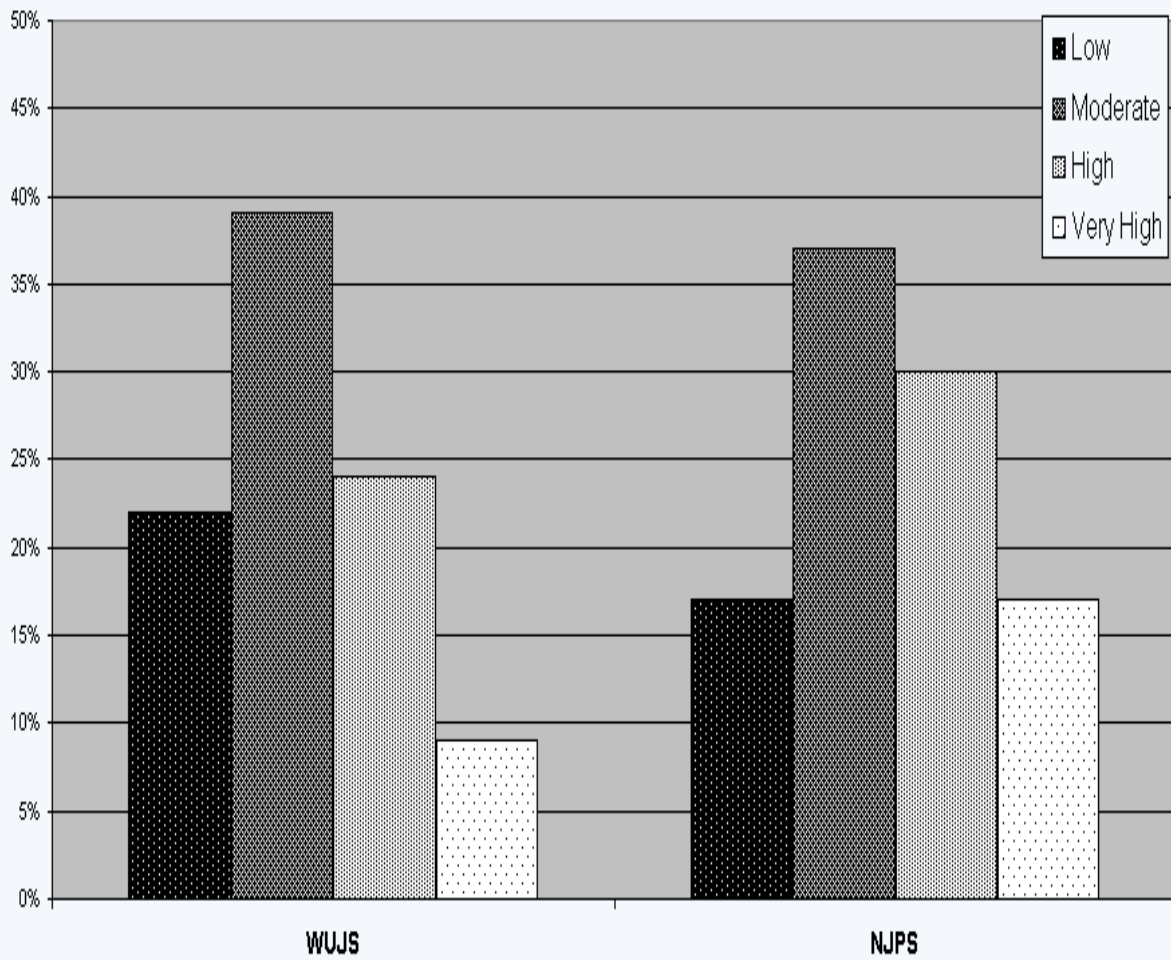
Summary Index of Jewish Identity Indicators, Livnot vs. NJPS



Summary Index of Jewish Identity Indicators,
Pardes vs. NJPS



Summary Index of Jewish Identity Indicators,
WUJS vs. NJPS



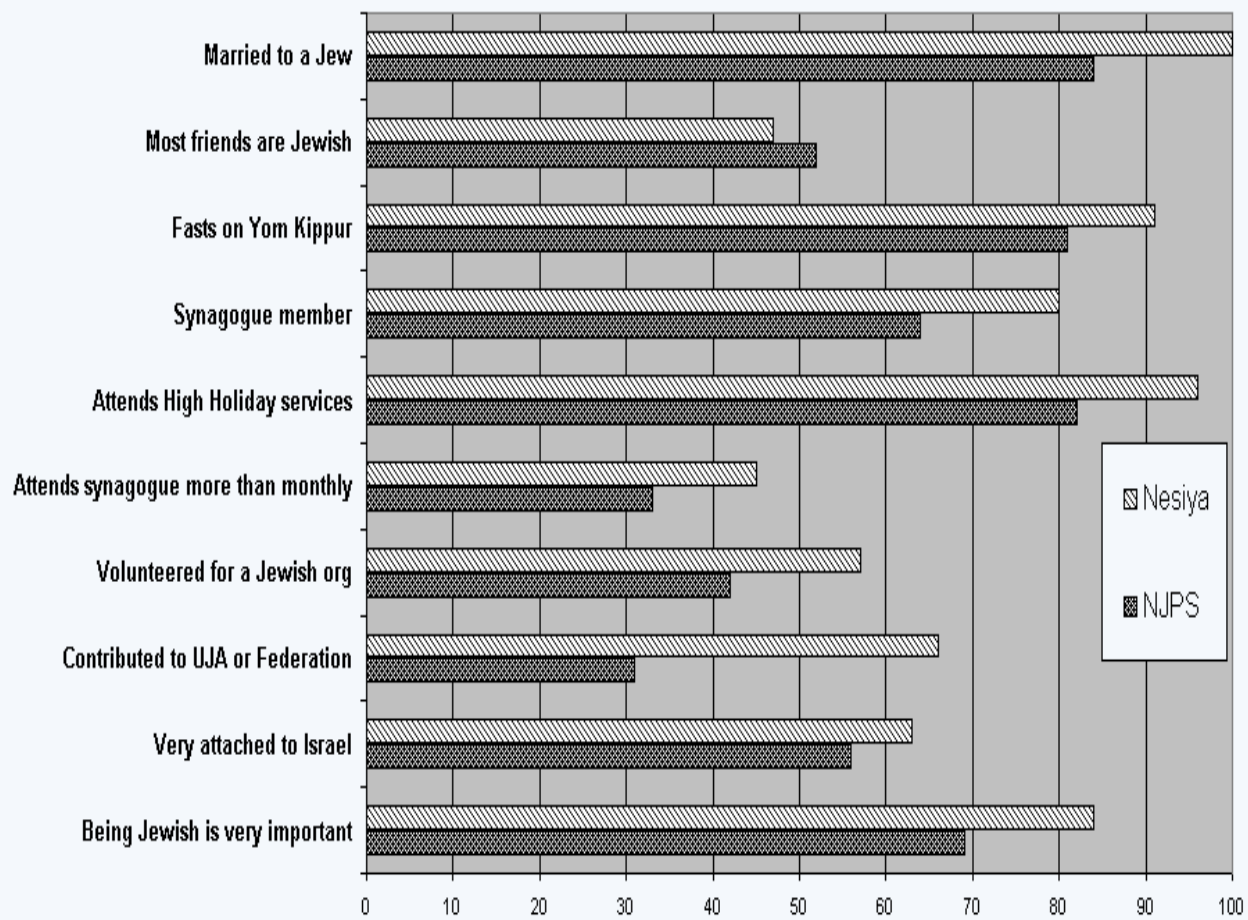
To construct NJPS control groups tailored to each of the five groups, we weighted the NJPS data such that the distribution on the index of Jewish socialization would match that for the respective Israel program. Thus, to construct the NJPS control group for Livnot, we more than doubled the weight of those with low levels of Jewish socialization (so that they went from 17% to 42% of the respondents), and considerably down-weighted those with very high socialization (so they went from 17% in the original NJPS distribution to as little as 3% in the weighted distribution, matching the 3% in the Livnot group). We followed this procedure for all five program alumni.

