

VOLUNTEERING + VALUES

A REPAIR THE WORLD Report on Jewish Young Adults



REPAIR THE WORLD works to inspire American Jews and their communities to give their time and effort to serve those in need. We aim to make service a defining part of American Jewish life.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Volunteer service, defined as productive work, performed with minimal or no compensation and intended to further the “social good,” is experiencing a renaissance among the millennial generation of American young adults. At the same time, momentum is building in the American Jewish community for a renewed commitment to Jewish young adult volunteering both within and beyond communal borders. Indicative of the growing focus on elevating service as a Jewish communal norm was the creation in 2009 of Repair the World as a central organization for Jewish service-learning and volunteer efforts. However, despite growing interest, little was known about the full extent of Jewish young adults’ service commitments. National surveys of volunteering either did not include information about the religious identity of respondents or contained too small a sample of Jewish young adults to allow for meaningful analysis.

The goal of the current study was to understand the full extent of Jewish young adults’ volunteer habits and preferences. This research was commissioned by Repair the World and was conducted as a collaborative effort between researchers at the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies (CMJS) at Brandeis University and Gerstein|Agne Strategic Communications. The major component of this research was the development and administration of a survey of the volunteer commitments, motivations, and attitudes of a sample of Jewish young adults between the ages of 18–35 from across the spectrum of Jewish identities and levels of Jewish engagement. The report develops a portrait of the motivations that cause Jewish young adults to volunteer, the varieties of service in which they engage, and the ways in which they construe the connections among their involvement in volunteering, Jewish values, and identity. The report concludes with discussion of the most promising points of leverage to increase commitment to service and encourage Jewish young adults to see volunteering as a Jewish act.

... FINDINGS ...

Volunteering

The majority of contemporary Jewish young adults engage in volunteer work. However, it is also true that for many volunteering is an infrequent and episodic activity. Jewish young adults volunteer because they want to help those in less fortunate circumstances and make positive changes in their communities. Much of the volunteer work of Jewish young adults is comprised of local efforts to ameliorate disparities in economic resources and educational opportunity and often entails activities such as collecting, sorting, and distributing goods, tutoring, leading recreational programs, and providing manual labor for construction and repair.

Most Jewish young adults are politically and civically involved, but tend to participate when the investment of time and energy is low or when the behavior is well integrated into the course of their regular routine. The most common forms of civic engagement among these Jewish young adults comprise what could be called “low-threshold activism” such as signing petitions, donating money, and making purchasing decisions that are in line with their political and social values.

Among Jewish young adults, volunteering, and especially the development of a pattern of regular volunteering, is the result of social learning and modeling of behavior that originates in the home and is

reinforced by peers. Jewish young adults who are most likely to volunteer have a history of high school participation in volunteering, and those who volunteer on a regular basis came from homes with parents who volunteered. Jewish young adults who are highly engaged in religious life are also more likely to volunteer and do so on a regular basis. Volunteering is also supported by an attitudinal disposition that values helping those facing hardship and serving the needs of the larger community. Women and those who come from homes with one non-Jewish parent are also more likely to volunteer, although not more likely to become regular volunteers.

The volunteer commitments of Jewish young adults are influenced, and too often limited, by opportunity. Following self-initiated interest, the most common avenue of volunteer recruitment for Jewish young adults is through family and friends. Factors that constrain the extent or variety of social networks, such as gender or disengagement from religious life, also limit knowledge of volunteer opportunities and peers with whom to volunteer. Logistical concerns such as finding volunteer work that is geographically accessible and accommodating of busy schedules also serve to limit the volunteer commitments of Jewish young adults.

Jewish young adults want to “make a difference,” and the majority appears to have a sense of personal efficacy. However, those subgroups that are least likely to volunteer also have the weakest belief that their volunteer efforts can contribute to desired effects. The personal relevance of the causes for which Jewish young adults are being asked to volunteer may also play a role in their decision making. Many Jewish young adults do not find their way into volunteer opportunities related to the causes about which they care most deeply. Volunteer options related to the full spectrum of Jewish young adult concerns may either not be available or may not be well known among this demographic.

Volunteering through the Jewish Community

Only a small portion of Jewish young adults prefer to or actually do volunteer with Jewish organizations. This form of volunteering is predicted by a trajectory of in-depth Jewish education and involvement, starting in childhood and extending into the present. The minority of Jewish young adults who volunteer through Jewish organizations do so to support their own people and community. By contrast, the vast majority of Jewish young adults say it does not matter if they volunteer with a Jewish or non-Jewish organization. Instead, the reasons they give for choosing any volunteer option center on whether the activity involves a cause or issue that is personally meaningful to them. Most Jewish young adults appear at least open to the idea of volunteering through Jewish organizations, however, they do not know what opportunities exist and of greater concern, they do not perceive Jewish volunteer options as addressing their most deeply held concerns.

Volunteering through a Jewish Perspective

Jewish young adults are primarily drawn to service through universal rather than Jewish-based values or identity. Whether or not young adults see connections between Jewish identity and volunteering is closely related to the overall integration and prominence of their Jewish identity amidst other aspects of their conception of self. At one end of the spectrum are young adults for whom the Jewish component of their identity stands front and center in everything they do. These are the Jewish young adults most likely to see their volunteer work grounded in Jewish values of compassionate helping and social justice. For young adults at the other end of the spectrum, however, volunteering is an activity partitioned off from their

Jewish identity in much the same way that their Jewish identity is separate from many aspects of their lives. Although they embrace the values of caring and social justice, they perceive them as universal values rather than particularistic Jewish ones and frame their service work accordingly. Only a very small portion of Jewish young adults volunteer as a means to represent the Jewish community to the larger society.

... STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS ...

Repair the World has positioned itself to influence the intersection between Jewish young adult involvement in volunteering and the development of a Jewish lens for understanding the meaning and salience of service. The current survey data provides some important guidance as to how to more effectively engage Jewish young adults in service and help them to see their volunteer work through the prism of Jewish tradition, values, and identity.

- **Start early to build the habit of volunteering:** Volunteering is clearly a socially learned behavior and, once established, a habit likely to continue throughout the lifespan. Programming that encourages Jews in their formative teen years to engage in volunteering and introduces them to a Jewish perspective on service needs to be developed and expanded. Jewish service learning that combines hands-on work with reflection and study needs to be woven into formal and informal Jewish educational programming, including supplementary and day schools as well as camps and youth groups. Immersive Jewish service learning programs for teens will also need to be expanded.
- **Develop effective framing messages:** Efforts to mobilize social consciousness and encourage collective action can be bolstered by the use of messages that provide an appealing and motivating framework. The current data suggest that describing service in universal terms and as a responsibility of Jews to help others in need, regardless of religious affiliation, is convincing to a broad cross section of Jewish young adults. For many, this message is as effective as similar ones couched in non-Jewish terms. The utility of this framing of service comes from its appeal to those Jewish young adults who do not see their service through a Jewish lens. By contrast, tying service to the goal of helping the Jewish community specifically is not a strong entry point.
- **Expand volunteer options that relate to core concerns:** Jewish young adults are most motivated to serve when they think they can make a difference in the lives of others, and when they can work on issues about which they care deeply. For those issue areas where volunteer options are limited or non-existent, new opportunities, under Jewish and non-Jewish auspices, will need to be developed. Suitable volunteer opportunities that already exist may need to be better advertised to Jewish young adults, in particular Jewish service efforts that address the very universal issues high on the list of concerns of Jewish young adults.
- **Create flexible, local options for volunteering:** Time is a valued and scarce resource for Jewish young adults, and all strategies must include tactical provisions that make volunteering time-friendly. Where feasible, emphasis should be placed on expanding volunteer opportunities that offer a flexible schedule, have options for short-term commitments, and are located where Jewish young adults reside.

- **Recruit through existing social networks and build new ones around volunteering:** Recognizing the role of peer groups in promoting volunteer activity, special emphasis should be placed on tapping social circles as a method of recruitment. Many Jewish young adults indicate a strong preference for volunteer opportunities that allow them to work with friends or with peers as part of a team. Highlighting the social or team aspect of volunteer work or creating “Posse” models of volunteering that bring together groups of Jewish young adults and enable them to volunteer together over time present an exciting option for expanding the reach of volunteering among this demographic.
- **Partner with non-Jewish organizations:** Jewish young adults are drawn to service that serves all people regardless of religion and addresses issues that extend beyond Jewish communal boundaries. Repair the World should invest in building partnerships with non-Jewish organizations that are leading volunteer efforts on the universal concerns about which Jewish young adults care deeply. Partnering with non-Jewish volunteer organizations is a tangible way to demonstrate the paired commitment of the Jewish community to both universal causes and Jewish values. Equally important is that these collaborations allow young adults to address their issues of concern through a Jewish portal of service and can be used to increase their understanding of Jewish perspectives on service. Partnerships can also be a vehicle for encouraging Jewish young adults to identify all their volunteer work, regardless of who it serves, as a Jewish act.
- **Leverage “low-threshold activism” and Jewish young adults’ belief that they can make a difference:** Most Jewish young adults believe their actions can make a difference and most engage in low-threshold forms of activism. These forms of civic engagement can serve as an entry point to volunteer engagement. Pathways need to be developed that lead Jewish young adults from simpler forms of activism toward graduated levels of commitment and volunteer involvement. In much the same manner, entry level or brief volunteer experiences should be followed by opportunities for more in-depth volunteer work and skill development.
- **Frame volunteering as a Jewish act:** Efforts are needed to educate Jewish young adults of the rich connections between Jewish thought and volunteering in such a way that young adults from across the entire spectrum of Jewish identity “own” a Jewish perspective on service. Widespread efforts are needed that draw attention to and link the universal and Jewish values that young adults already hold with the universal causes about which they care most deeply. Spreading a Jewish perspective on volunteering may be facilitated by peer “connectors” that have ties to a broad array of social networks.
- **Build the knowledge base regarding harder to reach groups:** Important questions remain about how best to draw certain subgroups such as men and Jewish young adults with the most limited Jewish involvement into volunteering and encourage them to see this activity through a Jewish lens. Additional research to explore the unique concerns and needs of these groups is necessary if Repair the World is to spread a commitment to volunteering throughout this generation of Jewish young adults.

Jewish young adults believe they can make the world a better place, and they want to work toward the common good. Repair the World’s mission to make service a defining part of Jewish life for young adults faces a unique set of challenges and will require navigating generational as well as Jewish identity dynamics. However, equally apparent is the potential of Jewish young adult volunteering to address pressing social issues domestically and abroad and to bring Jewish identity and values into the forefront of efforts to serve the common good.

INTRODUCTION

A person starts to live when he lives outside himself. (Albert Einstein)

Volunteer service is experiencing a renaissance among the millennial generation of American young adults. Thomas Friedman (2007) has named this cohort “Generation Q—the Quiet Americans...quietly pursuing their idealism, at home and abroad.” Volunteer service, defined as productive work, performed with minimal or no compensation and intended to further the “social good” (Wilson, 1997), is quickly becoming a signature element of the contemporary young adult experience. Between 2008 and 2009 applications for AmeriCorps increased by 170% (Corporation for National and Community Service, 2010), those for City Year tripled (City Year, 2010), and interest in the Peace Corps jumped by 18% (Peace Corps, 2010). While certainly influenced by recession-induced fluctuations in the job market, this rise of interest in volunteer alternatives is also likely to be an outgrowth of the unique focus of this generation on “making a difference” and making time in their lives to work toward the common good. A recent survey by the Institute of Politics at Harvard University (2010) found that 80% of college-educated young adults viewed community service as an “honorable” activity in which to be engaged.

Momentum is also building in the American Jewish community for a renewed commitment to Jewish young adult volunteering within and beyond communal borders (Greenberg, 2001; Messinger, 2003). Providers of Jewish service opportunities report recent growth in capacity (Irie & Blair, 2008). Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life (2009) reported that in the academic year 2008-09 over 2,300 students from 120 North American campuses travelled on Hillel-sponsored alternative break service programs. Perhaps most indicative of the growing focus on elevating service as a communal norm was the creation in 2009 of Repair the World, the metaphorical “table” for Jewish service-learning and volunteer efforts. Repair the World has positioned itself to influence the intersection between Jewish young adult involvement in volunteering and the development of a Jewish lens for understanding the meaning and salience of service and social justice.

However, despite growing interest, the landscape of Jewish young adult volunteer involvement remained largely uncharted, and little was known about the full extent of Jewish young adults’ service commitments. National data from two of the three largest surveys of volunteering, Giving and Volunteering in the United States (Independent Sector, 2001) and the Current Population Survey; Volunteer Supplement (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009) do not include information about the religious identity of respondents. The third national study, the Center on Philanthropy Panel Study (Wilhelm, et al., 2005) asked respondents about their religion, but included too small a number of Jewish young adults to allow for meaningful analysis. Previous research on the Jewish community specifically looked at attitudes toward and involvement in social justice efforts, a subset of volunteer engagement (Cohen & Fein, 2001). As a result, many of the questions central to the mission of Repair the World and the larger field of Jewish service remained unanswered. These questions include; what is the nature and extent of Jewish young adults’ involvement in volunteering under Jewish and other auspices?; who is drawn to service work, and what obstacles keep some Jewish young adults on the sidelines of volunteering?; what issues, values, and goals move Jewish young adults to action?; and how do Jewish young adults construe the connections between their volunteer work, regardless of its sponsorship, and their Jewish identities and values?

In response to this need for systematic baseline data, Repair the World commissioned research to explore the motivations for Jewish young adults to serve; the varieties of volunteer work in which they engage; the connections between Jewish values and identity and service; and the most promising points of leverage to increase commitment to volunteering. The research described in this report was a collaborative effort between researchers at the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies (CMJS) at Brandeis University and Gerstein|Agne Strategic Communications.

The major component of this research was the development and administration of a survey of the volunteer commitments, motivations, and attitudes of a sample of Jewish young adults from across the spectrum of Jewish identities and levels of Jewish engagement. The overarching goal of this research was to develop a rich body of valid, high-quality data for Repair the World and other communal policy makers to use in deciding how best to make service a defining part of American Jewish life for young adults.

The report begins with a description of the study design and methods. Next, the patterns of volunteer involvement of Jewish young adults are described followed by examination of their preferences, desires, and unmet needs for volunteer opportunities. The report then focuses on involvement in volunteering under Jewish auspices along with the factors that impede participation in service. The report then examines the extent to which Jewish young adults see their volunteer work through a Jewish "lens" and the generational as well as identity dynamics that influence the connection between volunteering and Jewish values. This is followed by exploration of the appeal of different framing messages to this cohort. The report concludes with a discussion of the implications of the findings for expanding the involvement of Jewish young adults in sustained volunteer commitments and for framing these efforts as Jewish acts.

METHODS

Sampling Strategy

This report is a baseline study of the volunteer habits and preferences of Jewish young adults between the ages of 18-35. Developing a representative sample of Jewish young adults presents considerable methodological challenges because of their low incidence within the general American population. Creating a representative sample using traditional methods such as random digit dialing is prohibitively expensive. To address this challenge, the current study employed a hybrid sampling approach that makes use of the Taglit-Birthright Israel (Taglit) applicant pool and Knowledge Networks' online research panel (KnowledgePanel®). The Taglit applicant pool is the largest extant list of American Jewish young adults with over 300,000 members and includes both participants and nonparticipants from virtually the entire spectrum of Jewish backgrounds and denominational identities. Substantial numbers have minimal engagement in Jewish life, including secular Jews and those with no connection to Jewish organizations (Saxe et al., 2008). The Knowledge Networks' online panel is a representative sample of the U.S. population selected using probability-based sampling techniques. In addition, the Knowledge Networks panel contains groups who may not be represented in the Taglit applicant pool, including those who were not eligible for the program. However, the small number of Jewish young adults in the Knowledge Networks panel is not sufficient, by itself, to provide meaningful estimates of Jewish young adult volunteer involvement or allow comparisons among sub-groups. A hybrid-sampling approach provided a sample which both resembles the larger American Jewish population of young adults and is large enough to conduct meaningful analysis.

