Youth Engagement – Audit Review
St. Louis, MO – Summer 2017
Our Goal from conversations with synagogue and communal staff and lay leadership, was to begin identifying:

- **STRENGTHS / SOURCES OF PRIDE**
- **GAPS IN PROGRAMMING / WISH LISTS**
- **OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATION**
- **CURRENT ENGAGEMENT NUMBERS (AS SELF REPORTED)**
# Meetings With St. Louis Congregations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Synagogue</th>
<th>Website</th>
<th>Meeting Attendees</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Congregation Shaare Emeth</td>
<td><a href="https://www.sestl.org">https://www.sestl.org</a></td>
<td>Rabbi Jonah Zinn</td>
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<td>Rabbi James M. Bennett</td>
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<td>Stacy Jespersen</td>
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<td>Cantor Seth Warner</td>
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<td>United Hebrew Congregation</td>
<td><a href="http://www.unitedhebrew.org">http://www.unitedhebrew.org</a></td>
<td>Rabbi Roxanne Shapiro &amp; Lee Rosenberg</td>
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<td>Bnot Sherut / Young Israel</td>
<td><a href="https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100007417215446">https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100007417215446</a></td>
<td>Sima Oberlander</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Ginat Midler</td>
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<td>Temple Emanuel</td>
<td><a href="https://www.testl.org">https://www.testl.org</a></td>
<td>Subie Banaszynski</td>
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<td>Bnai Amoona</td>
<td><a href="https://www.bnaiamoona.com/lifelong-learning/education-team/">https://www.bnaiamoona.com/lifelong-learning/education-team/</a></td>
<td>Shelby Cohen</td>
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<td>Andy Schwebel</td>
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<td>Avital Ostfield</td>
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<td>Bais Abe</td>
<td><a href="https://www.baisabe.com">https://www.baisabe.com</a></td>
<td>Ginat Midler</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRC</td>
<td><a href="http://www.centralreform.org">http://www.centralreform.org</a></td>
<td>Maxine Weil</td>
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# Meetings With St. Louis Agencies

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<tr>
<td>Jewish Federation of St. Louis</td>
<td><a href="https://www.jfedstl.org">https://www.jfedstl.org</a></td>
<td>Emily Bornstein &amp; Andrew Rehfeld</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jewish Federation of St. Louis</td>
<td><a href="https://www.jfedstl.org">https://www.jfedstl.org</a></td>
<td>Emily Bornstein &amp; Cyndee Levy</td>
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<td>BBYO</td>
<td><a href="http://bbyo.org">http://bbyo.org</a></td>
<td>Debbie Tozer</td>
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<td>Israeli Scouts/Tzofim</td>
<td><a href="http://www.israel">www.israel</a> scouts.org</td>
<td>Yael Treger</td>
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<td>Jewish Student Union</td>
<td><a href="http://jsustl.org">http://jsustl.org</a></td>
<td>Rabbi Mike Robinsky Sam Zitin</td>
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<td>JCRC</td>
<td><a href="http://jcrcstl.org">http://jcrcstl.org</a></td>
<td>Fawn Chapel Rebecca Nathanson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jewish Community Center</td>
<td><a href="https://jccstl.com">https://jccstl.com</a></td>
<td>Craig Neuman Rabbi Brad Horwitz Simone Picker Brad Chotiner</td>
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No one invited me

I didn’t know that was happening...

I won’t know anyone / my friends aren’t going...

Yeah, I’m Jewish, so?
Community Readiness/Opportunity to Create

- St. Louis has the building blocks to establish a robust teen engagement strategy.
- Established and large participatory Jewish population.
- Existing teen offerings from a variety of organizations.
- Committed and engaged “community”, willing to set youth engagement and education as a priority.
- “Need is not a question – there is a lack of coordination and collaboration which limits teen outreach and participation”
- Belief in teen engagement.
- Excitement around communal collaboration.
Estimated between 3,000 and 3,500

BBYO 244 *paid members

Tzofim 30~35

JCRC Programming ~170

Jewish Student Union 711

JCC ~250-300

Shaare Emeth 310

United Hebrew 130

B’nai Amoona ??