The results in the key comparisons that follow contrast current levels of Jewish engagement for the program alumni with the respective levels of Jewish engagement for the NJPS sub-sample, re-weighted so as to resemble the alumni in terms of Jewish experiences in childhood and early teen years. In a sense, for each of the five sets of comparisons, we are looking at two groups with equal Jewish starting points in childhood, and contrasting their eventual Jewish destinations in adulthood.

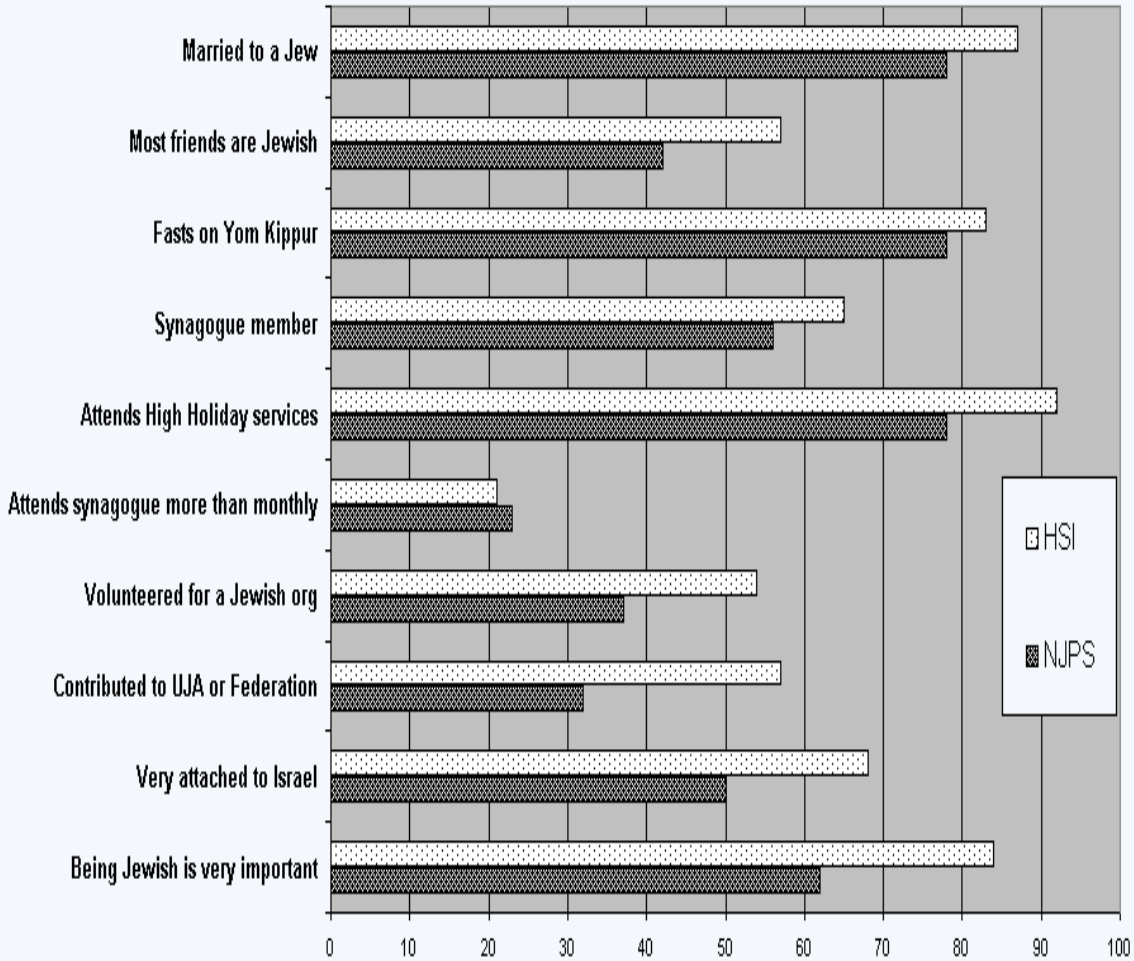
**Comparison of Jewish Identity Measures for
Program Participants and NJPS “Control” Group**

	<u>NESIYA</u>	<u>AMHSI</u>	<u>LIVNOT</u>	<u>PARDES</u>	<u>WUJS</u>
Married to a Jew	100	87	87	98	97
NJPS	84	78	76	80	79
Most friends are Jewish	47	57	47	86	75
NJPS	52	42	39	45	43
Fasts on Yom Kippur	91	83	86	95	87
NJPS	81	78	73	78	77
Synagogue member	80	65	50	75	63
NJPS	64	56	51	58	56
Attends High Holiday services	96	92	92	99	93
NJPS	82	78	72	79	77
Attends synagogue more than monthly	45	21	28	72	36
NJPS	33	23	16	25	22
Volunteered for a Jewish org.	57	54	52	72	59
NJPS	42	37	31	38	36
Contributed to UJA or Federation	66	57	49	58	57
NJPS	31	32	28	31	31
Has visited Israel 2+ times	64	65	60	97	93
NJPS	41	35	27	36	33
Very attached to Israel	63	68	67	87	87
NJPS	56	50	45	51	49
Being Jewish is very important	84	84	86	97	92
NJPS	69	62	57	64	61

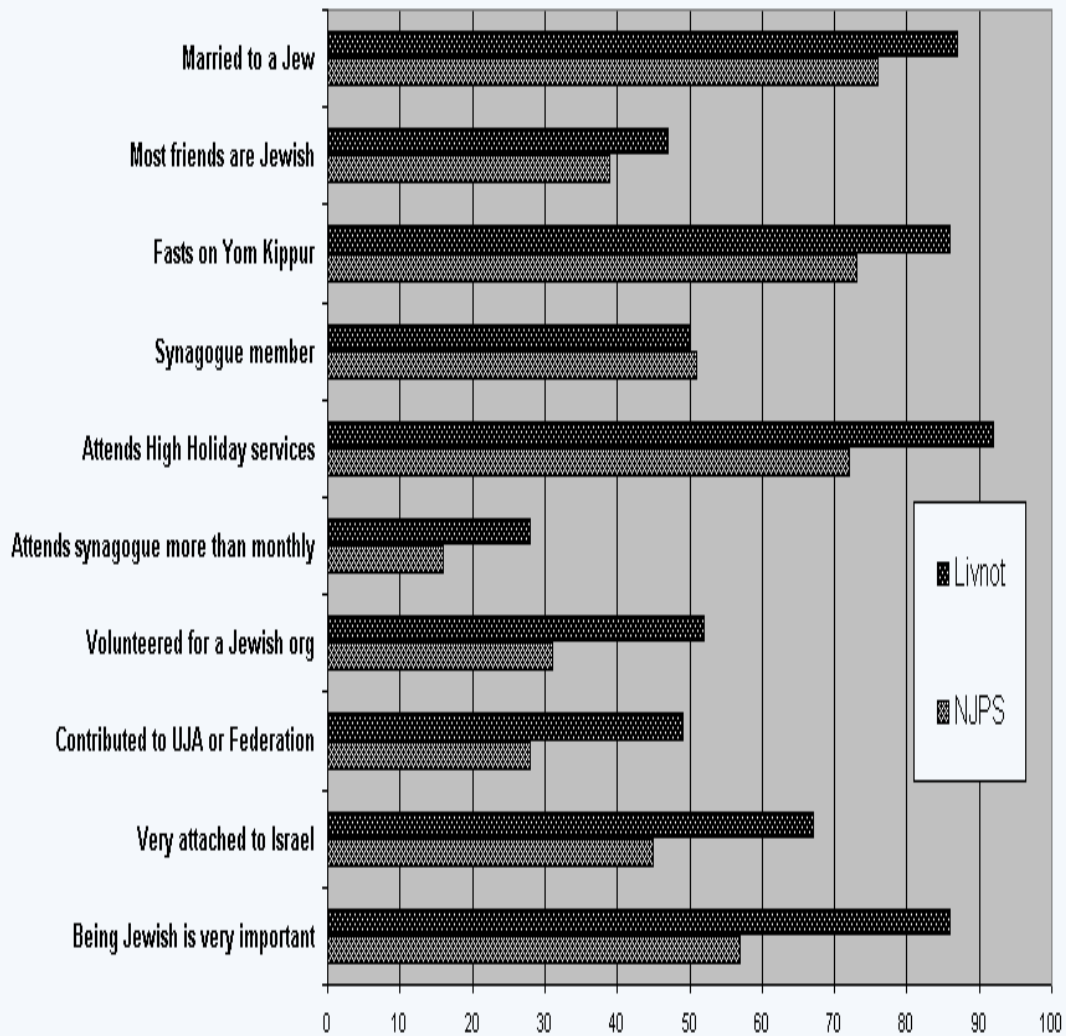
Comparison of Jewish Identity Measures for Nesiya and NJPS