Sampling Frame

The Taglit sampling frame consisted of all eligible applicants for summer trips between 2001 and 2010.¹ Included in the frame are all participants on Taglit summer trips, as well as those who applied but did not go on the trip for which they applied or on a subsequent trip. The sample was stratified by age, gender, application round, and Taglit participation to ensure an equal distribution across age and gender and the correct proportion of Taglit participants and non-participants from the application rounds from which they were sampled. Older applicants were oversampled in order to account for the loss in the quality of their contact information. A total of 1,920 cases were selected from the Taglit sampling frame to receive the survey.

Knowledge Networks' Jewish panelists were identified for this study using a question about religious affiliation. Since many people with Jewish background identify as "No Religion," a follow-up question was asked of those panelists who selected that option to determine if they considered themselves Jewish for any reason or had a Jewish parent. Knowledge Networks' Jewish panelists were excluded if they were under the age of 18 or over the age of 35. A total of 204 panelists were selected to receive the survey. After the survey was completed, some panelists were determined to be ineligible because they did not meet the eligibility requirements of Taglit in terms of Jewish background. The final number of eligible cases from the Knowledge Networks sample was 193.

¹ Taglit winter trips were excluded to minimize overlap with the Jewish Futures Project (See Saxe et al., 2011).

Survey Instrument

In order to best capture the priorities and interests of all stakeholders, CMJS and Gerstein | Agne developed the survey instrument in collaboration with the Repair the World organization. The instrument included questions about volunteer involvement, motivations for service, obstacles to involvement, and reactions to messages regarding Jewish service. In addition, the survey instrument included questions about important contextual information, including Jewish background and demographic characteristics.

Survey Administration

The survey was designed to be implemented as a dual-mode telephone/web survey. Data collection for the Taglit sample was conducted by CMJS. Prior to fielding the survey, extensive internet searches were conducted to obtain up-to-date contact information. Each potential respondent in the Taglit sample was sent an email invitation and up to five reminders. After the second reminder, CMJS began contacting potential respondents by phone. Telephone calls were made by trained interviewers, mostly Brandeis University undergraduate and graduate students, and were closely supervised by CMJS staff. A \$15 Amazon.com gift certificate was offered for participation in the survey. Field operations for the Taglit sample began on September 20, 2010 and ended on November 30, 2010.

Knowledge Networks conducted the survey of its own panel members via the internet. Knowledge Networks provided incentives for respondents based on its internal schedule of rewards, comparable to those offered to the Taglit sample. The Knowledge Networks survey was in the field from October 19, 2010 through November 5, 2010.²

Response Rates

Surveys were conducted with 951 eligible respondents, and the overall response rate was 45% (Table 1). Response rates were calculated using the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR, 2000) standard definition in which the response rate is the number of surveys, in this case both complete and partial, divided by the number of eligible units in the sample. This response rate also estimates the proportion of cases with unknown eligibility that is actually eligible for the survey and includes them in the denominator. Any differences between respondents and non-respondents were corrected for using weights.

TABLE 1: Response Rate by Sample

SAMPLE	RESPONSE RATE	# of RESPONDENTS
Taglit Sample	44%	850
Knowledge Networks Sample	52%	101
Overall	45%	951

² A smaller follow-up survey was conducted between November 10, 2010 and November 30, 2010 regarding previous participation in Taglit for those Knowledge Networks cases in which this information was missing. This information was necessary for determination of sample overlap.

Weighting

The weighting of the samples occurred in four stages. Initially, design weights for each sample were calculated to account for the differences in the probability of selection for each eligible sample member. After data collection was completed, non-response weights were generated to correct for any potential bias due to non-response. The two samples were then merged and additional weights were calculated to account for potential overlap between the samples (Hartley, 1962). A final set of post-stratification weights was applied to the combined samples to correct for differences in the gender and age distribution in the sample and the known characteristics of the population.³

Analysis

Several kinds of findings are presented in this report. Findings that are descriptive in nature are presented using weighted frequencies, means, and crosstabs. The results of regression analysis are also employed to estimate the impact of independent variables (e.g., gender or Jewish education) on the dependent variable of interest (e.g., volunteering). Regression analysis allows assessment of the relationship between two variables while controlling for the impact of other, possibly correlated, variables. Findings based on regression analysis are presented using estimated proportions and probabilities. All reported findings from regression analysis are statistically significant ($p < .05$). Analyses of variables that did not prove to be statistically significant are described in the Technical Report.

Sample Composition

While the sample in many ways resembles known characteristics of the U.S. Jewish population, there are some ways in which it is not representative. It is likely that Orthodox respondents, non-college graduates, and children of intermarried parents are under-represented in the sample. However, the distribution of survey respondents on each of these characteristics lends support to the contention that the survey attracted a diverse sample of Jewish young adults. For example, the distribution of Jewish identities in which respondents were raised suggests that the sample represents the full spectrum of Jewish identities. In addition, nearly all subpopulations are available in sufficient numbers to describe their characteristics and allow for comparison across subgroups.

³ Post-stratification weights were applied to yield an even distribution by gender and an age distribution that reflected the proportion of eligible respondents in each age category based on recent meta-analytic estimates of the American Jewish population (Saxe, 2010).

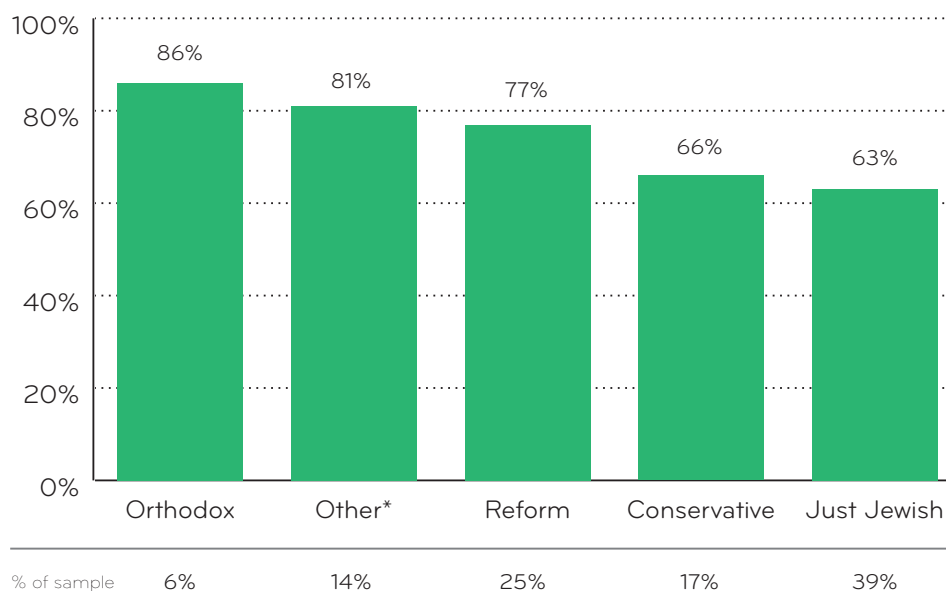
VOLUNTEERING IN THE LIVES OF JEWISH YOUNG ADULTS

This section of the report begins by describing the nature and extent of Jewish young adult involvement in volunteering starting with their overall volunteer experience in the preceding 12 months and then focusing more closely on the volunteer work to which they have made the greatest commitment in that time frame.⁴ The discussion then moves from description of the texture and variety of volunteer involvement to analysis of the factors that lead Jewish young adults into volunteering, with special attention to trajectories associated with volunteering on a regular basis. This section of the report concludes with examination of the concerns and preferences that play a role in young adult decision making about volunteering.

Overall Volunteer Experience

The vast majority of Jewish young adults from across the spectrum of denominations and Jewish identities report involvement in some form of volunteer work during the last 12 months (Figure 1). The current survey also indicates that young adults who identify as Orthodox have the highest overall rates of volunteering.

FIGURE 1: Volunteering by Denomination/Identity

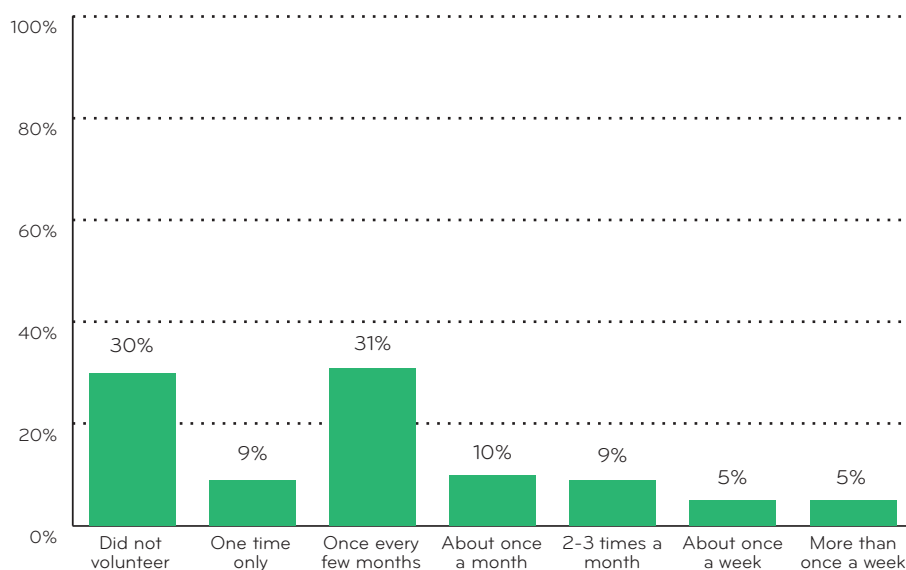


*Includes those who indicated they identify as Reconstructionist as well as those who wrote in identities not included in any of the other choices

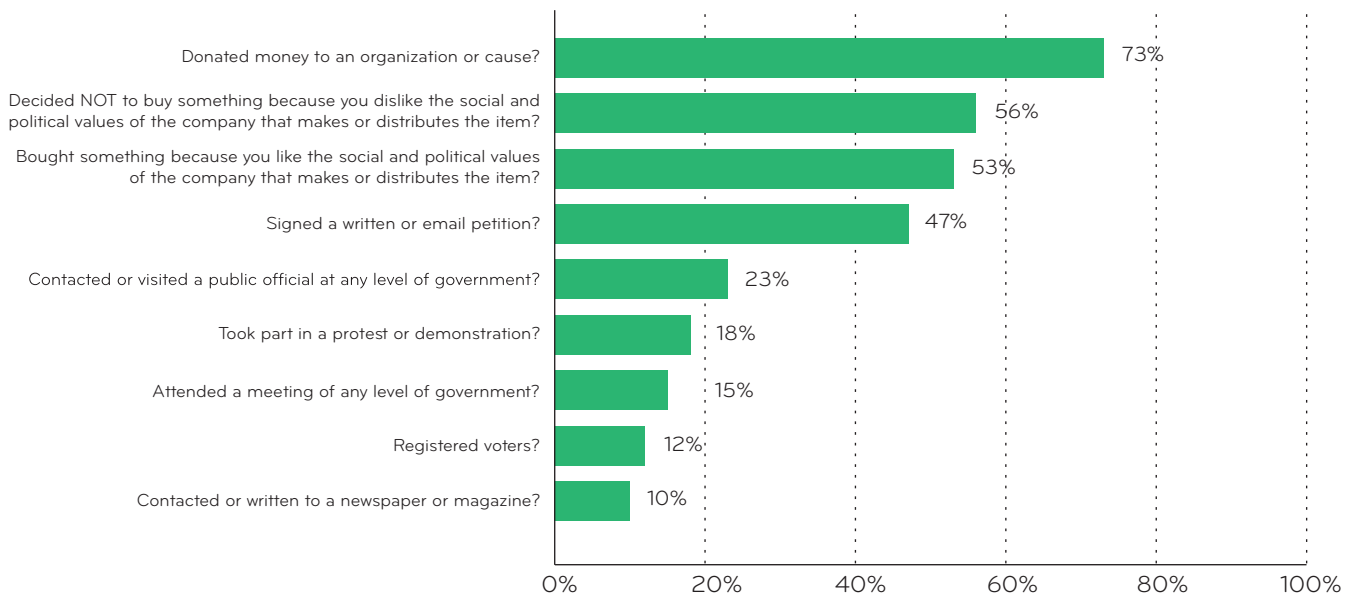
⁴ A twelve-month time frame was selected to most fully capture the volunteer engagements of young adults, many of whom live by an academic calendar with substantial differences in their summer and winter schedules.

For many Jewish young adults (40%) volunteering is an infrequent activity in which they usually engage less than once per month (Figure 2). The majority of Jewish young adults (52%) report that in a typical week they spend no time at all engaged in volunteer work. On the other hand, almost one-third (29%) of survey respondents have made volunteering an integral part of their lives and volunteer at least once a month, with 10% participating at least once if not several times a week.

FIGURE 2: Frequency of Volunteering in Last 12 Months



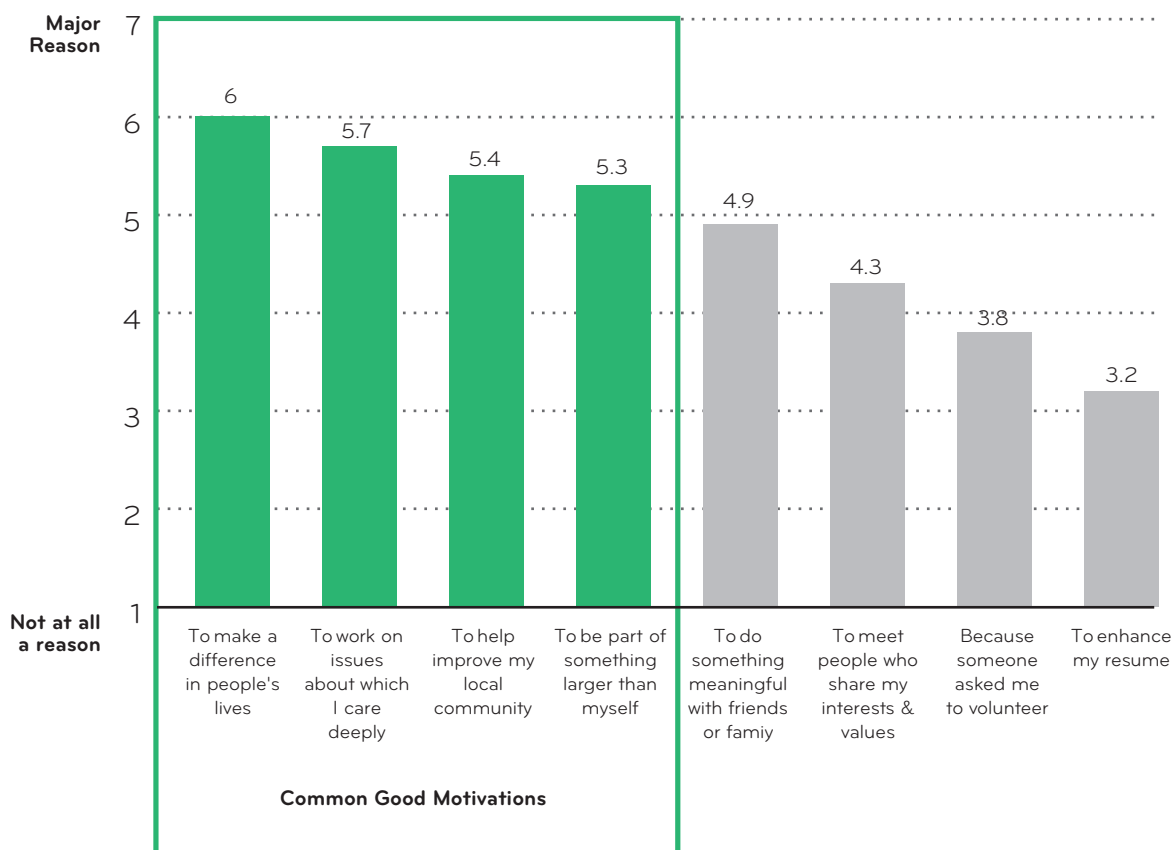
Over three-quarters (78%) of Jewish young adults report engaging in at least one form of civic activity, during the last 12 months (Figure 3). The most common forms of civic engagement among these Jewish young adults comprise what could be called “low-threshold activism.” Survey respondents report that they sign petitions, donate money, and make purchasing decisions that are in line with their political and social values—essentially, they are politically and socially involved, but tend to participate when the investment of time and energy is low or when the behavior is well integrated into the course of their regular routine. Only 45% report civic behaviors that require an active effort, such as participating in demonstrations or attending government meetings.