Temple Emanuel 23

Bais Abe ~10

Bnot Sherut / Young Israel 45

Central Reform ??

Connecting Our Community

Preliminary Findings

TEEN ENGAGEMENT AUDIT

CONNECTING OUR COMMUNITY
Audit Themes - Professionals:

1) There is a diverse and impressive menu of opportunities available for Jewish teens in St. Louis that span movements, formal, informal, travel, volunteerism, peer engagement and more.

2) When Federation coordinates meetings or events (like youth council or J-Serve), it lowers barriers of perceived competition. Everyone reported willingness and some successes when collaborating with a central “neutral” convener. However, programmatic follow through and coordination is lacking.

3) There is a strong camp presence throughout community with some linked success to year round programming (most significantly through BBYO). Camp staff person with correlating 10 month BBYO advisor position is seen as most significant contributing variable to that connection and success.

4) There is a lack of coordinated marketing and awareness of the opportunities that are available throughout community for teens. Most staff in community know what they are offering in-house and are aware of a handful of other temples and programs. No central calendar.

5) Universally among interviewees, there was a strong commitment to and support for Israel. Several programs reflected on their own scholarship funds to incentivize and support travel.

6) Several synagogue based programs reported feeling “left out” of funding priorities, despite engaging large numbers of teen members. They reflected on “double counting of their members” by centralized teen programs doing engagement work.
Audit Themes – Teen Representatives:

1) Teens reported pride in their specific affiliated youth programs (USY, NFTY, BBYO, NCSY and Bnai Akivah) and didn’t feel that having multiple options was a deterrent or problem to participation.

2) Teens felt most of the hang-ups or barriers to collaboration between youth organizations came from adults setting the rules and priorities, rather than from the teen participants. They reflected that collaborating could and should be easy, but “sometimes, adults wont let us”.

3) They reflected on a problematically wide gap in the quality control between local events and regional events. “While they have the same name, they are really really different things”.

4) Teens would like the space to both feel pride in their individual youth groups, as well as the opportunity to work in conjunction / partnership with their friends in other groups.
Strengths / Sources of Pride:

**Youth Groups**: NFTY, NCSY, USY and B’nai Akivah all have significant groups running in association with their respective synagogues and movements. There is a strong investment in professionals to be working with these affiliated membership youth group entry points.

**JCC**: With two campuses, day camp and overnight camp the JCC is well positioned to be a central and pluralistic leader in the space of teen recruitment and retention.

**JSU**: Has an incredible track record already of bringing the engagement process to the teens in their public school setting, rather than relying on their temple or organizational affiliation.

**Central Agencies**: Additionally, there are highly effective program run by JCRC, Mishma, Tzofim and Rosh Hodesh

**BBYO**: Not only is the chapter thriving and large, but it is integrally connected to the JCC’s summer camp by virtue of a share staff person, and works collaboratively with temple youth groups.
Abundance of Programming
Opportunity is NOT the Challenge

Central Questions

What’s WORKING to engage Jewish teens and connect them to opportunities?

What BARRIERS exist when we try to connect Jewish teens to programming?

What’s MISSING from our collective effort to engage Jewish teens?
Community Wide Coordinator / Central Address

- Leverages existing knowledge to adapt a “teen initiative”
- Invests in human resources, training, and operations to position for growth
- Collaborates with peers in setting a broader vision for youth engagement
Centralized and Shared Teen Calendar
Bringing New Outreach Strategies to St. Louis
Challenges / Problems

Key Strategies

Outcomes / Benchmarks
Identifying Opportunities For Collaboration, Partnership & Community

Anticipated Scale of Investment

Position for Sustainability

Growth

Establish Baseline

Expand Impact

Year 1

Year 2

Year 3

Year 4