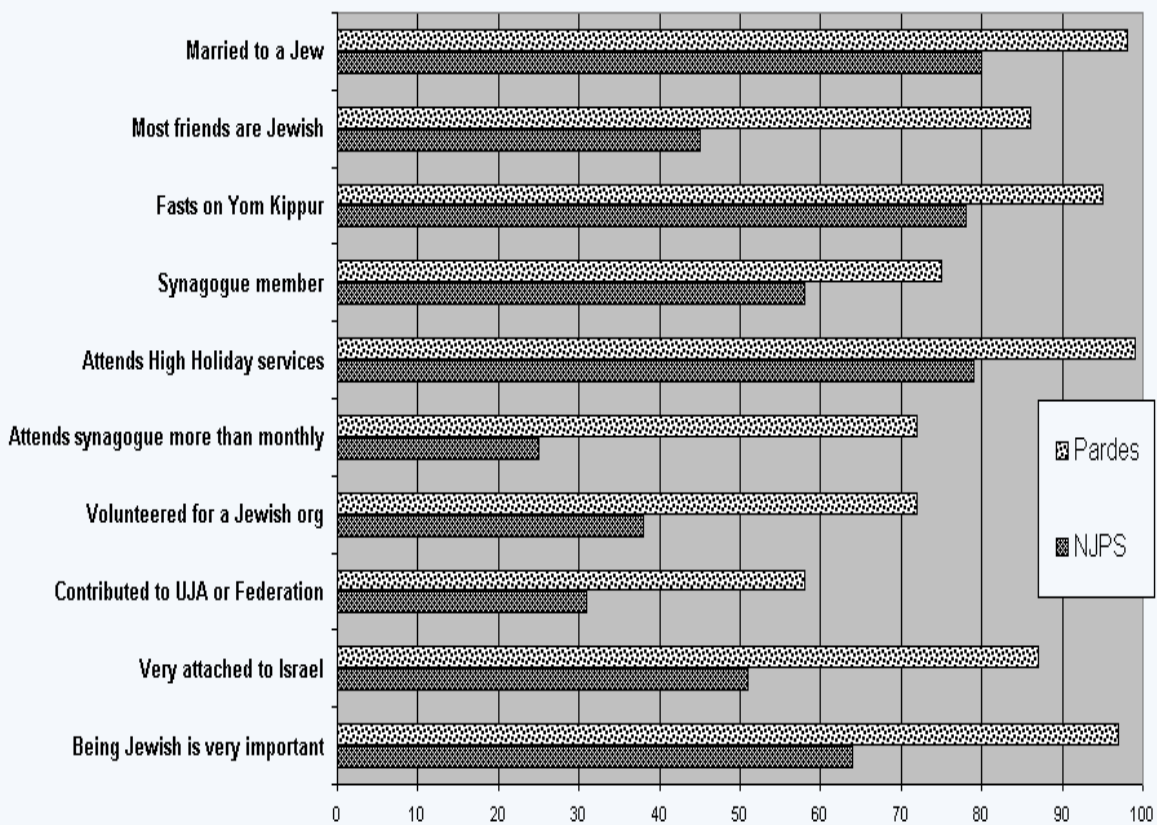
Comparison of Jewish Identity Measures for HSI and NJPS



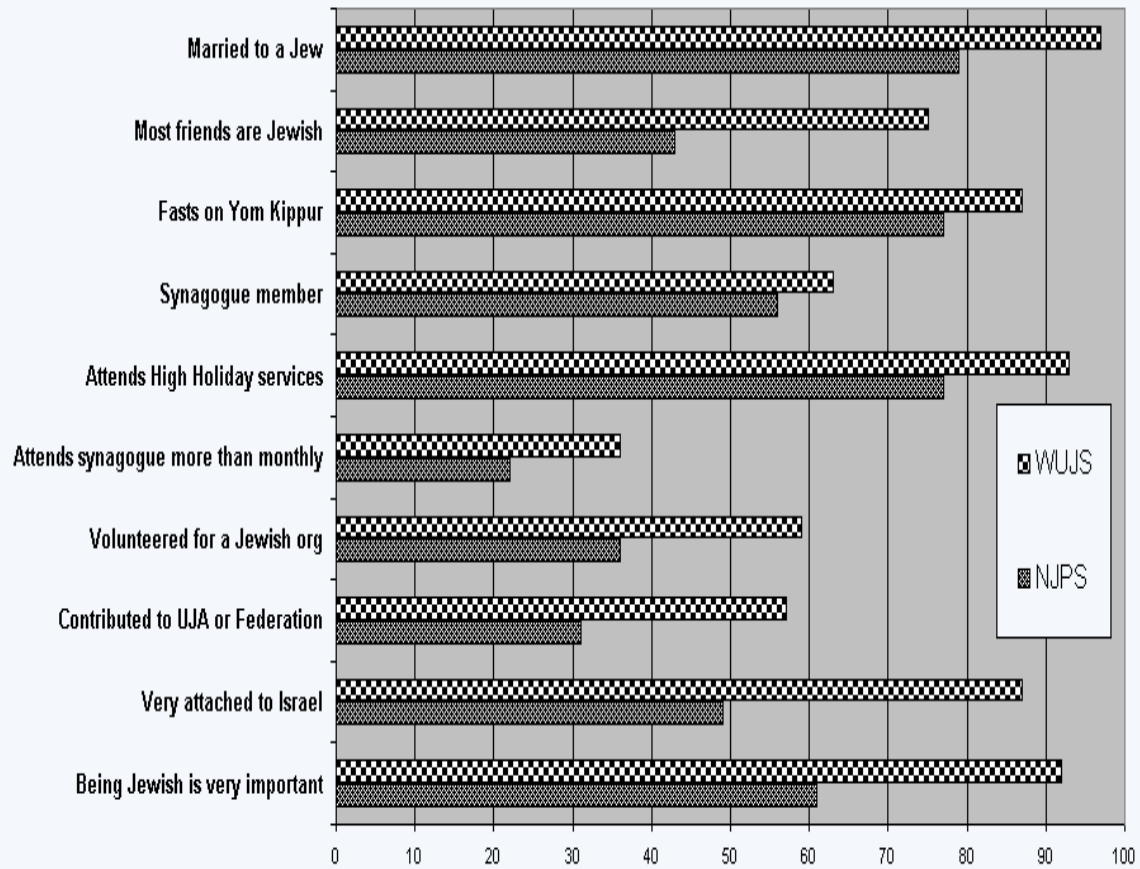
Comparison of Jewish Identity Measures for Livnot & NJPS



Comparison of Jewish Identity Measures for Pardes and NJPS



Comparison of Jewish Identity Measures for WUJS & NJPS



Surpassing the NJPS Sub-samples on Jewish engagement: For the alumni and NJPS respondents we examine ten key indicators of current Jewish engagement: in-marriage, Jewish friendship, Yom Kippur fasting, synagogue membership, High Holiday service attendance, monthly synagogue attendance, volunteering for a Jewish organization, contributing to the local UJA/Federation campaign, feeling very attached to Israel, and feeling that being Jewish is very important. For all five sets of comparisons, in almost all instances, the program alumni report Jewish engagement scores exceeding those found in their respective NJPS control groups. (The two exceptions occur in the case of Jewish friendship networks for the Nesiya comparison, and attending synagogue more than monthly for the AMHSI comparison.)