FIGURE 3: Civic Engagement in Last 12 Months

Approximately one-fifth (21%) of Jewish young adults in our sample have participated, at some point in their lives, in a short or medium-term immersive volunteer program of one to twelve weeks, such as an alternative break or summer experience. A small portion (5%), have done so in volunteer programs organized by Jewish entities, such as American Jewish World Service or Jewish Funds for Justice. Five percent of Jewish young adults have participated in a long-term (three months or longer) volunteer program of any kind and very few (less than 1%) have done so under Jewish auspices, through programs such as AVODAH.

Survey respondents were asked to rate a variety of reasons for volunteering on a seven-point scale, where a score of seven indicated that the motive was a major reason for them to volunteer and a score of one indicated that it was not at all a reason (Figure 4). Jewish young adults indicate that their paramount motivations are to help those in less fortunate circumstances, to make positive changes in society, and to give back to their community. These statements correlate with what we know about the inspirations to volunteer among the larger non-Jewish young adult community (Astin & Sax, 1998). Jewish young adults also want to experience a shared sense of purpose by engaging in personally meaningful work with family, friends, and peers. Although utilitarian motivations, such as enhancing one's resume are part of the mix, they are secondary in motivating Jewish young adults to volunteer. Factor analysis indicated that ratings of four motivations for volunteering (to make a difference in peoples' lives, to improve the local community, to be part of something larger than oneself, and to work on issues about which you care deeply) are highly inter-correlated ($\alpha=.80$). The relationship suggests that these four motivations all measure the same underlying construct that we call "common good motivations."

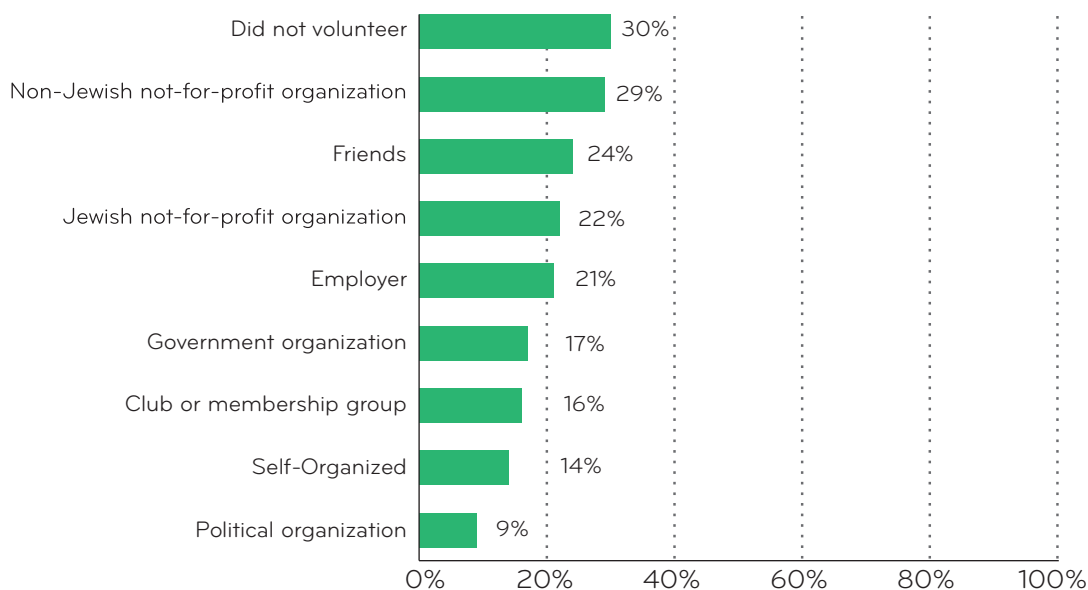
FIGURE 4: Reasons for Volunteering – Mean Ratings



The survey also asked Jewish young adults to review a list of potential organizers of volunteer work and indicate which ones had played a role in their volunteer work during the last 12 months. Non-Jewish not-for-profit organizations closely followed by friends (independent of an organization), employers, and membership groups such as civic or fraternal organizations are the most frequently endorsed as organizers of volunteer work for survey respondents (Figure 5). Jewish organizations are the third most commonly cited organizer of volunteer work for Jewish young adults, although, as we will later explain, they face serious challenges as they seek to engage this age group.

One of the interesting findings of this research is that a substantial portion of Jewish young adults are engaged, at least in part, in volunteer efforts outside of the formal organizational sphere. The second most frequently mentioned organizer of volunteer activity is "Friends independent of an organization." Examples of this type of non-organization based volunteering include both informal individual acts of caring and support, such as visiting elderly neighbors and tutoring children of employees, as well as organized group efforts, such as local fundraising events or neighborhood cleanups.

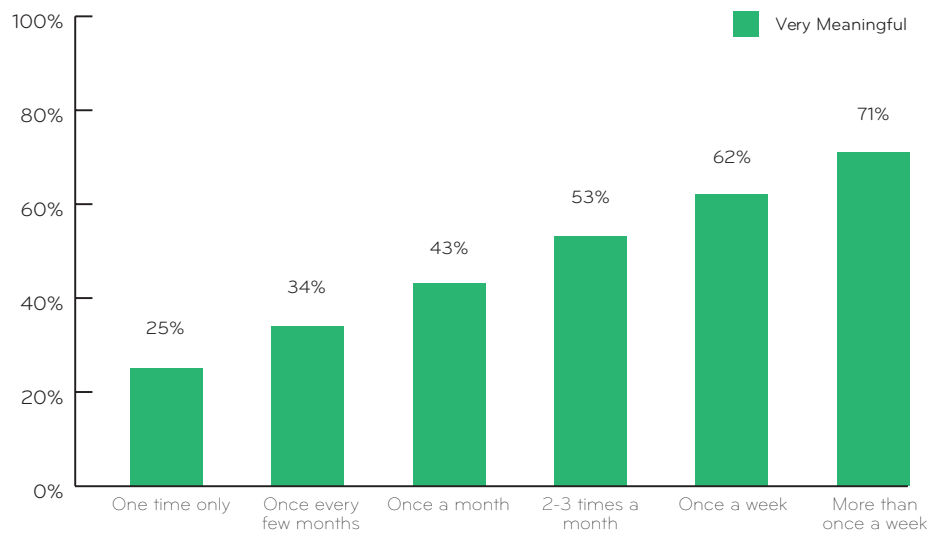
FIGURE 5: Organizer of Volunteer Work



*Response totals greater than 100% because respondents were allowed to indicate more than one organizer of their volunteer work

Jewish young adults with any volunteer experience over the preceding 12 months were also asked to rate how meaningful they found their service work on a scale of one to four, where a rating of one indicates not at all meaningful and a rating of four indicates that it was very meaningful. Most of these Jewish young adults indicate that their volunteer work is at least somewhat personally meaningful (82%), although less than half (43%) report the highest level of personal meaning. One factor strongly associated with experiencing high levels of personal meaning in volunteer work is the frequency of participation (Figure 6). Although it may be that those who find volunteer work meaningful also volunteer more frequently, it is also possible, and not mutually exclusive, that spending more time volunteering allows Jewish young adults to gain a greater appreciation of the importance and impact of their contribution. Support for the former explanation comes from a study of Jewish immersive service programs which found that even when the length of the service involvement was constant across programs, the intent to volunteer subsequently was determined by how meaningful participants found the service they performed (Chertok, Tobias, & Boxer, 2011).

FIGURE 6: Meaningfulness by Frequency of Volunteer Work



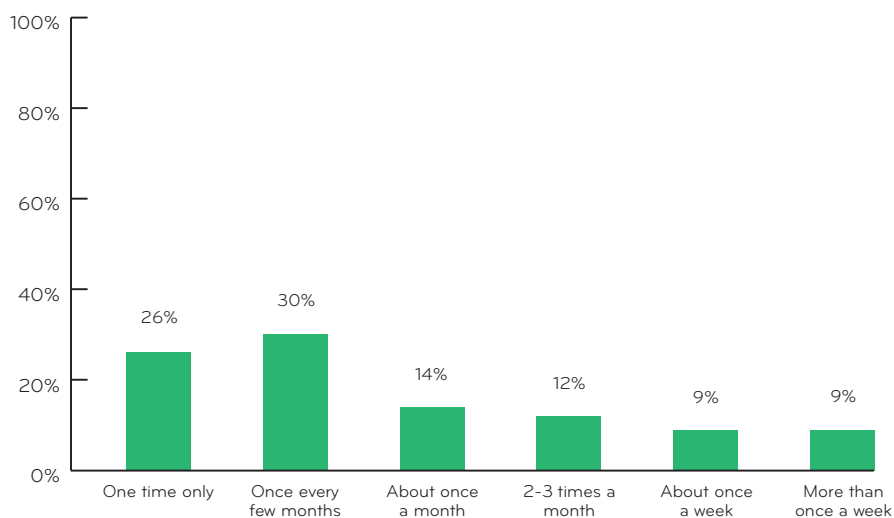
*Note: Estimated probabilities
p<.001

Primary Volunteer Work

To gain a better understanding of the volunteer commitments of Jewish young adults, survey respondents were asked to describe the volunteer work in which they were most involved over the preceding 12 months. Data in this section of the report is described in relation to the portion of respondents (70%) who engaged in any volunteer work in the preceding 12 months.

In a similar pattern to their overall volunteer participation, most Jewish young adults indicate that they engage only infrequently in their primary volunteer work. In fact, the majority (56%) participate less than once per month (Figure 7).

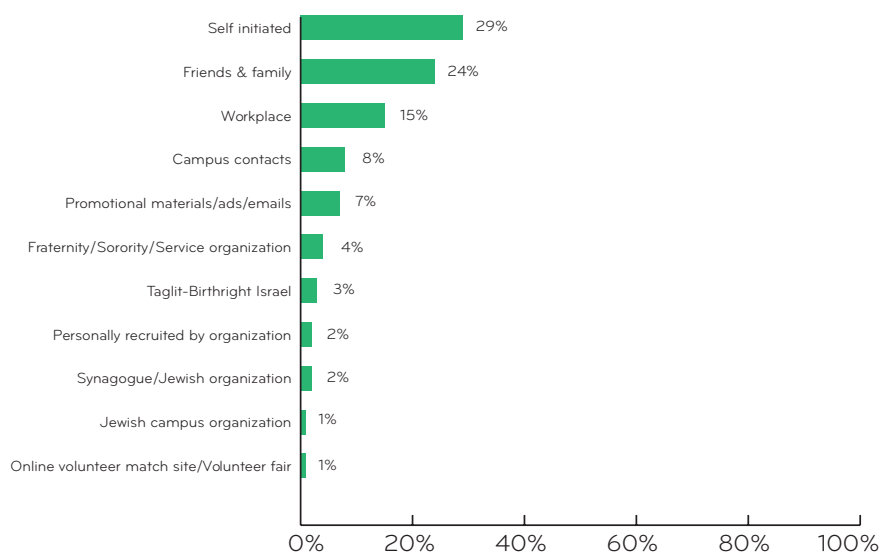
FIGURE 7: Frequency of Primary Volunteer Work



When asked how they came to be involved in their primary volunteer work, surprisingly few indicated that they found this opportunity through online volunteer match sites, volunteer fairs, or through mass advertising (Figure 8). For a small portion of those taking classes, this primary volunteer activity fulfilled the service requirement of an academic course or unpaid internship (10%) or of their school (14%). For an even smaller portion of those who are working, this volunteer commitment fulfilled a requirement of their employer (2%).

One of the clear trends in the data is the prominent role played by social networks in volunteer recruitment. Following self-initiated interest, the most common avenue of volunteer recruitment is through family and friends. These social connections provide links to volunteer opportunities and signify to Jewish young adults that an activity is appropriate or expected for “someone like them.” Previous research indicates that whether or not members of their social network participate in an activity will play a critical role in Jewish young adult decision making about program choice (Chertok, Sasson, & Saxe, 2009).

FIGURE 8: Recruitment for Primary Volunteer Work



The majority (79%) of Jewish young adults describe their primary volunteer work as addressing the needs and issues of their local community or metropolitan area (Figure 9). Just over one-tenth (13%) work on causes at the national level or areas of the United States other than where they live, and almost the same small proportion (9%) report involvement in volunteer efforts that address concerns in other parts of the world. Although contemporary young adults have been described as global citizens concerned about causes that transcend national borders (Arnett, 2002), these findings suggest that for respondents to the current survey, volunteer actions not only take place locally, but also have a geographically limited focus.

FIGURE 9: Geographic Focus of Primary Volunteer Work

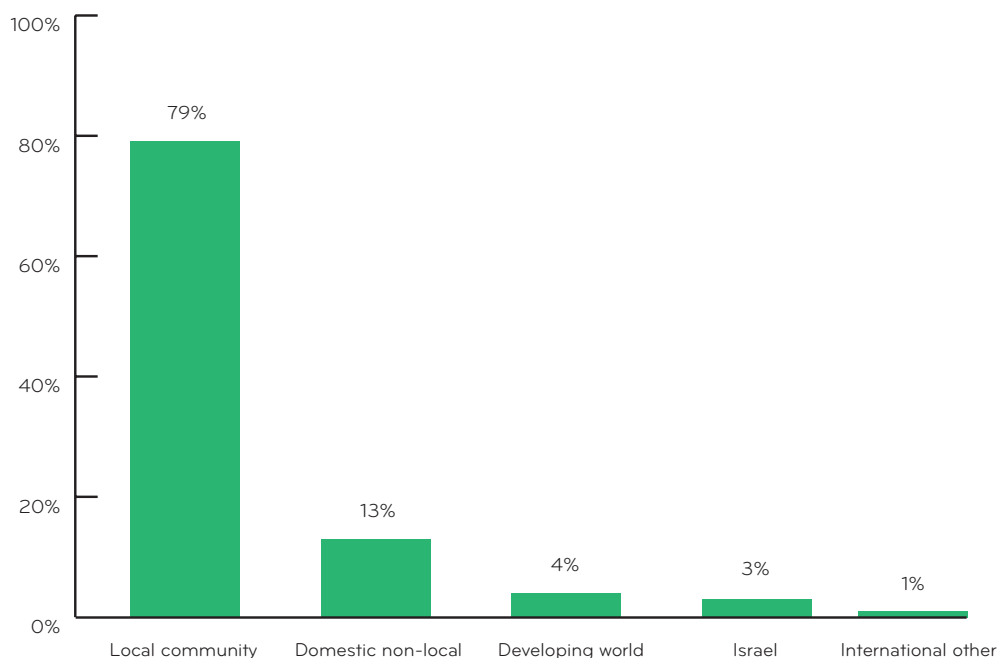
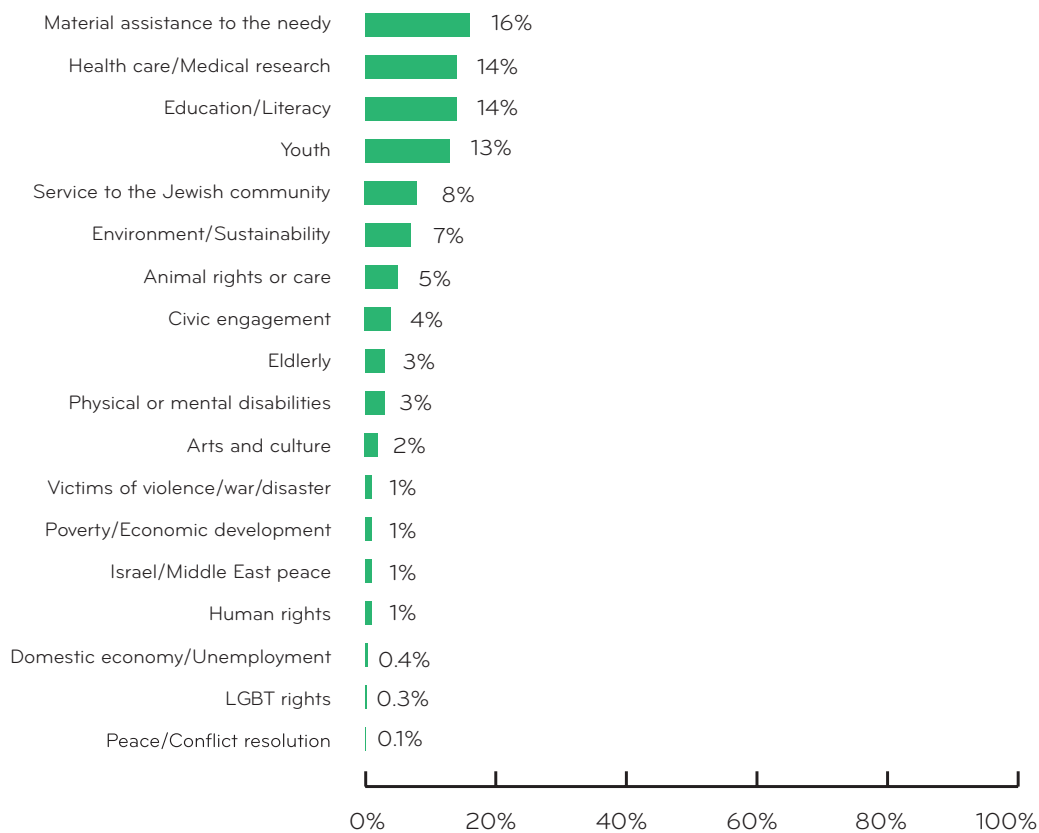