In other words, in almost all instances, the levels of current Jewish engagement of program alumni exceed those we find among comparable American Jews. These are American Jews who had also been to Israel in their young adult years and who had experienced roughly similar levels of Jewish socialization in terms of their home, educational experiences, and friendship patterns.

Although the gaps in Jewish engagement scores are nearly uniform in direction (with the program alumni exceeding the NJPS sub-samples), the groups do vary in the relevant patterns. Some groups are associated with far larger gaps in general, and far larger gaps on some indicators rather than others. The indicators where the gaps between alumni and NJPS control groups are especially pronounced are listed below:

Program	Indicators with especially large gaps vs. NJPS control groups (unusually large gaps are marked with an asterisk *)
Nesiya	Contributed to UJA/Federation
AMHSI	Contributed to UJA/Federation* Very attached to Israel Being Jewish is very important
Livnot	High Holiday services Monthly synagogue attendance Volunteered for a Jewish organization Visited Israel 2+ times Contributed to UJA/Federation Very attached to Israel Being Jewish is very important*
Pardes	In-married Most friends are Jewish* High Holiday services Monthly synagogue attendance** Volunteered for a Jewish organization* Contributed to UJA/Federation* Very attached to Israel** Being Jewish is very important*
WUJS	In-married Most friends are Jewish* Monthly synagogue attendance** Volunteered for a Jewish organization Contributed to UJA/Federation Very attached to Israel** Being Jewish is very important

The gaps between the Jewish identity indicators of the alumni and their appropriate comparison group from the NJPS are, in some instances, rather substantial and especially noteworthy. For example, as many as 86% of Livnot alumni say that being Jewish is very important to them, as contrasted with just 57% for their respective NJPS control group. A similar comparison for the AMHSI on the matter of contributing to the UJA/Federation finds a contrast of 57% among AMHSI graduates versus only 32% for the NJPS sub-sample. For Pardes, several large gaps emerge with its NJPS control group, as follows: most friends Jewish (86% for Pardes versus 45% in the NJPS); monthly synagogue attendance (72% vs. 25%); volunteering (72% vs. 38%); feeling very attached to Israel (87% vs. 51%); and stating that being Jewish is very important (97% vs. 64%). The WUJS Institute displays exceptional gaps in several areas as well. Among these are Jewish friendship (75% vs. 43%), and, as we would both hope and expect for a program specializing in socializing young adults into Israeli society: feeling very attached to Israel (87% vs. 49%).

The import of these findings needs to be appreciated. The former participants from the five Israel programs are being compared with a sample of adult American Jews who also went to Israel in their young adult years. Moreover, the control groups have been adjusted so as to approximate the Jewish socialization experiences of each group of Israel program participants.

The comparisons reveal nearly consistent, and sometimes quite dramatic, differences between the program participants' Jewish engagement today and that of their statistically constructed counterparts. These differences suggest the operation of three processes:

- 1) At some point prior to their entry into the Israel program, these participants may well have already embarked on personal Jewish journeys that would take them to higher levels of engagement than their peers, even their Jewishly well-educated peers.
- 2) The program in which they enrolled provoked growth and intensification of their Jewish identity.

- 3) Subsequent to their participation in their program, they continued to grow as Jewishly committed individuals.

Strictly speaking, the current data do not allow us to tease out the extent to which each process – self-selection, impact, and post-program growth – are operating. Thus, with the evidence at hand, we cannot say that the gaps we have observed are due solely to program impact. We can say that the Israel programs, in different ways, for different constituencies are ASSOCIATED with Jewish identity growth. At bare minimum, they facilitate a Jewish growth process that in many cases was underway before participation in these programs, advanced further during (and due to) participation in these programs, and, in all likelihood, continued upon the conclusion of the program.

Low intermarriage, but higher inter-dating: As reported above, of those alumni who have married, relatively few have married non-Jews. Just 8% of all such respondents have done so, with Pardes and WUJS reporting infinitesimal intermarriage rates (2% and 3% respectively). Even the programs with the highest rates of intermarriage (Livnot and AMHSI) report rates that are remarkably low (13%) in the current American environment.

Intermarriage and Inter-dating: Attitudes and Experiences							
Program	Currently In-married (of those married)	Greatly committed to finding a Jewish spouse		Dated only Jews in college	Dating Jews only now	Very important child's spouse Jew	Agree that Jews should marry Jews
Nesiya	--	73		24	100	62	62
AMHSI	87	63		27	34	62	66
Livnot	87	65		11	27	62	69
Pardes	98	92		35	62	87	84
WUJS	97	79		20	44	76	78
Total	92	70		22	38	69	72

Those who are now unmarried report varying commitments to in-marriage, albeit at levels that seem to dramatically exceed those in the Jewish population more generally (we have no solid data on such matters in the larger American Jewish population). Over two thirds (70%) of the unmarried alumni say they are greatly committed to finding a Jewish spouse, ranging from relative lows among AMHSI (63%) and Livnot (65%) alumni up to 92% for Pardes graduates. We find similar frequencies and patterns with respect to views on the importance of their children marrying Jews (69%) and concerning the simple normative statement that Jews should marry Jews (72%).

In contrast with the high rates of in-marriage and of endorsement of its importance, significant numbers of alumni are dating non-Jews. Just 38% say they are dating only Jews. In this respect, the programs vary dramatically, ranging from just 27% for Livnot to 62% for Pardes. Current dating patterns reveal sharp increases in in-group dating from the college years, both overall and for each program. At the same time, they certainly point to the lack of widespread commitment to endogamy that all the program sponsors regard as critical to contemporary Jewish identity.

High levels of Israel attachment, especially among Pardes graduates:

Previous research has documented the importance of travel to Israel as both an expression of and a contributor to a deep and abiding attachment to Israel. These programs, known for their educational intensity, apparently are associated with former participants who display extraordinarily high levels of Israel attachment.

In addition to the survey question on emotional attachment to Israel reported in the comparisons with the NJPS findings, the survey examined several other such measures. All the findings suggest relatively high levels of attachment to Israel. As many as 61% plan to visit Israel within the next three years, 78% have encouraged a friend to visit, and 79% talk about Israel with their friends. On these and other measures, the Pardes alumni significantly out-pace the graduates of the other programs (for the measures reported immediately above: 80%, 82%, and 93% respectively).

Israel Involvement						
	Program most recently attended					
	Nesiya	AMHSI	Livnot	Pardes	WUJS	Total
Planning to visit Israel in next 3 years	57	50	61	80	70	61
Encouraged friend to visit Israel	75	71	79	82	85	78
Talk about Israel with Jewish friends	84	70	76	93	88	79
Very emotionally attached to Israel	63	68	67	87	87	74

Subjective Assessments of the Programs

The evidence reviewed above speaks, in various ways, to the question of how the programs may have contributed to Jewish identity growth on the part of the participants. In a manner of speaking, these maybe regarded as “objective” measures insofar as we are assessing levels of Jewish engagement as reported by the respondents. In addition, the survey asked the respondents for “subjective” measures of program impact. That is, we asked them to assess the extent to which their programs (the one they most recently attended) influenced them in one way or another, as the table below reports.