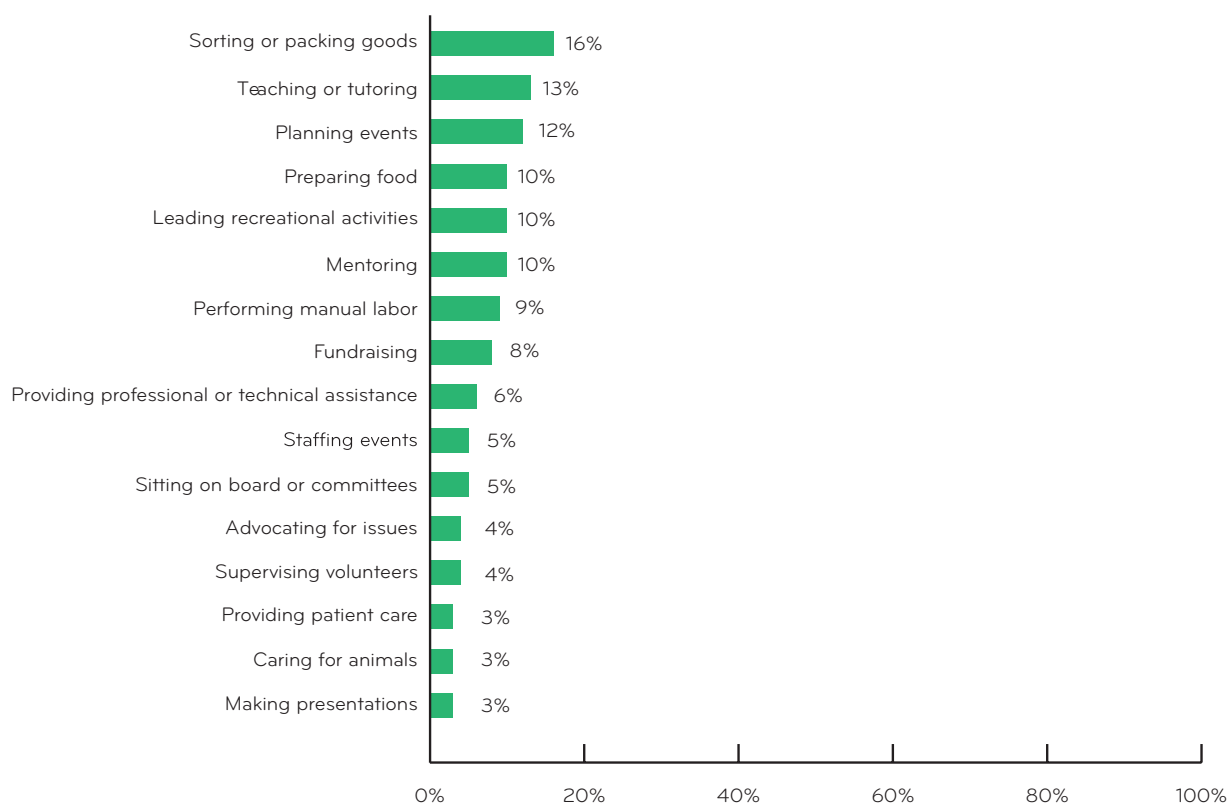
FIGURE 10: Issue Focus of Primary Volunteer Work



Much of the volunteer work of Jewish young adults is comprised of efforts to ameliorate disparities of economic and educational resources and opportunity (Figure 10). For example, 16% engage in volunteer work to address the material needs of those facing financial hardship, and an additional 27% are involved in tutoring, organizing recreational opportunities, coaching or mentoring, or programs for disadvantaged youth.

Survey respondents were asked to describe the types of work they actually perform in their primary volunteer work. Although most listed only one type of activity, some listed up to five. The most commonly cited volunteer work activities include collecting, sorting, and distributing goods such as food and clothing, as well as tutoring, event planning, leading recreational programs, and providing manual labor for building construction and repair (Figure 11).

FIGURE 11: Activities Engaged as part of Volunteer Work



One way to characterize the tasks that comprise the volunteer work of Jewish young adults is to compare the activities of regular volunteers (those who participate at least once per month) and occasional volunteers (those who participate less than once per month). Although both groups engage in volunteer activities that bring them into direct contact with recipients or the public, regular volunteers, as compared with occasional volunteers, are more likely to engage in skilled work (42% and 20% respectively) such as emergency medical care, delivery of presentations, recruitment and supervision of volunteers, and mentoring. Occasional volunteers, as compared with regular volunteers, are more likely to perform unskilled

tasks (45% and 24% respectively) such as collecting and sorting of goods, preparing food, and cleaning. Not surprisingly, the latter are all activities that require only brief training and can accommodate one-time or infrequent volunteers.

The Repair the World survey finds that the majority of contemporary Jewish young adults engage in volunteer work. They join forces with their friends, co-workers, or fellow students to tutor children and teens or serve food to the homeless. Some act individually or with their circle of friends to help their elderly or less fortunate neighbors or create local fundraisers to support various causes. However, it is also true that for most Jewish young adults volunteering is an infrequent and episodic activity, and volunteers often find themselves in unskilled and only moderately rewarding tasks.

Factors Associated with Volunteering

What leads Jewish young adults to volunteer and why do some become intensely involved in one or several volunteer commitments? In an effort to answer these questions and investigate the factors that are associated with different levels of volunteer participation, a series of regression analyses were conducted.

The factors that are associated with whether or not Jewish young adults volunteered in any capacity in the preceding 12 months include gender, high school participation in volunteering, current Jewish religious involvement, and parental intermarriage. A pattern of volunteering marked by participation on a regular basis (at least once per month) is associated with having parents who volunteered, current Jewish religious involvement, and motivations for volunteering related to supporting the common good (Table 2). Some of these factors, such as gender, family and personal history, and current Jewish involvement appear to have a causal effect on volunteer engagement. In other words, these factors predispose or lead young adults into making the choice to volunteer or to do so regularly. Other factors, such as desire to support the common good may be concomitant but not causal. These sentiments represent how young adults frame their experience but may not necessarily influence their initial decision to volunteer.

TABLE 2: Factors Associated with Volunteering

FACTOR	ANY VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY	REGULAR VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY
Gender	✓	
Parental Volunteering		✓
Parental Intermarriage	✓	
High School Volunteering	✓	
Common Good Motivations		✓
Current Jewish Religious Involvement	✓	✓

Gender—The current survey indicates that although gender operates as a significant predictor of whether or not the individual volunteers, it does not predict a pattern of regular volunteering. Over three-quarters (78%) of female respondents to our survey volunteered in the past 12 months compared to 63% of males. This data echoes the well-documented finding that, especially among younger cohorts, women are more likely to volunteer than men (Cruce & Moore 2007; Wuthnow, 1995). The fact that there are no significant differences in the portion of men and women involved in regular volunteering in the current survey suggests that, although it is harder to attract male volunteers, having entered this realm they are as likely as women to volunteer on a regular basis.

Several mechanisms may be responsible for these observed gender differences. Previous research indicates that men, as opposed to women, have smaller and less varied social networks (Antonucci, 1994). Given the importance of social network connections in recruitment, men may simply be less likely to find out about or be invited through social contacts to participate in volunteer efforts. When asked in the current survey to rate a variety of reasons for not volunteering, men, as compared with women, more strongly endorsed the fact that they were never asked.

The types of volunteer work to which men are drawn may also limit their volunteer options. The literature on service suggests that men tend to seek volunteer work that is related to their paid work (Little, 1997). Particularly as entry level or occasional volunteers, men may encounter more difficulty in finding volunteer work that relates to their career. The situation may be even more difficult for Jewish young men who are very likely to work in skilled or professional fields. A majority (64%) of male respondents to the current survey has achieved at least a bachelor's degree and 18% have graduate or professional degrees.

Parental Volunteering—Jewish young adults who recall their parents volunteering frequently during respondents' high school years are themselves more likely to be regular volunteers. Although many Jewish young adults are drawn to occasional volunteering, making a regular commitment to unpaid service appears to be a socially learned behavior influenced by parental modeling. The importance of internalized family norms and values of community service has been noted elsewhere (Janoski, Musick & Wilson, 1998; Rosenthal et al., 1998). Previous research also suggests that for parental teaching to be optimally effective, parents must themselves practice the volunteer commitments that they "preach" (Pancer & Pratt, 1999).

Parental Inter-marriage— Having a non-Jewish parent is a significant predictor of whether or not Jewish young adults volunteer but not of the frequency of their volunteer participation. Although an explanation of the exact mechanism by which this factor influences volunteering is beyond the scope of the current study, the literature suggests at least two possible explanations. A study of individuals involved in social justice work found that many recalled a "constructive, enlarging experience of the other" that challenged their assumptions about who was and was not within their sphere of obligation (Daloz, et al., 1996). Jewish young adults with close family ties to non-Jewish as well as Jewish relatives may have a sense of identity and obligation that is more expansive than peers who grew up in more homogeneous in-married homes. An alternative, but not mutually exclusive explanation, is that intermarried parents may encourage volunteering as an easily agreed upon and non-religious avenue for imparting compassion and a sense of moral responsibility to their children.

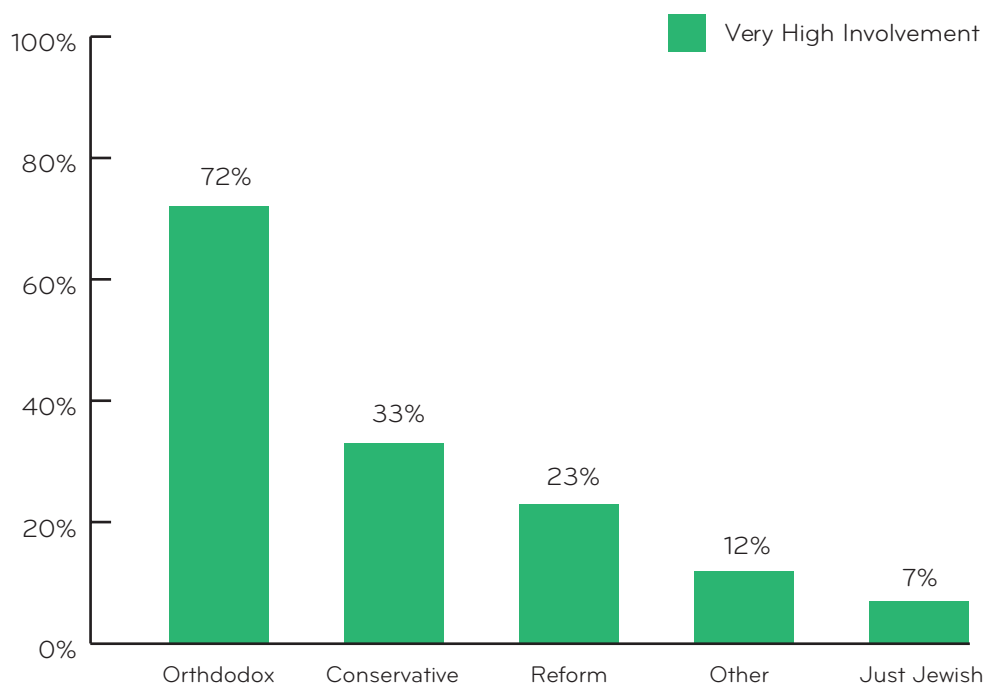
High School Volunteering—Survey respondents who report that they were very involved in volunteering during high school have an 82% probability of volunteering as young adults as compared to a 60% probability for those who did not volunteer during their late teen years. These results echo often reported find-

ings about the continuity of volunteer participation from high school through the young adult years (Astin, 1993; Astin & Sax, 1998; Damico, Damico & Conway, 1998; Oesterle, Johnson, & Mortimer, 2004). Jewish young adults who volunteered during their high school years are likely to have experienced situations where the skills and dispositions toward working for the common good were modeled and reinforced by peers (Janoski, Musick & Wilson, 1998).

Common Good Motivations—Jewish young adults who score higher on motivations for volunteering related to serving the common good are more likely to volunteer on a regular basis. This is in keeping with a substantial body of research that indicates that volunteers attribute greater importance to helping others, aiding the less fortunate, and working to improve society (Flanagan et al., 1999; Sundeen, 1992).

Current Jewish Religious Involvement—In an effort to determine the current Jewish involvement of survey respondents, a scale was constructed composed of three behavioral questions: participation in Shabbat meal or activity, attendance at Jewish religious services, and participation in Jewish text study. For each item, survey respondents were asked to indicate their current level of involvement on a four-point scale, where a rating of zero indicates no participation and a rating of three indicates frequent participation. Scores on this scale were calculated by averaging responses to the constituent items. The resulting Current Jewish Religious Involvement Scale showed a high level of internal consistency ($\alpha=.81$) and is a more sensitive measure of religious involvement than denominational affiliation. As shown in Figure 12, although Jewish young adults who identify as Orthodox are the most likely to receive the highest scores on the Current Jewish Religious Involvement Scale, one-third of those who identify as Conservative and almost one-quarter (23%) of those identified as Reform score at the same level indicating that they are also very involved in Jewish religious observance, study, and worship.

FIGURE 12: Very High Current Jewish Religious Involvement by Denomination/Identity



In the present study, current involvement in Jewish religious life was associated with both the decision to volunteer and the development of a habit of regular volunteering. Those at the lowest end of the scale have only a 61% probability of volunteering at all and a 17% probability of regular volunteering compared to a 91% probability of volunteering and a 53% probability of volunteering regularly for those at the top of the scale.

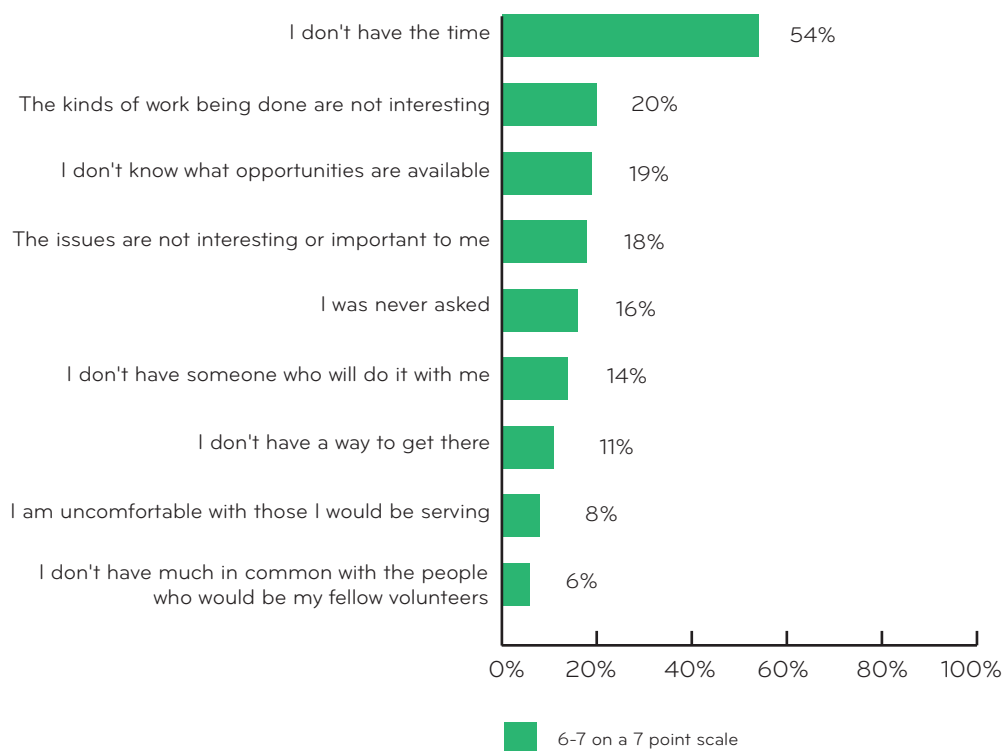
Religious involvement has been found to be associated with engaging in community service among college students (Marks & Jones 2004), and adults who report attending religious worship services even infrequently are more likely to volunteer than those who say they never attend (Wilson & Janoski, 1995). There are several possible mechanisms by which religious involvement leads to volunteer activity. Religious life and teaching are often associated with values of compassion and altruism but, by themselves, adherence to religiously based values does not predict volunteering (Greeley, 1999). Religious institutions may offer both volunteer opportunities and contact with people who already do volunteer work (Wilson & Janoski 1995). It is this “network of morally freighted personal connections, coupled with an inclination toward altruism” (Putnam & Campbell, 2010) that may lead people involved in organized religious life to volunteer more. The net effect is that those who are religiously active have more opportunities to volunteer and more people with whom to do so.

The analyses described above suggest that volunteering among Jewish young adults is influenced by multiple factors. Volunteering is a learned behavior with strong roots in family and teen experience. Volunteering, and especially the development of a pattern of regular volunteering, is the result of social learning and modeling of behavior that originates in the home and is reinforced by peers during the teen and young adult years. However, volunteering is also influenced by opportunity. Jewish young adults are often drawn into volunteering through their social networks. Factors that constrain the extent or variety of these networks, such as gender, or disengagement from religious life, also limit knowledge of opportunities and a social network with which to volunteer. Volunteering is also supported by an attitudinal disposition that values helping those facing hardship, serving the needs of the larger community, and including diverse groups in one’s sphere of obligation.

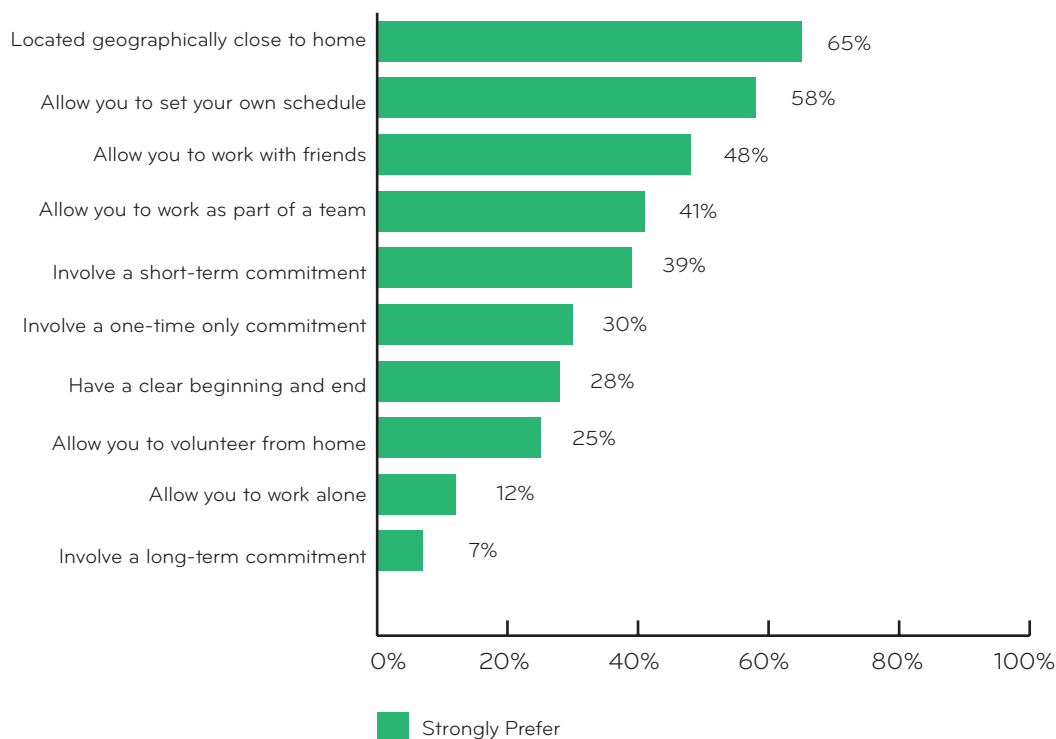
Limitations and Preferences in Volunteering

Although most Jewish young adults in our survey spent some time volunteering during the past 12 months, their participation is usually limited to one-time or infrequent experiences. There is also a substantial portion of this group that had no volunteer experience during this time frame. This section of the report considers the concerns and preferences that play a role in Jewish young adult decision making about volunteering, focusing on three factors that emerge from the data. The first factor relates to the practical logistics of volunteering, the second to Jewish young adults’ perception of their ability to have a meaningful impact through volunteering and the personal relevance of the cause itself, and the third to the critical role of social networks.

Logistics— All survey respondents, regardless of whether or not they volunteered in the preceding 12 months, were presented with a variety of reasons that people might give for not volunteering and asked to indicate how important each was on a seven-point scale, where one indicates that a reason is not at all personally relevant and seven indicates that it is very important. Not having enough time is the obstacle to volunteering most frequently given strong endorsement (Figure 13). However, there is reason to surmise that by itself, not having time does not limit volunteering. For example, the amount of time that Jewish young adults reported spending in paid work or attending classes does not impact the likelihood of volunteering. Similarly, familial commitments, such as a spouse, child, or living with a partner, all of which might be expected to limit discretionary time, do not have a negative effect on volunteering.

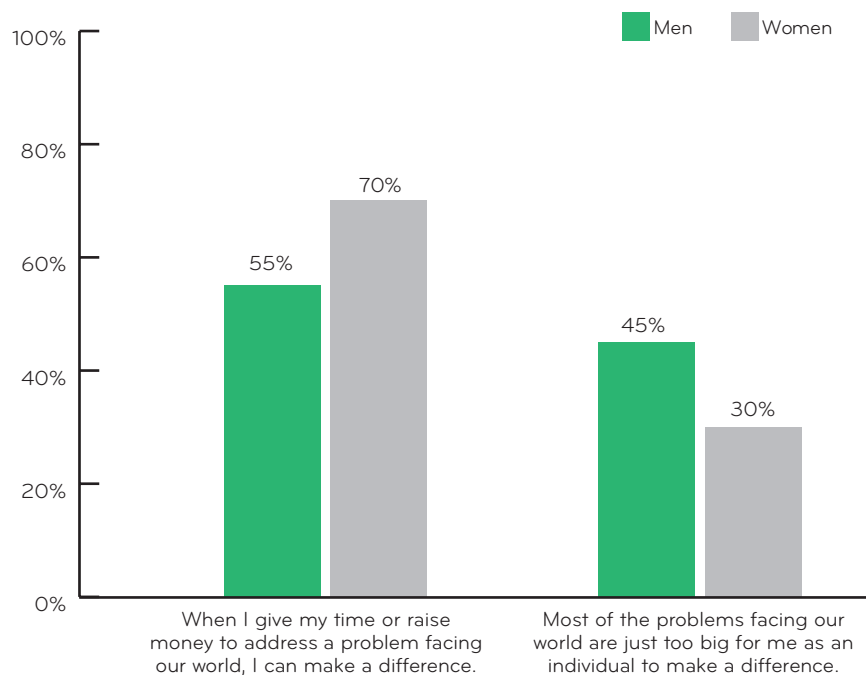
FIGURE 13: Major Reasons Limiting Volunteering

Our data suggests that time constraints may work in a variety of more nuanced ways to limit volunteering. Among survey respondents who provided additional reasons for not volunteering, one of the most commonly described problems relates to the convenience of volunteer jobs in terms of scheduling or transportation. For example, the available blocks of time in the busy schedules of many Jewish young adults often do not coincide with those desired by volunteer organizations. One survey respondent commented, "My work schedule keeps me from being able to regularly participate in some volunteer opportunities I've come across that I would otherwise be interested in," and another echoed this sentiment, saying "It's not always not having any time, but not having the right time or the same time." Not surprisingly, when asked to rate their preferences for volunteering on a four-point scale, where a rating of one indicates not at all a preference and a rating of four indicates a strong preference, the two characteristics of volunteer jobs that most frequently receive the highest ratings are geographic proximity to where respondents live and the ability to create a personal schedule (Figure 14). In fact, of those who rate time as a major reason for why they do not volunteer, 62% stated they would be "very interested" in volunteer opportunities that allow them to set their own schedule, 47% would have the same level of interest in volunteer opportunities that involve a short-time commitment, and 35% would be interested in a one-time only commitment. The pragmatic concerns of getting to and from a volunteer job also appear to be intertwined with viewing time as a limiting factor. Most (60%) Jewish young adults in our sample report that they are already spending three or more hours each week commuting, with 28% spending at least ten hours in travel time. Of those who rank time as major reason not to volunteer, 75% are very interested in volunteer opportunities that take place in close proximity to their home.

FIGURE 14: Preferences for Volunteering

Agency and Personal Relevance —Jewish young adult decision making about volunteering is influenced by the perceived potential to “make a difference” and by the personal relevance of the cause. At the most basic level, Jewish young adults need to feel a sense of personal efficacy, meaning the belief that their actions can produce desired results (Bandura, 2000). Among survey respondents who gave additional reasons for volunteering, the most commonly described (cited by 39%) is the desire to do something that is personally fulfilling and helps them feel they can make a meaningful difference. For example, one respondent commented, “I love knowing that just a few hours out of my day could mean the world to someone.” Another wrote, “Volunteering gives you a sense of purpose and selflessness.” Unfortunately, as previously noted, most Jewish young adults do not find their volunteer work to be highly personally meaningful.

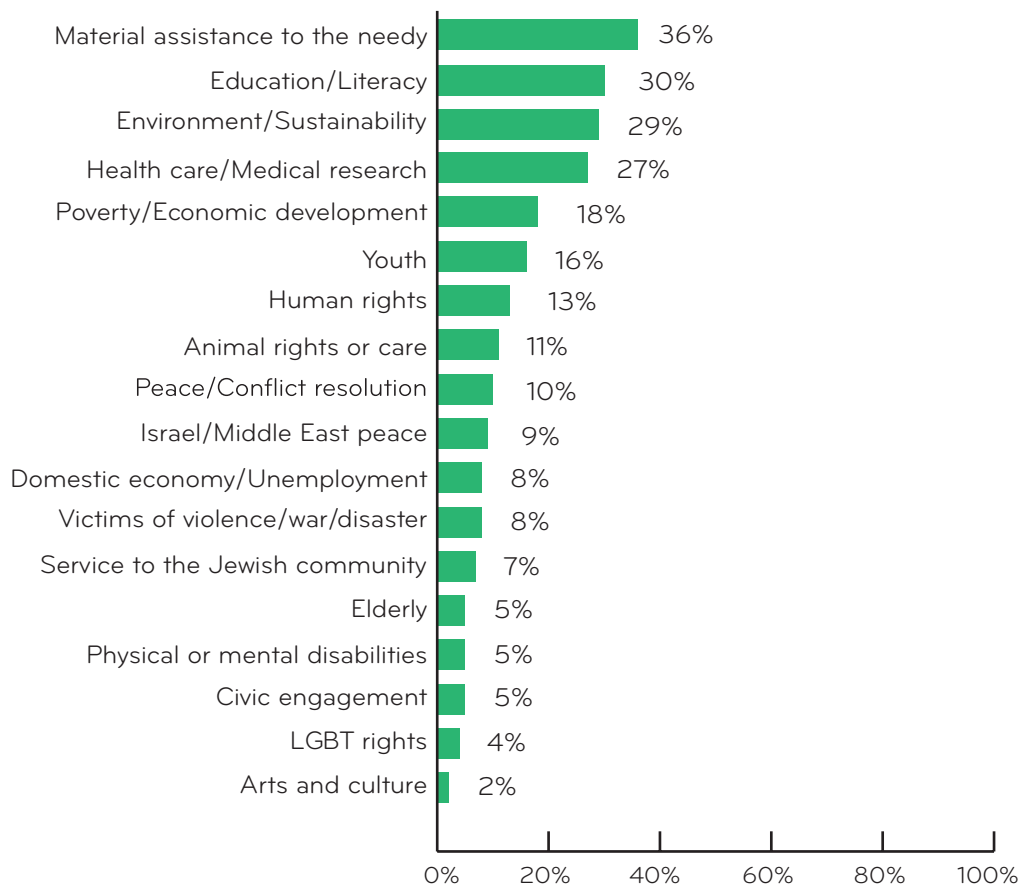
When asked which of a set of paired statements is closest to their own beliefs, most survey respondents (63%) agree that their volunteer or philanthropic efforts can make a difference as compared with 37% who select the statement “Most of the problems facing our world are just too big for me as an individual to make a difference.” However, men as compared with women are significantly less likely to endorse the former statement (Figure 15). In a very similar pattern of results, those who did volunteer in the preceding 12 months are 33% more likely to endorse the statement reflecting a sense of personal efficacy than those who did not volunteer in that time period. The lower volunteer engagement of some Jewish young adults may be due to their limited sense of agency and, in a circular path of causation, not volunteering may prevent them from having the exact types of experiences that would build confidence in their ability to make a difference.

FIGURE 15: Sense of Efficacy and Gender

*Note: Estimated proportions
 $p < .001$

The personal relevance of the causes for which Jewish young adults are asked to volunteer also appears to play a role in their decision making. Approximately one-fifth of survey respondents indicate that reasons for not volunteering that are related to issue relevance, such as “the issues being addressed are not important to me” or “the kinds of work being done are not interesting or important to me” are major deterrents for them. Men, as compared with women, are also more likely to indicate that these are major reasons for not volunteering. Perhaps surprisingly, Jewish young adults who volunteer on a regular basis express significantly greater concern over the issues and types of work available to them as compared with occasional volunteers. One explanation is that regular volunteers are more aware of the landscape of opportunities and the options that are lacking for them.