Self-report impact of the program (“to a great extent”)						
	Program most recently attended					
	Nesiya	AMHSI	Livnot	Pardes	WUJS	Total
improved knowledge of Judaism	42	72	62	76	47	63
new skills to study Jewish text	16	11	18	82	21	27
better understanding of Israel	70	92	77	37	77	75
enhanced attachment to Israel	75	79	72	44	71	70
enhanced appreciation for being part of the J people	53	74	72	46	55	64
feel more connected with something larger	71	67	66	46	47	59
enhanced Jewish commitment	49	54	57	50	47	52
enhanced appreciation of Shabbat	51	15	70	47	28	41
new Jewish friends	43	33	35	40	53	39
enhanced appreciation for observance	30	12	48	45	15	29
new skills to practice Judaism	34	12	36	53	19	28
enriched appreciation of prayer	27	9	28	42	12	21
increased interest in working in Jewish community	16	21	25	24	21	23
made you feel more spiritual	43	20	34	17	11	23
improved Hebrew	4	7	3	18	64	19
more uncomfortable with intermarriage	3	11	29	19	13	18
deepened your faith in God	16	11	22	19	9	15
made you feel more religious	8	6	19	26	4	13

Among the areas of impact eliciting the most widespread concurrence among the respondents were those related to understanding of Israel and attachment to Israel. Other high-scoring items referred to improved knowledge of Judaism, appreciation for being part of the Jewish people, feeling more connected with something larger than oneself, and enhanced Jewish commitment.

The low-scoring items are of interest as well. Of the seven items evoking the lowest levels of endorsement, four touched upon religiosity: made you feel more religious, deepened your faith in God, enriched appreciation for prayer, and made you feel more spiritual. The three others related to very specific issues: greater discomfort

with intermarriage, improved Hebrew, and increased interest in working with the Jewish community.

The summary table below lists those items where alumni from particular programs provided results that distinguished their program from the others:

The programs' distinctive contributions to Jewish identity growth, as assessed by the participants (percent responding "to a great extent" for items where programs' alumni scored appreciably higher than other programs)	
Program	Area of self-assessed impact
Nesiya	Feel more connected with something larger (71%) Made you feel more spiritual (43%)
AMHSI	Better understanding of Israel (92%) Enhanced attachment to Israel (79%)
Livnot	Enhanced appreciation of Shabbat (70%) Enhanced appreciation for observance (48%) Made you feel more spiritual (34%) More uncomfortable with intermarriage (29%)
Pardes	New skills to study Jewish text (82%) New skills to practice Judaism (53%) Enhanced appreciation for observance (45%) Enriched appreciation of prayer (42%)
WUJS	Improved Hebrew (64%) New Jewish friends (53%)

Note that the items selected were not always endorsed by the largest number of participants. Rather, they represent those items where the frequencies associated with particular program participants distinguished themselves from reports by other groups.

To those familiar with these programs, these results should come as no surprise. Nesiya emphasizes spiritual journey and exploration, as these findings clearly suggest. AMHSI focuses upon the study of Israel as its primary educational mission. Livnot places heavy emphasis on encountering Shabbat and learning to appreciate a life of ritual observance. Its stated educational philosophy is to encourage participants “to find their own path in Judaism and place in the Jewish community.” Pardes is, if nothing else, a place to learn Jewish texts with the purpose of enabling one to practice and better appreciate Judaism and its practices. WUJS, in paving the way to become Israeli for many, teaches Hebrew and provides the friends that will help many become successfully absorbed in Israeli society.

Taken together, these items begin to give some flavor to the ways in which each program bears distinguishing features, at least in terms of the ways in which their own participants perceive them. As we shall see, the programs are distinguished in other ways as well.

How they educate: the staff, touring, “just being in Israel,” and more

We asked the participants to assess the contribution of different elements of their programs. Among the items that received the most widespread endorsement were (in descending rank order): “just being in Israel,” trips and touring, the staff, classes, and the other participants. Among the less widely cited elements were the administrators, spiritual experiences and religious experiences.

Elements of the program that contributed to the experience “a great extent”						
Who/what contributed?	Program most recently attended					
	Nesiya	AMHSI	Livnot	Pardes	WUJS	Total
Just being in Israel	88	95	92	90	94	93
Staff	72	89	90	80	60	81
Classes	46	86	69	87	68	76
Text study contributed	25	38	36	86	19	41
Trips and touring	80	99	92	48	87	86
Other participants	84	68	68	64	73	69
Personal conversations with teachers & counselors	65	71	70	56	42	62
Shabbat experiences	66	29	83	47	34	51
Religious experiences	54	31	70	45	24	44
Administrators	29	24	53	40	32	37
Israelis you met	81	44	66	20	54	50
Spiritual experiences	66	42	66	32	20	44

While these represent general patterns characterizing the sample as a whole, participants in specific programs cited certain elements substantially more often than did alumni from other programs. The following chart summarizes those distinctive features.

The programs' distinctive educational elements, as assessed by the participants (percent responding "to a great extent" for elements where programs' alumni scored appreciably higher than other programs)	
Program	Elements of the program that contributed to the experience
Nesiya	Other participants (84%) Israelis you met (81%) Spiritual experiences (66%)
AMHSI	Trips and touring (99%) Just being in Israel (95%) Staff (89%) Classes (86%) Personal conversations with teachers and counselors (71%)
Livnot	Trips and touring (92%) Staff (90%) Shabbat experiences (83%) Personal conversations with teachers and counselors (70%) Religious experiences (70%) Spiritual experiences (66%) Administrators (53%)
Pardes	Classes (87%) Text study (86%)
WUJS	Just being in Israel (94%) Other participants (73%)

Clearly, the programs bring together different and distinctive mixes of educational instruments. Thus, not only does each address a distinctive constituency, with distinctive educational objectives; in addition, each has honed a distinctive educational approach

reflecting its philosophy and suited to its circumstances. Nesiya alumni particularly note other participants (“other Israelis” may well refer to the Israelis who are also participants on the program along with North Americans). AMHSI, with its emphasis on learning about Israel, especially resonates with the respondents in terms of trips and touring and being in Israel. Livnot’s educational philosophy explicitly emphasizes Shabbat and religious experiences, many of which take place in the homes of observant Israelis, and the survey results certainly reflect these emphases. Pardes prides itself on its classes that teach the study of Jewish texts, consistent with the results reported here. And WUJS, by taking Diaspora Jews and providing an entry way into Israeli society, relies on Israel itself and the bonds among participants to accomplish its educational mission.

Many strengths, some shortcomings

We provided respondents with a list of nearly two dozen modifiers, both positive and negative in connotation, with which to describe their programs. In the table below we report the extent to which participants held positive views of their programs. For modifiers with positive connotations, we report the per cent responding, “to a great extent.” For modifiers with negative connotations, we report the per cent responding, “not at all.”

The former participants held largely very positive views of their program. Taken together, the entire sample heavily rejected such critical terms as anti-religious, unfriendly, boring, hypocritical, sexist, closed-minded and anxiety-producing. Rather, almost as large majorities saw their programs as intellectually engaging, inspiring, safe and comfortable, and Zionist.

Following the procedures used earlier, we present those modifiers where the response patterns pointed to areas where programs were especially distinguished, in the eyes of their alumni.

Perceptions of the program (“to a great extent” or “not at all”)						
	Program most recently attended					
	Nesiya	AMHSI	Livnot	Pardes	WUJS	Total
not at all anti-religious	82	93	99	99	98	96
not at all unfriendly	86	96	96	91	91	94
not at all boring	85	97	95	93	85	93
not at all hypocritical	64	90	91	86	89	88
not at all sexist	88	95	84	71	87	86
not at all closed-minded	82	80	79	75	83	80
intellectually engaging	72	89	74	96	62	79
Inspiring	80	87	84	70	52	76
not at all anxiety-producing	48	72	78	69	82	74
safe & comfortable	70	82	78	63	67	74
Zionist	39	64	66	68	81	68
not at all judgmental	60	67	70	59	76	68
Honest	56	66	75	66	59	67
accepting	72	64	69	60	62	65
not at all manipulative	44	60	67	59	75	64
open	74	52	59	53	56	56
sensitive	55	36	56	45	29	43
spiritual	75	33	75	30	15	43
egalitarian on gender issues	49	46	31	23	40	37
multi-denominational	65	37	21	30	38	32
religious	14	9	52	61	9	30
pluralist	65	21	18	38	39	28
denominational	2	3	21	19	8	12

The programs' distinctive features, as assessed by the participants (percent responding "to a great extent" for positive features, where programs' alumni scored appreciably higher than other programs)	
Program	Distinguishing features of the program
Nesiya	Spiritual (75%) Open (74%) Accepting (72%) Multi-denominational (65%) Pluralist (65%) Sensitive (55%)
AMHSI	NOT sexist (95%) Inspiring (87%) Safe and comfortable (82%)
Livnot	Inspiring (84%) Honest (75%) Spiritual (75%) Sensitive (56%) Religious (52%)
Pardes	Intellectually engaging (96%) Religious (61%)
WUJS	Zionist (81%) NOT judgmental (76%) NOT manipulative (75%)

Again, as with the other sets of questions summarized earlier, we see evidence of distinctiveness. Nesiya is seen by its alumni as especially open and accepting. AMHSI, among other things, is especially inspiring. Livnot also gets high marks for being inspiring and honest. Pardes is especially intellectually engaging and religious (as is Livnot). WUJS, with its emphasis on helping its participants enter Israeli society, is seen as Zionist more often than other programs.

While the findings point to several very highly appreciated features of these programs, some patterns suggest areas that may require the attention of program managers. Three patterns are of particular interest in this regard.

First, compared to the other programs, Livnot alumni were relatively unlikely to refer to their program as “pluralist” (18%), or “multi-denominational” (21%), and were more likely than those from any other program participants to see their program as “denominational” (21%). These findings suggest that at least some significant number of alumni see Livnot as promoting a particular denominational approach to Jewish living.

Second, of all programs, Pardes scores lowest on being seen as egalitarian on gender issues, and correlatively, the highest among those who see it as in any way sexist. These findings point to the struggles inherent in the Pardes approach, one which appeals often to academically qualified Jewish young adults with strong commitment to feminism and egalitarianism, while at the same time bringing them into contact with a traditional Jewish approach that is far from fully egalitarian. The Pardes community continually struggles with these issues in several aspects of prayer, study, and social life.

Third, Nesiya alumni are more likely than all others to see their program as at least somewhat manipulative and at least somewhat hypocritical. Nesiya is known for its intensive approach to group-building and provoking personal exploration. Inevitably, some participants react somewhat negatively to these educational methods.

Clearly, all five programs generate both praise and criticism. But, to be sure, the praise and appreciation for their strengths far outweigh and outnumber the expressions of concern or criticism for their shortcomings.

Conclusion: Diversity in Participants, Goals and Methods – Alternative Paths to Excellence

Previous research has documented that Israel educational experience programs serve constituencies whose Jewish engagement and Israel attachment exceed norms in the larger Jewish population, both before and after participation in such programs. Insofar as it is possible to assess impact, the evidence in that earlier research points consistently to the general inference that the Israel experience does enhance Jewish identity.

In going beyond the prior research, this study demonstrated several important and distinguishing features of five very distinctive approaches to Israel education. Nesiya, AMHSI, Livnot, Pardes and WUJS each appeals to different constituencies. They differ not only in terms of age, but also in terms of Jewish socialization and interests.

The programs also differ widely in terms of educational objectives. The respondents themselves offer very distinctive portraits of the programs in which they participated. Thus, if we make appropriate inferences from the responses, we do see evident that Nesiya, indeed, emphasizes personal Jewish journeys for adolescents. AMHSI teaches high school students about Israel through history and physical contact with the land. Livnot emphasizes Shabbat, observance, spirituality, and Jewish community and peoplehood, in a program especially designed for those with relatively low levels of Jewish socialization. For Pardes, in its programs of intensive study for multi-denominational Jews in their young adult years, Jewish text study is at the core of its educational approach and of its very understanding of the educated Jew. WUJS sees itself as on a Zionist mission to facilitate the aliyah and absorption of young adults contemplating living in Israel, be it for a year or a lifetime.

These programs undeniably leave their imprint on their participants. In this study, the alumni report levels of Jewish engagement that significantly exceed those reported by Jews their age, or even older, who also traveled to Israel as young people. The graduates of the programs cite the experiences, objectives, and features that do, in fact, distinguish the programs from one another. The cardinal educational features of each program – be it

spirituality, or Shabbat, or knowing Israel, or observance, or texts, or learning Hebrew – come across loud and clear in these reports.

All of these findings, then, strongly point to Israel educational programs that succeed in attracting distinctive target groups, and that succeed in achieving their very particular educational objectives. The evidence is consistent with the two-fold conclusion that

- 1) these educationally sophisticated programs go beyond the more standard touring programs in their overall impact upon Jewish identity; and
- 2) that they induce very specific changes in skills, attitudes and behavior that are distinctive to each program and consistent with its specific educational mission.

Jewish educational offerings are undoubtedly enriched by the variety and diversity presented in programs such as these and by the many others with distinctive philosophies of Jewish and Zionist education. The Jewish community clearly has an interest not only in advancing the Israel experience in general, but in assuring that educationally sophisticated programs can continue to appeal in diverse ways, to a diverse constituency, with distinctive educational objectives.

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Appendix: The Survey Instrument

International Survey of Israel Program Graduates

For you personally, how much does your sense of being Jewish involve each of the following? Would you say: not at all, a little, some, or a lot?

	Not at All	A Little	Some	A Lot
1. Attending synagogue?	1	2	3	4
2. Caring about Israel?	1	2	3	4
3. Making the world a better place?	1	2	3	4
4. Remembering the Holocaust?	1	2	3	4
5. Having a rich spiritual life?	1	2	3	4
6. Believing in God?	1	2	3	4
7. Working for social justice?	1	2	3	4
8. Countering anti-Semitism?	1	2	3	4
9. Being part of a Jewish community?	1	2	3	4
10. Feeling part of the Jewish people?	1	2	3	4
11. Studying Jewish texts?	1	2	3	4

To what extent is each of the following important in your life?

	Not at all important	A little important	Somewhat important	Very important	Not sure
12. Spirituality	1	2	3	4	9
13. Religion	1	2	3	4	9
14. Being Jewish	1	2	3	4	9

15. Among the people you consider your closest friends, would you say that..

- 1 None are Jewish
- 2 Some are Jewish
- 3 About half are Jewish

4 Most are Jewish

5 All or almost all are Jewish

16. Referring to the Jewish religious denominations, do you consider yourself to be...(select one answer only):

- 1 Orthodox
- 2 Conservative
- 3 Reform
- 4 Reconstructionist
- 5 Trans-denominational, post-denominational
- 6 Something else Jewish
- 7 Not Jewish

17. About how often do you personally attend synagogue or temple services?

- 1 Not at all, or only on special occasions (Bar Mitzvah, a wedding)
- 2 Only on High Holidays (Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur)
- 3 A few times a year
- 4 About once a month
- 5 Two or three times a month
- 6 About once a week or more

Which of the following apply to you? (Yes, No, Not applicable)

	Yes	No	Not Applicable
18. During the last Yom Kippur, did you fast all or part of the day?	1	2	3
19. Are you a member of a synagogue or temple?	1	2	3
20. During the past year, have you attended any program or activity at a JCC (Jewish Community Center)?	1	2	3
21. During the past year, did you pay membership dues to any Jewish organization other than a synagogue or JCC?	1	2	3
22. In the past 2 years, have you served as an officer or on the board or committee of a Jewish organization or synagogue?	1	2	3
23. In 2002, did you or anyone in your household make a monetary contribution to a UJA-Federation campaign?	1	2	3
24. During the past year, have you done any volunteer work for, or sponsored by a synagogue, Federation, or other Jewish organization?	1	2	3
25. During the last year, have you engaged in regular study of a Jewish subject matter, such as in a class or in an informal study group?	1	2	3

To what extent do you feel...

	Not at All	A Little	To Some Extent	To a Great Extent	Not Sure
26. Close to other Jews	1	2	3	4	5
27. Close to Israelis	1	2	3	4	5
28. Close to non-Jewish Americans (or, non-Jews, in your home country)	1	2	3	4	5
29. Close to the Jewish People worldwide	1	2	3	4	5

30. If you had a child who were to marry, how important would it be to you, if at all, that your child's future spouse be Jewish? Would it be...