To further explore the role of issue relevance, survey respondents were asked to list as many as three causes about which they care deeply and for which they would be willing to volunteer (Figure 16). In light of the actual volunteer pursuits of these Jewish young adults, it is not surprising to find that causes such as helping those facing economic hardship, education, and healthcare are among the most commonly mentioned. More illuminating are the substantial portions who feel strongly about environmental issues, human rights, and peace and conflict resolution.

FIGURE 16: Issues that Animate Young Adults

We also examined the role that political ideology plays in determining which issues are most important to Jewish young adults. Most respondents to the current survey (61%) describe their political identity as Liberal/Progressive, 25% identify as Moderate, and 13% as Conservative. The most prominent finding is the high degree of convergence on the issues that are most important to Jewish young adults across political ideologies. For example, assistance to the domestic poor, the environment, education, and health-related issues are in the top five most nominated causes regardless of political stance (Table 3).

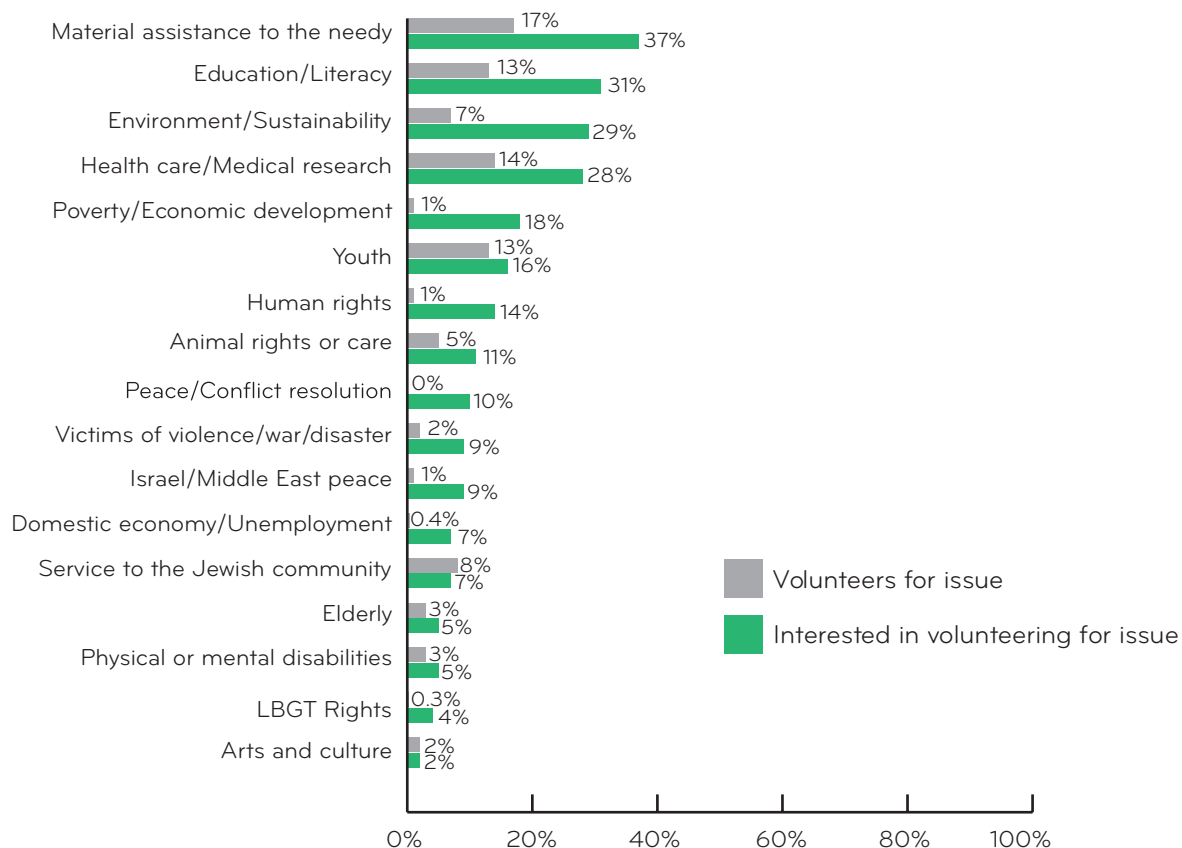
TABLE 3: Issues of Concern by Political Ideology*

	Total	Conservative	Moderate	Liberal / Progressive
Material assistance to the needy	36%	37%	35%	38%
Education/Literacy	30%	17%	22%	36%
Environmental/Sustainability	29%	16%	39%	25%
Health care/Medical research	27%	33%	26%	27%
Poverty/Economic development	18%	12%	13%	21%
Youth	16%	14%	18%	16%
Human rights	13%	3%	17%	14%
Animal rights or care	11%	8%	9%	13%
Peace/Conflict resolution	10%	12%	11%	10%
Israel/Middle East peace	9%	14%	11%	5%
Service to the Jewish community	7%	17%	10%	2%

*NOTE: Bolded numbers are the top five concerns for the respective group

A more relevant barrier to volunteering is that many Jewish young adults do not seem to be able to find volunteer work related to the causes about which they care most deeply. Among respondents who volunteer, less than half (46%) are involved in primary volunteer work related to a cause that they mention as one of the three issues about which they care most deeply and for which they would most like to work. For example, among those who volunteer, almost one-third (29%) of Jewish young adults indicate strong concern about environmental issues such as green energy, recycling, and sustainability, but this comprises the primary volunteer activity of only 7% (Figure 17). Causes such as promoting human rights and peace also seem to animate more Jewish young adults than the very small portions that are actually doing related primary volunteer work. It is possible that volunteer options related to the full spectrum of Jewish young adult concerns are not available or that these volunteer opportunities exist but are not well known among this demographic.

FIGURE 17: Issues of Concern and Primary Volunteer Work



*Total interest in each issue is slightly different from the totals in Figure 16 because respondents with missing data for the issues they volunteered for were excluded from Figure 17

The current data suggest that Jewish young adult decision making about volunteering may be influenced by an interrelated set of beliefs about their own sense of agency to effect change coupled with the personal relevance of causes for which they might volunteer. The majority of those responding to our survey appear to have a strong sense of personal efficacy, but those subgroups that are least likely to volunteer also have the weakest belief that their volunteer and philanthropic efforts can contribute to desired effects. At the same time, many Jewish young adults do not find their way into volunteer opportunities related to the causes about which they care most deeply.

Social Network Factors—The current survey suggests that the social aspects of volunteering are also important to Jewish young adults. Young adults surround themselves with similar peers and, for the most part, explore activities as part of this group. As previously noted, Jewish young are frequently recruited into service activities through their social network of friends and family. Almost half of survey respondents (48%) also indicate a strong preference for volunteer opportunities that allow them to work with friends, and almost as many (41%) have an equally strong preference for working as part of a team. In other words, Jewish young adults are drawn to volunteer activities that allow them to interact with, and potentially expand, their network of social connections.

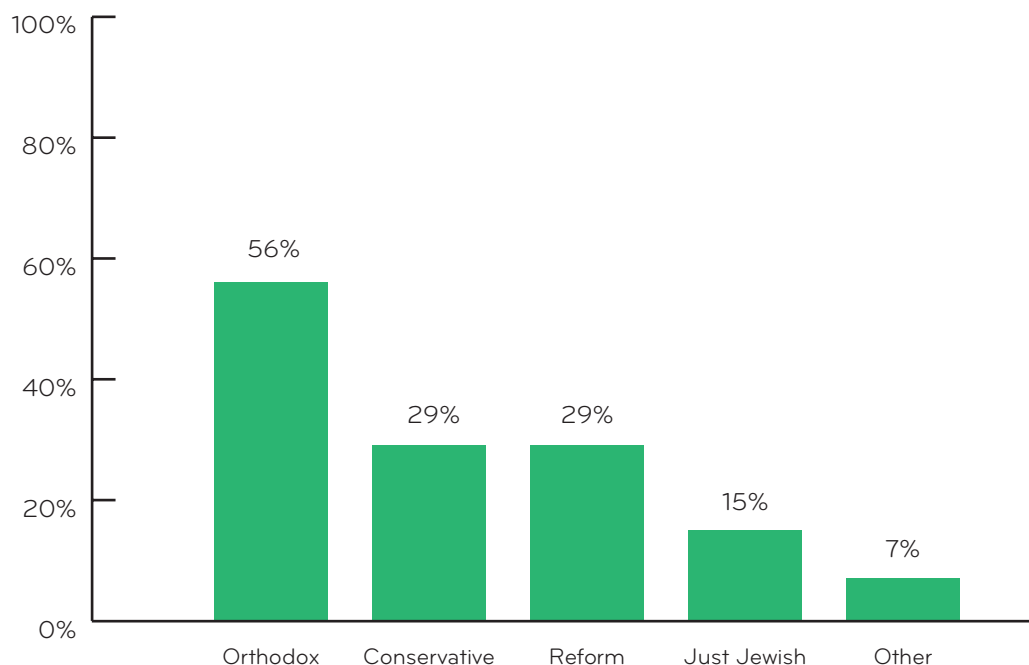
Achieving the goal of making volunteer service an integral part of the lives of Jewish young adults will require addressing the limitations and preferences described above. Some relate to the logistics of finding volunteer work that is geographically accessible and accommodating of the busy schedules of young adults. There is also a tension between providing short-term, local, and flexible options and the need for volunteer opportunities that increase Jewish young adults' sense of agency and relate to their core concerns. Finally, recognizing the critical role that the peer group has in promoting and supporting volunteer activity is central for informing strategies to increase volunteering among Jewish young adults.

VOLUNTEERING UNDER JEWISH AUSPICES

Jewish communal professionals note that although many Jewish young adults engage in civic activity, it is usually not under the sponsorship of Jewish organizations (Schwartz, 2000). This section considers the extent of Jewish young adult involvement in volunteering under the auspices of Jewish communal organizations or synagogues, and the characteristics and pathways that lead to this form of service work.

One-tenth (10%) of survey respondents indicate that their primary volunteer work is under Jewish auspices. Across all survey respondents, 22% indicate that at least some of their volunteer activity during the preceding 12 months was organized by a Jewish not-for-profit organization or synagogue. Those who identify with the Orthodox movement volunteer at higher rates with Jewish organizations as compared with young adults with other denominational and Jewish identities (Figure 18). Focusing on young adults with comparable levels of education (Bachelor's degree or higher), the proportion of survey respondents working through Jewish organizations in the current survey is very similar to national figures on volunteers working with religious organizations (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009). However, 26% of volunteers nationwide, as compared with 14% of similarly educated Jewish young adult volunteers, engage in their primary volunteer work through a religious organization.

FIGURE 18: Volunteering under Jewish Auspices by Denomination / Identity



Factors Associated with Volunteering Under Jewish Auspices

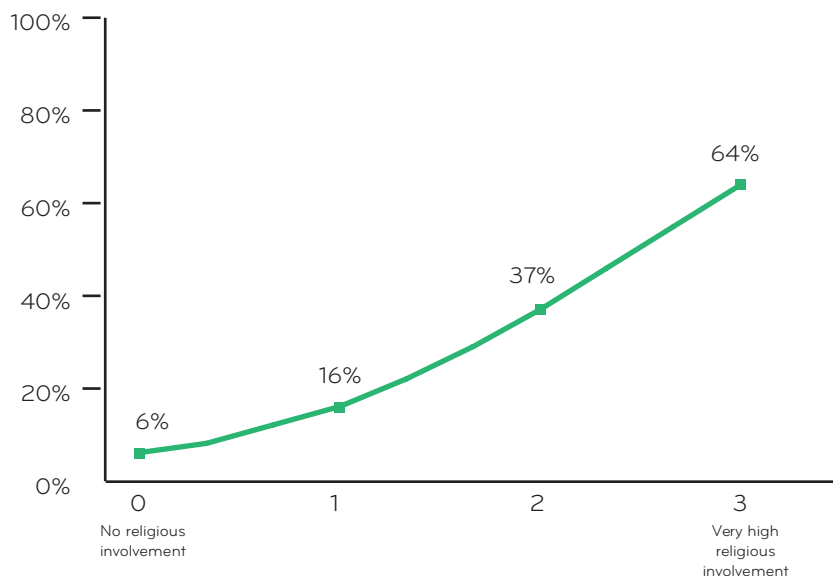
Understanding the characteristics of those who volunteer under the auspices of Jewish organizations was accomplished in two ways. The first approach examines the factors associated with devoting at least some portion of volunteer work to a Jewish organization. The second approach investigates the factors associated with engaging in primary volunteer work under the umbrella of Jewish organizations. Three variables were associated with both types of volunteering: current level of Jewish religious involvement, hours of Jewish education, and relationship status. A fourth factor, having a history of working at a Jewish summer camp, was associated with overall volunteering but not primary volunteering under Jewish auspices (Table 4).

TABLE 4: Factors Associated with Volunteering Under Jewish Auspices

FACTOR	ANY VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY	PRIMARY VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY
Current Jewish Religious Involvement	✓	✓
Hours of Jewish Education	✓	✓
Relationship Status	✓	✓
Jewish Camp Work	✓	

Current Jewish Religious Involvement—Jewish religious involvement is the strongest predictor of volunteering through a Jewish organization. Survey respondents with only minimal or no involvement in Jewish religious life have a very small (6%) probability of volunteering with Jewish organizations. This compares to those with the highest levels of Jewish involvement who have a 64% probability of this type of volunteer engagement (Figure 19).

FIGURE 19: Probability of Volunteering under Jewish Auspices by Current Jewish Religious Involvement



*Note: Estimated proportions
p<.001

There are several reasons that may account for the relationship between religious involvement and volunteering under Jewish auspices. On a practical level, volunteer options through Jewish organizations may be particularly important to Jewish young adults who want to be assured that their civic efforts will not violate observance of dietary laws or Shabbat (Chertok & Samuel, 2008). As compared with survey respondents who have little to no Jewish involvement, there is also support in the current data for the idea that those who are actively involved in Jewish life engage in volunteer action to express their commitment to the Jewish community. For example, as Jewish religious involvement increases from no involvement to the highest involvement, the percentage of respondents who find a statement about the importance of contributing time to strengthen the Jewish community "very convincing" also rises from 11% to 50%. The proportion that finds a statement about the preference to do service that primarily helps other Jews to be at least somewhat convincing also rises from 7% to 32% as Jewish religious involvement increases.

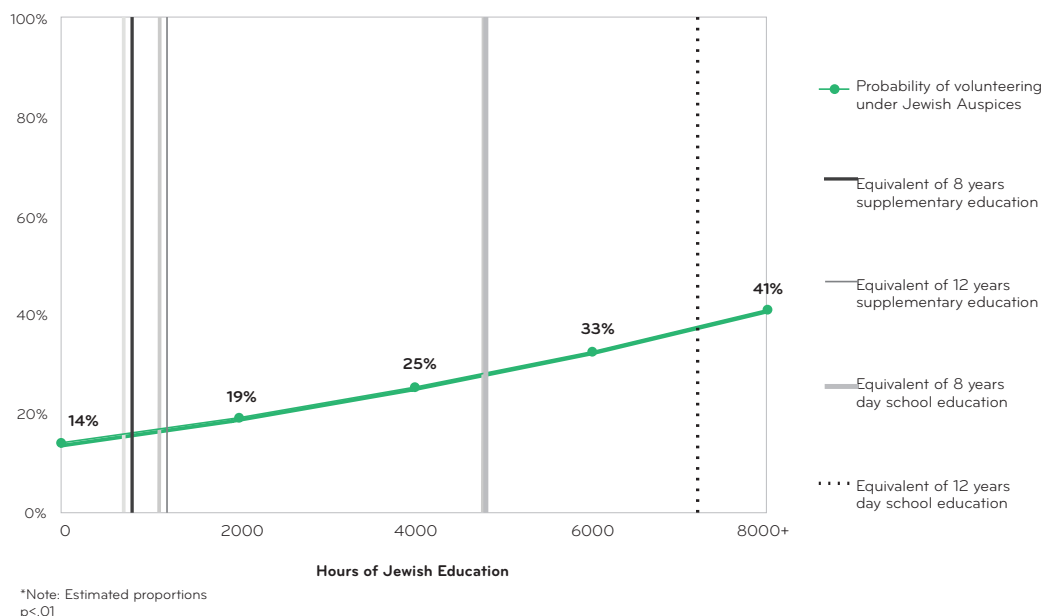
Previous research also suggests that Jewish young adults with higher levels of religious involvement are likely to spend more time and be more comfortable in Jewish settings and have predominantly Jewish social networks (Sales & Saxe, 2006). For all of these reasons, religiously active Jewish young adults can be expected to have a strong sense of commitment to the Jewish communal enterprise, greater knowledge of volunteer opportunities through these organizations, and a similarly involved network of friends with whom to participate.