- 1 Not at all important
- 2 Not very important
- 3 Somewhat important
- 4 Very important

31. **Now we'd like to know the extent to which you agree or disagree with a variety of statements:**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Mixed, Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
32. Jews should marry Jews	1	2	3	4	5
33. I have a strong sense of belonging to the Jewish people	1	2	3	4	5
34. Jews have had an intimate connection with the Land of Israel for centuries	1	2	3	4	5
35. The Hebrew language holds a special place as the language of the Jewish people	1	2	3	4	5
36. Israel is critical to sustaining Jewish life in America	1	2	3	4	5
37. Israel is a dangerous place to visit	1	2	3	4	5

38. How emotionally attached are you to Israel?

- 1 Not at all attached
- 2 A little attached
- 3 Somewhat attached
- 4 Very Attached
- 5 Not sure

39. Where are you currently living?

- 1 USA
- 2 Canada
- 3 UK
- 4 Israel
- 5 Other

40. IF YOU LIVE IN ISRAEL PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 58.

	Yes	No	Not Sure
41. Do you have any family or close friends living in Israel?	1	2	3
42. Do you frequently talk about Israel with Jewish friends?	1	2	3
43. Do you often read an Israeli newspaper (in English or Hebrew) either directly or on the internet?	1	2	3
44. Are you planning to visit Israel in the next 3 years?	1	2	3
45. Have you ever seriously considered living in Israel?	1	2	3

46. Altogether, how many times have you been to Israel?

- 1 Once
- 2 Two or three times
- 3 Four times or more
- 4 I have lived in Israel for the past 6 months
- 5 I was born in Israel

47. To date, what is the longest period of time you have spent in Israel on a single trip?

- 1 Less than a month
- 2 Two months
- 3 Three months
- 4 Four to six months
- 5 Seven to eleven months
- 6 a year or more
- 7 now living in Israel(Skip next question)

48. When was your last trip to Israel? Enter year _____

49. If more than one trip...

When was your first trip to Israel after the age of 13? Enter year _____

50. If more than two trips...

In what other years did you go to Israel? _____

Please rate your Hebrew proficiency:

	Not at all proficient	A little proficient	Somewhat proficient	Proficient	Very proficient
51. Spoken Hebrew	1	2	3	4	5
52. Reading Hebrew	1	2	3	4	5

During the last 12 months, have you...

	Yes	No
53. Attended a rally or meeting in solidarity with Israel?	1	2
54. Made a contribution to an Israel-related charity?	1	2
55. Tried to discourage someone from visiting Israel?	1	2
56. Encouraged someone to visit Israel?	1	2

57. QUESTIONS FOR EVERYONE:

	Born Jewish	Converted to Judaism	Not Jewish
58. Are you	1	2	3
59. If you are married, is your spouse	1	2	3

60. IF YOU WERE NOT BORN JEWISH PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 71.

61. In which Jewish denomination were you raised?

- 1 Orthodox
- 2 Conservative
- 3 Reform
- 4 Reconstructionist
- 5 Trans-denominational, post-denominational
- 6 Something else Jewish
- 7 Not Jewish

62. What is the main type of Jewish schooling you received as a child (grades 1-7)?

Select one answer only.

- 1 None
- 2 Sunday School
- 3 Hebrew School or other part-time Jewish school
- 4 Yeshiva or Day School

63. For how many years did you receive this sort of Jewish education? (use whole numbers) _____

64. What is the main type of Jewish schooling you received as a teen-ager (grades 8-12)?

Select one answer only.

- 1 None
- 2 Sunday School
- 3 Hebrew School or other part-time Jewish school
- 4 Yeshiva or Day School

65. For how many years did you receive this sort of Jewish education? _____

66. When you were about 10 or 11 years old, how often, if at all, did anyone in your household light Sabbath candles on Friday night?

- 1 Never
- 2 Sometimes
- 3 Usually
- 4 Always (every week)
- 5 Don't know, not sure

67. When you were about 10 or 11 years old, about how often, if at all, did you personally attend synagogue or temple services?

- 1 Not at all
- 2 Only on the high holidays (Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur)
- 3 A few times a year
- 4 About once a month
- 5 Two or three times a month
- 6 About once a week or more

68. Did you ever attend a sleep away camp that had Jewish religious services or other Jewish content?

- 1 No
- 2 Yes

69. [If yes] Which Jewish camp(s) did you attend? (Check all that apply.)

- 1 Young Judaea
- 2 another Zionist movement camp
- 3 An Orthodox-sponsored camp
- 4 Ramah
- 5 UAHF Camp
- 6 JCC Camp
- 7 Other Jewish camp

70. WHETHER YOU WERE BORN JEWISH OR NOT, PLEASE CONTINUE WITH THE REMAINING QUESTIONS:

71. During high school, how many of the people you considered to be your closest friends were Jewish?

- 1 None
- 2 Some
- 3 About half
- 4 Most
- 5 All were Jewish

72. During high school, did you date...

- 1 only non-Jews
- 2 Mostly non-Jews
- 3 Both Jews and non-Jews
- 4 Only Jews
- 5 Did not date at all

73. Did you regularly participate in an organized Jewish youth group during high school?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

74. [If yes] In which Jewish youth group(s) did you participate as a teenager (tick all that apply)?

- 1 National Council of Synagogue Youth (NCSY) or an Orthodox youth group
- 2 United Synagogue Youth (USY) or a Conservative/Masorti youth group
- 3 National Federation of Temple Youth (NFTY) or a Reform/Liberal/Progressive youth group
- 4 A JCC youth group
- 5 B'nai Brith Youth Organization (BBYO)
- 6 Young Judaea
- 7 Another Zionist youth group
- 8 Another Jewish youth group

75. IF YOU HAVE NEVER / NOT YET ATTENDED COLLEGE, PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 81 (ON WHETHER YOU ARE MALE / FEMALE)

76. When you were in college, did you take any courses specifically focusing on Jewish subjects, such as Jewish history, Hebrew or the Holocaust?

- 1 No
- 2 Yes, one course
- 3 Yes, two or more courses

77. While in college, do/did you participate in Hillel (or similar group)?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

78. While in college, how many of your closest friends are/were Jewish?

- 1 None
- 2 Some
- 3 About half
- 4 Most
- 5 All or almost all were Jewish

79. During college, do/did you date...

- 1 only non-Jews
- 2 Mostly non-Jews
- 3 Both Jews and non-Jews
- 4 Most Jews
- 5 Did not date at all

80. QUESTIONS FOR EVERYONE. YOUR BACKGROUND:

81. Please indicate your sex: 1 Male 2 Female

82. Please enter the year you were born, using 4 digits. _____

83. If applicable, what is the US zip code or Canadian Postal Code where you currently live? _____

84. Are you...

1 Never married 2 Married/Partnered 3 Divorced or separated 4 Widowed

85. Please enter the total number of children you have had, including any that are adopted and any that may be deceased: _____

86. Please enter the main form of Jewish education you plan to provide, or was experienced by, your first/oldest child? (if you are genuinely not sure, provide your best guess or, if necessary, skip to question 87, and if you have step-children, feel free to decide whether to include them when answering this question).

- 1 None
- 2 Sunday School
- 3 Hebrew school or some other part-time Jewish school
- 4 Yeshiva or day school
- 5 Will not have children

87. In thinking about the people you currently date, or have recently dated, or dated in the 3-5 years before marrying, do/did you go out with...

- 1 Only non-Jews
- 2 Mostly non-Jews
- 3 Both Jews and non-Jews
- 4 Mostly Jews
- 5 Only Jews

88. [If not now married] To what extent are you committed to finding a Jewish spouse?

- 1 To a great extent
- 2 To some extent
- 3 A little or not at all
- 4 Not Applicable – I'm married, or I'm not particularly committed to finding a spouse

89. What is the highest academic degree you have earned?

- 1 High School diploma
- 2 BA/BS equivalent
- 3 Masters Degree
- 4 Law Degree
- 5 MD
- 6 Other doctorate
- 7 Other graduate or professional degree

90. Please indicate the job category that most closely resembles your current occupation.

- 1 Student
- 2 Physician, dentist
- 3 Other health care provider
- 4 Lawyer
- 5 Finance/Accounting
- 6 Real Estate
- 7 Teacher, other education
- 8 Professor, higher education
- 9 Manager
- 10 Business Owner
- 11 Social worker
- 12 Rabbi, Jewish educator
- 13 Jewish communal service professional
- 14 Other

91. With respect to your political views on most issues, do you regard yourself as...

- 1 Very liberal
- 2 Liberal
- 3 Slightly liberal
- 4 Moderate
- 5 Slightly conservative
- 6 Conservative
- 7 Very conservative

92. [If you are currently working 20 hours or more per week] Which of the following best describes your total personal income?

- | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 Under \$25,000 | 2 \$25,000-49,999 | 3 \$50,000-74,999 |
| 5 \$75,000-100,000 | 6 \$100,000-149,000 | 7 \$150,000+ |

9 I'm not working 20 hours per week

93. The next two questions apply to Israel Experiences when you were in high school. If you have had no such experiences, please skip to Question 96.

94. During your high school years did you participate in any Israel experience program?
If yes, in which program(s) did you participate?

- a. BBYO _____
- b. Camp Ramah _____
- c. FZY _____
- d. Alexander Muss High School in Israel _____
- e. NCSY _____
- f. NFTY _____
- g. Nesiya _____
- h. Shorashim _____
- i. USY _____
- j. Young Judea _____
- k. Other _____

95. At which time of the year did you attend this program (if you attended more than once, please answer with respect to your most recent program experience)

- 1 A summer
- 2 Other short term (2 months or less)
- 3 Fall semester only
- 4 Spring semester only
- 5 A full academic year
- 6 Another long term period (more than 2 months)
- 7 Other period

96. Since high school, have you participated in any Israel experience programs? If yes, in which program(s) did you participate?

- a. birthright Israel _____
- b. Livnot _____
- c. Nativ _____
- d. Pardes _____
- e. University program _____
- f. Yeshiva study _____
- g. Young Judea _____
- h. WUJS _____
- i. Other _____

97. At which time of the year did you attend this program (if you attended more than once, please answer with respect to your most recent program experience)

- 1 A summer
- 2 Other short term (2 months or less)
- 3 Fall semester only
- 4 Spring semester only
- 5 A full academic year
- 6 Another long term period (more than 2 months)
- 7 Other period

98. The remaining questions apply to your participation in one of the following programs. Please respond with respect to the program in which you participated. If you participated in more than one, answer with respect to the program in which you most recently participated, and make sure all the programs you attended are listed in Question 96.

- Livnot,
- Alexander Muss High School in Israel,
- Nesiya,
- Pardes,
- Shorashim, or
- WUJS.

99. Please select the program in which you most recently participated

- 1 Livnot
- 2 Muss High School in Israel
- 3 Nesiya
- 4 Pardes
- 5 Shorashim
- 6 WUJS

With respect to your experience on that program, to what extent did the program...

	Not at all	To Some Extent	Somewhat	To a great extent	Not sure
100. Improve your knowledge of Judaism	1	2	3	4	5
101. Enhance your Jewish commitment	1	2	3	4	5
102. Give you a better understanding of Israel	1	2	3	4	5
103. Enhance your attachment to Israel	1	2	3	4	5
104. Enrich your appreciation of prayer	1	2	3	4	5
105. Deepen your faith in God	1	2	3	4	5
106. Enhance your appreciation for being part of the Jewish people	1	2	3	4	5
107. Make you feel more connected with something larger than yourself	1	2	3	4	5
108. Give you new skills to study Jewish text	1	2	3	4	5
109. Give you new skills to practice Judaism	1	2	3	4	5
110. Enhance your appreciation of Shabbat	1	2	3	4	5
111. Make you feel more uncomfortable with inter-dating and/or intermarriage	1	2	3	4	5
112. Improve your command of the Hebrew language	1	2	3	4	5
113. Give you new Jewish friends	1	2	3	4	5
114. Make you more spiritual	1	2	3	4	5
115. Make you more religious	1	2	3	4	5
116. Enhance your appreciation of Jewish religious observance	1	2	3	4	5
117. Increase your interest in working (volunteer or professional) in the Jewish community	1	2	3	4	5
118. Move you in a more hawkish direction, with respect to Israel-Arab affairs	1	2	3	4	5
119. Move you in a more dovish direction, with respect to Israel-Arab affairs	1	2	3	4	5

To what extent did each of the following aspects of your program positively contribute to your experience on that program?

	Not at all	Somewhat	To a great extent	Not sure or not applicable
120. The other participants/students	1	2	3	4
121. The staff/faculty	1	2	3	4
122. The top management/administrators	1	2	3	4
123. The classes/studying	1	2	3	4
124. The trips/touring	1	2	3	4
125. The religious experiences	1	2	3	4
126. The Israelis you met	1	2	3	4
127. The Shabbat experiences	1	2	3	4
128. The text study	1	2	3	4
129. Personal conversations with teachers/counselors	1	2	3	4
130. Spiritual experiences	1	2	3	4
131. Just being in Israel	1	2	3	4

During the last 12 months, have you...

	Yes	No
132. Encouraged someone to participate in this program?	1	2
133. Advised someone against participating in this program?	1	2
134. Been in e-mail or phone contact with a staff member from this program?	1	2
135. Participated in this program event or a program for alumni?	1	2

136. During the last year, how often have you had contact in person or by phone or e-mail with other participants who were with you in Israel on that program?

1 None 2 Infrequent contact 3 Occasional 4 Frequent

137. Of the people you were with in Israel on this program, with about how many have you had at least occasional contact over the last year?

1 None 2 One 3 Two-three 5 Four or more

138. The next set of questions ask about your views of the program in question reflecting your own personal experience. Please answer to the best of your ability.

	Not at all 1	Somewhat 2	To a great extent 3	Not sure or not applicable 4
139. To what extent would you apply the term Pluralist to the program?	1	2	3	4
140. To what extent would you apply the term Unfriendly to the program?	1	2	3	4
141. To what extent would you apply the term Intellectually Engaging to the program?	1	2	3	4
142. To what extent would you apply the term Manipulative to the program?	1	2	3	4
143. To what extent would you apply the term Open to the program?	1	2	3	4
144. To what extent would you apply the term Judgmental to the program?	1	2	3	4
145. To what extent would you apply the term Accepting to the program?	1	2	3	4
146. To what extent would you apply the term Hypocritical to the program?	1	2	3	4
147. To what extent would you apply the term Sensitive to the program?	1	2	3	4
148. To what extent would you apply the term Closed-minded to the program?	1	2	3	4
149. To what extent would you apply the term Inspiring to the program?	1	2	3	4
150. To what extent would you apply the term Safe and comfortable to the program?	1	2	3	4
151. To what extent would you apply the term Spiritual to the program?	1	2	3	4
152. To what extent would you apply the term Religious to the program?	1	2	3	4
153. To what extent would you apply the term Anxiety-producing to the program?	1	2	3	4
154. To what extent would you apply the term Zionist to the program?	1	2	3	4
155. To what extent would you apply the term Anti-religious to the program?	1	2	3	4
156. To what extent would you apply the term Boring to the program?	1	2	3	4
157. To what extent would you apply the term Denominational (Orthodox <u>or</u> Conservative <u>or</u> Reform) to the program?	1	2	3	4
158. To what extent would you apply the term Multi-denominational to the program?	1	2	3	4

159. To what extent would you apply the term Honest to the program?	1	2	3	4
160. To what extent would you apply the term Sexist to the program?	1	2	3	4
161. To what extent would you apply the term Egalitarian (regarding gender issues) to the program?	1	2	3	4

162. What message would you like to send to the professional leadership of the program(s) you attended? Please indicate the name of the program to which your comments are addressed.

163. We would like to contact a selection of survey respondents. If you are willing to be contacted, please enter your name and telephone number with area code.