Jewish Education—Survey respondents were asked about the number of years they engaged in day school and supplementary forms of Jewish education.¹ One year of supplementary school was estimated to equal 100 hours of instruction and one year of day school to equal 600 hours of Jewish education. Using this formula, Jewish education appears to be associated with volunteering under Jewish auspices even when controlling for current level of Jewish religious involvement (Figure 20). Survey respondents with hours of Jewish education equivalent to twelve years of day school are more than twice as likely as those with no hours of Jewish education to engage in volunteer work with a Jewish organization. Previous research indicates that day school alumni express a greater commitment to the Jewish community combined with an enhanced sense of responsibility toward addressing the needs of the larger society (Chertok et al., 2007). College-aged day school alumni are also over-represented in immersive service learning programs sponsored by Jewish organizations (Chertok & Samuel, 2008).

Relationship Status—Jewish young adults in committed relationships, including those who are engaged, married, or living with a romantic partner are less likely to volunteer with Jewish organizations compared to those who are unattached. Survey respondents in long-term relationships have a 8% probability of volunteering with a Jewish organization compared to 21% for those not in established relationships. Previous research suggests that Jewish young adults seek out interest-based social opportunities, such as volunteering, where the development of personal connections, especially with potential romantic partners, is an organic outgrowth of sharing time and activities together (Chertok, Sasson, & Saxe, 2009).

¹ Average hours of Jewish education were calculated based on an analysis of supplementary schools in the Greater Boston area in the 2008-09 school years (retrieved November 8, 2010, from <https://www.jdata.com/>). One year of supplementary school was estimated to equal 100 hours of instruction and one year of day school to equal to 600 hours of Jewish education. These estimates are lower than those of Himmelfarb (1984), but were deemed more accurately representative of Jewish supplementary education in the 1980s and 1990s, when respondents would have been in grades 1-12.

FIGURE 20: Probability of Volunteering under Jewish Auspices by Jewish Education



Jewish Camp Work—A history of working at a Jewish overnight camp significantly increases the likelihood of volunteering under Jewish auspices but is not a predictor of the organizer of primary volunteer work. Survey respondents who previously worked at a Jewish camp have a 27% probability of volunteering with a Jewish organization compared to a 15% probability for those who did not have this background. Research on Jewish summer camp staff indicates that they differ from their peers in several ways that may be important to their later volunteer careers. For example, Jewish camp staff members tend to have stronger connections to the Jewish people, denser Jewish social networks, and more attachment to their local Jewish community than those who do not work in these settings (Sales et al., 2011). In other words, survey respondents who worked at Jewish summer camps have stronger Jewish backgrounds and social networks and may continue to seek out opportunities to engage with the Jewish community into their young adult years, even when they are not religiously involved.

A portion of Jewish young adults in the current survey have found their way into volunteering through the Jewish community. However, this form of volunteering is predicted by a trajectory of Jewish education and involvement, starting in childhood and extending into the present. This is exactly the Jewish educational and experiential background that research suggests most non-Orthodox Jewish young adults do not possess (Chertok, Phillips, & Saxe, 2008).

Factors that Limit Volunteering Under Jewish Auspices

Most survey respondents do not participate in a volunteer activity under Jewish auspices, and only 18% say that they prefer to volunteer with Jewish organizations or synagogues over other non-profit organizations. To the vast majority of Jewish young adults (78%), it does not matter at all if the organization with whom they are engaged in service is Jewish or non-Jewish (Figure 21). In other words, most Jewish young adults do not have an aversion to Jewish volunteer options and instead appear at least open to the idea of volunteering through Jewish organizations; yet only a minority engages in this type of volunteer work. This section of the report considers the factors that may dissuade Jewish young adults from volunteering under Jewish auspices.

As previously noted, there may be fundamental differences in the perspectives and goals of different sub-groups of survey respondents that help explain why they do or do not find their way into Jewish volunteering venues. Jewish young adults who volunteer through Jewish organizations are more likely to be involved in ongoing religious life. In addition, among the small portion (18%) of survey respondents who express a clear preference for volunteering under Jewish auspices, differences based on denominational identity are also observed (Figure 22). Over three-quarters (77%) of survey respondents identifying as Orthodox express a preference for volunteering with Jewish organizations. A significantly smaller portion of young adults from a variety of non-Orthodox identities share this preference.

FIGURE 21: Preference for Organizational Sponsorship of Volunteer Work

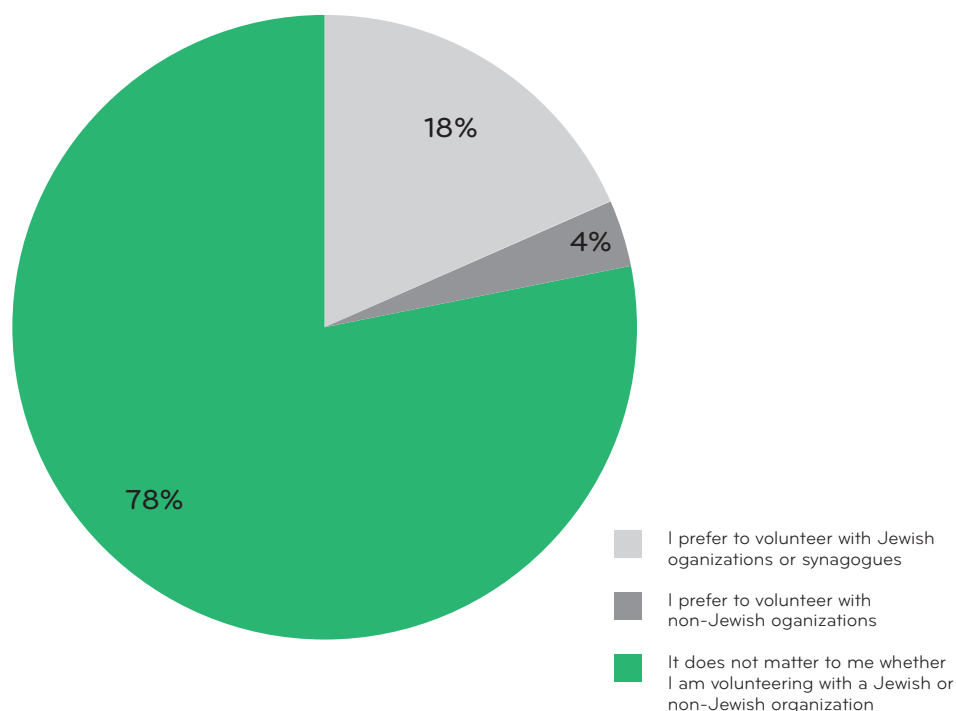
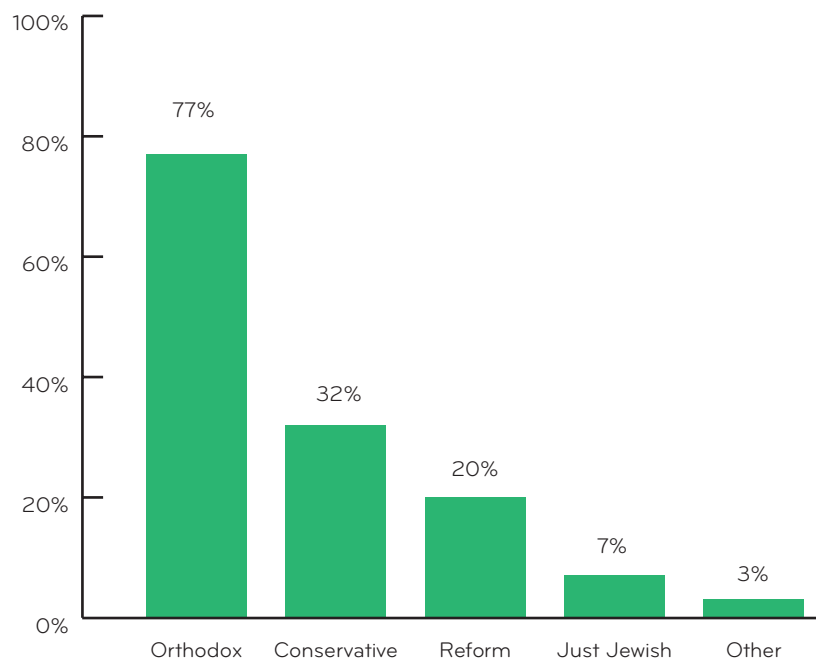


FIGURE 22: Preferences for Volunteering under Jewish Auspices by Denomination/Identity



For Jewish young adults with strong religious involvement and/or Orthodox identity, volunteering through Jewish organizations may represent the ideal pathway to fulfilling their goal of helping their own community. When asked to choose which of a paired set of statements came closer to their own point of view, survey respondents who identify as Orthodox are more likely to endorse the idea that their volunteer work should primarily help other Jews. By comparison non-Orthodox survey respondents overwhelmingly endorse the statement “it is not important to me whether my service is helping Jews or helping non-Jews” (Table 5). More than half (53%) of survey respondents whose primary volunteer commitment is through a Jewish organization indicate that indeed, their volunteer work serves only Jews.

TABLE 5: Preference for Recipient of Volunteer Help by Denomination/Identity

		Overall	Orthodox	Conservative	Reform	Just Jewish
STATEMENT #1 When thinking about volunteering, I prefer to do service that primarily helps other Jews.	Agree Strongly	4%	31%	6%	3%	3%
	Agree Somewhat	12%	31%	17%	16%	7%
	Total Agree	16%	62%	23%	19%	10%
STATEMENT #2 When thinking about volunteering, it is not important to me whether my service is helping Jews or helping non-Jews	Agree Strongly	63%	14%	43%	64%	68%
	Agree Somewhat	21%	24%	34%	17%	22%
	Total Agree	84%	38%	77%	81%	90%

Volunteering under Jewish auspices, to help other Jews is a good fit for a relatively small portion of Jewish young adults but not for most. To further explore the factors that deter the majority of Jewish young adults from volunteering with Jewish organizations, respondents were asked to rate a variety of potential obstacles on a seven-point scale, where one indicates that a reason is not at all personally relevant and seven indicates that it is very important. Among non-Orthodox respondents the reason that receives the highest average rating is lack of familiarity with the volunteer opportunities available through the Jewish community (Figure 23). A substantial number of respondents (23%) indicate that this is a major reason why they do not volunteer with Jewish organizations.

Jewish young adults who do not volunteer with Jewish organizations are significantly more likely to indicate that they are unaware of Jewish volunteer opportunities compared to those who do volunteer under Jewish auspices (Figure 24). As stated earlier, only a small portion (6%) of Jewish young adults indicate that they were recruited for their primary volunteer work through Jewish organizations on campus or in the community such as Hillel, Taglit-Birthright Israel, or synagogues. A related theme is the perceived lack of local Jewish volunteer options. Among survey respondents who chose to write in additional reasons for not volunteering with Jewish organizations, this is the most frequently described obstacle, cited by 24%.

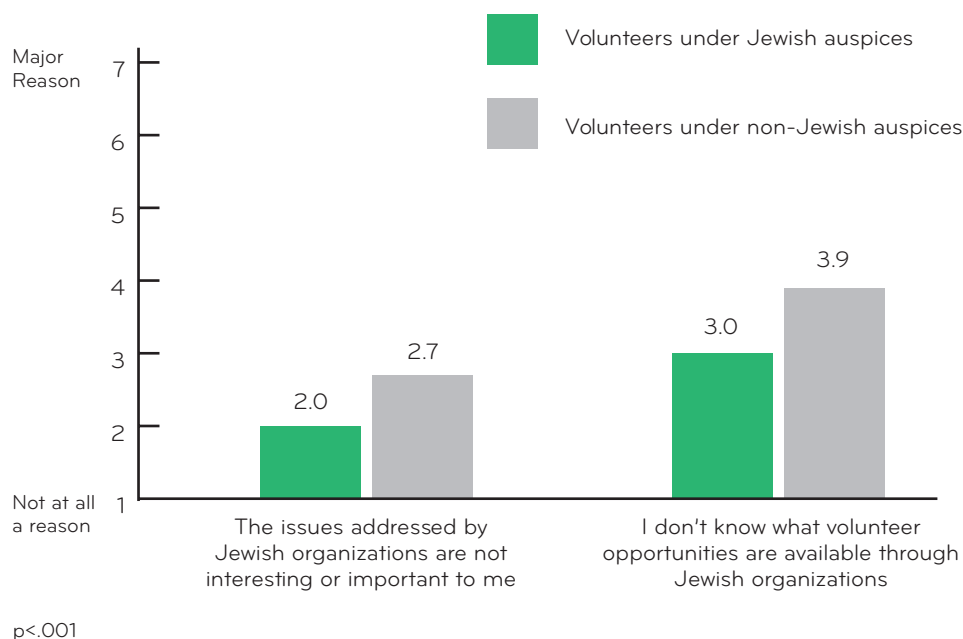
FIGURE 23: Reasons for Not Volunteering under Jewish Auspices among Non-Orthodox—Mean Ratings



Survey respondents who do not volunteer under Jewish auspices may also hold perceptions about the nature and scope of work done by Jewish organizations that make these options less attractive. As previously noted many Jewish young adults, especially those least likely to volunteer through Jewish organizations, do not want to limit their helping efforts to other Jews or the Jewish community. Instead, they want to meet more universal needs and bring about positive change for the larger societal issues about which they care deeply. Many do not perceive Jewish volunteer options as addressing these concerns. Compared to survey respondents who volunteer through the Jewish community, those who do not more strongly endorse the idea that the issues addressed by Jewish organizations are neither interesting nor important to them.

The current survey suggests that there is, indeed, cause for concern about the narrow scope of volunteer opportunities available under Jewish auspices. Almost half (48%) of survey respondents whose primary volunteer work is through a Jewish organization describe their work as benefiting the Jewish community or Israel. By contrast, only small portions of survey respondents indicate that issues related to Israel and the Middle East (9%) or the Jewish community (7%), are their paramount concerns. When survey respondents without a preference for Jewish or non-Jewish sponsorship are asked what might be done to increase their interest in Jewish volunteer options, the most frequently mentioned idea, cited by 41% is to provide opportunities that more closely align with their core concerns. As one Jewish young adult commented "Rarely are my volunteer activities—the causes I feel most strongly about—run through Jewish organizations."

FIGURE 24: Reasons for Not Volunteering under Jewish Auspices by Organization Sponsor of Volunteer Work – Mean Ratings



Jewish young adults appear to fall into two distinct “camps” when it comes to volunteering under Jewish auspices. The small portion that prefer to or actually do volunteer with Jewish organizations, cite their Jewish identity and their desire to support their own people and community as reasons for this type of volunteering. By contrast, among the vast majority of Jewish young adults who say it does not matter if they volunteer with a Jewish or non-Jewish organization, the reasons they give for choosing any volunteer option center on whether the activity involves a cause or issue that is personally meaningful to them.

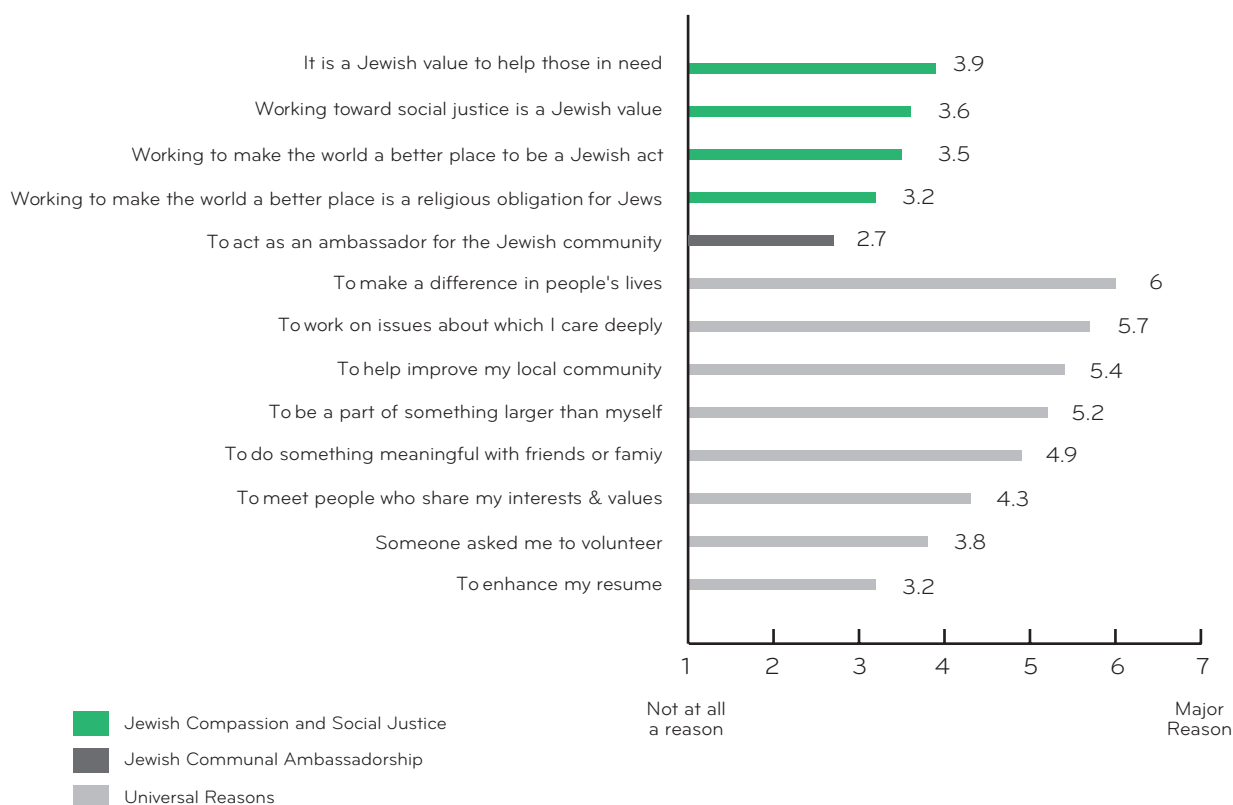
Even when Jewish young adults are open to Jewish volunteering, they simply do not know what opportunities exist. Few recall recruitment efforts by Jewish organizations, and their diverse social networks are more likely to lead them to discover opportunities outside the Jewish community. The reality is that there are a tremendous number of non-Jewish alternatives competing for the volunteer time of Jewish young adults. Perhaps a more troubling barrier is the perception that Jewish organizations do not address the causes that most resonate with Jewish young adults and that the organizational foci are too parochial and narrow, serving only the needs of the Jewish community. Today’s Jewish young adults have grown up amidst and are at home with ethnic and religious diversity (Eck, 2001). As a result, most are concerned for all victims of poverty or injustice, not just those who are Jewish. It appears that they do not believe that Jewish organizations share this concern for universal causes.

VOLUNTEERING THROUGH A JEWISH PERSPECTIVE

Although Jewish young adults are motivated by values of justice and compassion, they may not recognize the long history or imperative for service in the Jewish tradition. A national study of the spiritual lives of teens found that most adolescents are at a loss to define the ethical implications of their religious identity, regardless of the tradition in which they were raised (Smith & Denton, 2005). This section of the report examines the extent to which Jewish young adults see their volunteer work, regardless of its sponsorship or focus, through a Jewish "lens."

Survey results indicate that Jewish values comprise part of Jewish young adults' motivation for volunteering, but play only a secondary role for most (Figure 25). The distinction made by survey respondents between similar Jewish and universal values is particularly striking. For example, Jewish young adults give the highest ratings to the value of making a difference in the lives of others but indicate much weaker endorsement of the potentially related motivation that helping those in need is a Jewish value.

FIGURE 25: Jewish and Universal Reasons for Volunteering – Mean Ratings



The clearest evidence of the divide between Jewish identity and volunteering appears when survey respondents were asked to choose which of a paired set of statements came closer to their own point of view about the value proposition that underlies their volunteering (Table 6). Overall, only 27% agree that they consider their volunteer actions to be based on Jewish values and only 10% strongly endorse this statement. Again, very different reactions are observed based on denominational identity. Most Jewish young adults who identify as Conservative, Reform, or Just Jewish agree that they do not consider their volunteer work to be an action based on Jewish values. In other words, most Jewish young adults view service as independent of their Jewish identity. In sharp contrast, two-thirds (66%) of Jewish young adults who identify as Orthodox view volunteering as closely interlinked with their Jewish values.

TABLE 6: Volunteering as an Action Based on Jewish Values

Which statement comes closer to your own point of view?		Overall	Orthodox	Conservative	Reform	Just Jewish
STATEMENT #1 When I take action to make the world a better place, I usually consider it an action based on Jewish values.	Agree Strongly	10%	45%	15%	8%	7%
	Agree Somewhat	17%	21%	25%	24%	11%
	Total Agree	27%	66%	40%	32%	18%
STATEMENT #2 When I take action to make the world a better place, I do not usually consider it an action based on Jewish values.	Agree Strongly	44%	9%	32%	35%	52%
	Agree Somewhat	29%	25%	28%	33%	30%
	Total Agree	73%	34%	60%	68%	82%

Factors Associated with a Jewish Lens on Volunteering

What leads some Jewish young adults to conceive of their volunteering and Jewish values as part of the same whole cloth while most fail to see the connection? To explore this question the current survey asked about a variety of Jewish motivations for volunteering, including compassionate help for the needy (*Chesed*), working toward social justice (*Tzedak*), fulfilling religious obligations (*Mitzvot*), repairing the world (*Tikkun Olam*), and representing Jewish tradition in a positive light to the larger society. Factor analysis of survey responses to these five motivations indicates that four of them are closely interrelated ($\alpha=.94$) forming what we call the Jewish perspective of "Compassion and Social Justice" (Table 7). Scores on the Compassion and Social Justice perspective were calculated using the average of ratings of the four constituent items. A second perspective, that we call "Communal Ambassadorship" relates to the desire to represent the best aspects of the Jewish community to the larger society and contains one item.

TABLE 7: Jewish Perspectives on Volunteering

JEWISH PERSPECTIVE	SURVEY ITEM
Compassion and Social Justice	Because I consider working to make the world a better place to be a Jewish act
	Because I believe that working toward social justice is a Jewish value
	Because I believe it is a Jewish value to help those in need
	Because working to make the world a better place is a religious obligation for Jews.
Communal Ambassadorship	To act as an ambassador for the Jewish community

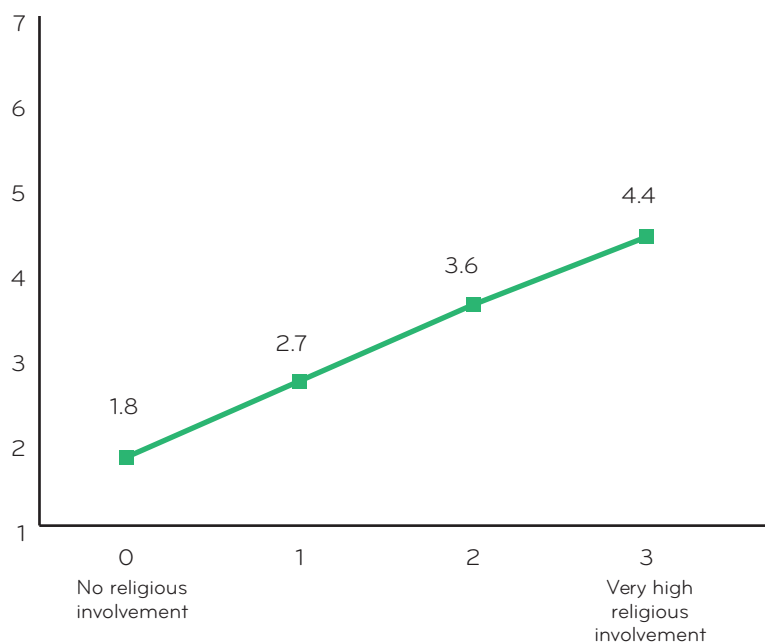
Communal Ambassadorship Perspective – Just a very small portion (10%) of Jewish young adults strongly endorse serving as an ambassador for the Jewish people as a reason for volunteering. Those who hold this Jewish perspective on volunteering are more likely to have high levels of current Jewish religious involvement (Figure 26). Requisite to seeing oneself as a representative of a community is feeling like a member of the communal enterprise. As previously noted, Jewish young adults with strong involvement are also more likely to have ongoing connections with religious and other communal institutions that predispose them to seeing their actions as representing the Jewish community.

The Communal Ambassadorship perspective also decreases as respondents get older, with the most dramatic decrease occurring immediately after the college years. Declining adherence to the Communal Ambassadorship perspective with age may reflect the finding reported elsewhere (Chertok, Sasson, & Saxe, 2009) that in the years between college and affiliation with a synagogue, Jewish young adults are often disengaged from communal life.

Compassion and Social Justice Perspective – One-third (35%) of Jewish young adults strongly endorse at least one of the four items that comprise the Compassion and Social Justice scale. However, the overall mean for this scale is 3.5 indicating that this perspective is not strongly held by most Jewish young adults. Analyses indicate that a perspective on service grounded in Jewish values of social justice and compassion is associated with four variables: current Jewish religious involvement, common good motivations, political ideology, and parental intermarriage (a negative predictor).

Current Jewish Religious Involvement—Not surprisingly, current Jewish religious involvement has the largest effect on a Jewish perspective of social justice and compassionate helping (Figure 27). Survey respondents with high levels of engagement in Jewish religious life may have cast many aspects of their lives, including their volunteer work, within a Jewish framework. In addition, the involvement of these Jewish young adults in both worship and text study suggests that they have repeated exposure to the religious underpinnings of this perspective. By contrast, those who do not regularly engage in Jewish religious life may be less familiar with the foundations for service in Jewish text and tradition and there-

FIGURE 26: Communal Ambassadorship Perspective by Current Jewish Religious Involvement – Mean Ratings

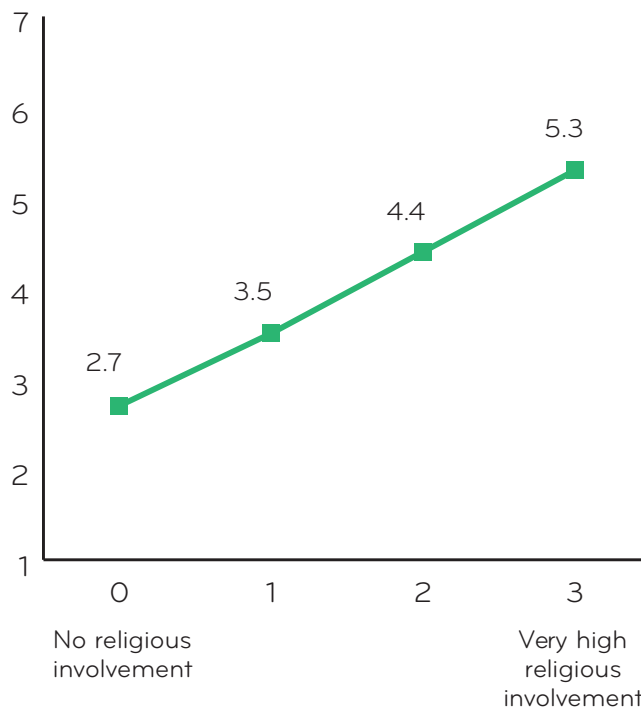


*Note: Estimated probabilities
 $p < .001$

fore less likely to claim these as motivations for their volunteer work. Research on Jewish service learning programs finds that participants with weaker Jewish backgrounds are often surprised to find that Jewish thought is directly relevant to their social justice concerns. For these non-observant young adults, one of the central consequences of their involvement in a Jewish service program is the realization that they can validly claim a Jewish basis for their commitment to helping those in need and addressing social inequalities (Chertok, Samuel, & Tobias, 2009).

Common Good Motivations—Jewish young adults who indicate greater importance of motivations for service related to serving the common good are also more likely to endorse the related Jewish values of compassion and social justice albeit less strongly.

FIGURE 27: Compassion and Social Justice Perspective by Current Jewish Religious Involvement – Mean Ratings



*Note: Estimated probabilities
 $p < .001$

Political Ideology—In the current survey Jewish young adults who describe their political position as Conservative or Moderate, as opposed to those who subscribe to the labels of Progressive or Liberal, more strongly adhere to the Jewish perspective of Compassion and Social Justice. At first glance this finding may seem unlikely given the historical connection between progressive movements and social justice causes. However, it may be that young adults who identify themselves as Progressive or Liberal are rejecting the notion that there is anything distinctively Jewish about the desire to help others or work toward social change.

Parental Inter-marriage—Children of intermarriage are significantly less likely than young adults with two Jewish parents to have a strong Jewish Compassion and Social Justice perspective on service, even when controlling for overall levels of Jewish involvement. It is possible that the same factors that make young adults raised in intermarried homes more likely to volunteer also limit the extent to which they ascribe their behavior to Jewish motivations. For example, familial connections to non-Jewish faith communities expand their sphere of obligation but also make them more aware of the promotion of values of compassion and social justice in other religious traditions and even less likely than peers raised in in-married homes to see these ideals as the exclusive province of Judaism.

Jewish young adults clearly subscribe to values of compassion and social justice that have a long history in Jewish tradition but most do not see a connection between these concerns and Judaism or their Jewish identity. Whether or not Jewish young adults see connections between Jewish identity and volunteer-

ing seems closely related to the overall integration and prominence of their Jewish identity amidst other aspects of their conception of self. At one end of the spectrum are Jewish young adults for whom the Jewish component of their identity stands front and center in everything they do. Previous research on identity suggests that among this group their Jewish identification is prioritized in terms of the frequency with which it comes into play and the degree to which it is personally salient (Deaux, 1996). These Jewish young adults tend to see all of their activities, including volunteering, through a Jewish lens. For Jewish young adults at the other end of the spectrum, however, volunteering is an activity partitioned off from their Jewish identity in much the same way that their Jewish identity is separate from many other aspects of their lives. They do not completely disavow Jewish values of caring and social justice but do not see them as very relevant to their volunteer commitments.

DEVELOPING FRAMING MESSAGES

Efforts to mobilize social consciousness and encourage collective action can be bolstered by the use of messages that provide an appealing and motivating framework. In the service of promoting volunteering, messages can be useful in at least two ways. For those Jewish young adults who are already involved in regular volunteering and those who have a well-developed Jewish perspective on service, messages can affirm that these activities reflect Jewish values. This is an important function and not to be overlooked. For Jewish young adults who do not volunteer or do so only sporadically and for those with a very limited Jewish perspective on service, messaging has the potential to play a very different role. These groups, which comprise the majority of Jewish young adults, require messages that attract them into regular service and toward greater salience of Jewish values in their perspectives about their volunteering.

The current survey explored a variety of potential frameworks for thinking about service by asking Jewish young adults how convincing they found four different statements (Table 8). Three of the messages invoked Jewish values and language, alternately focusing on the responsibility of Jews to respond to universal needs, to engage in Tikkun Olam or repair of the world, and to strengthen the Jewish community. One message contained no Jewish reference and focused on the universal responsibility of people to take care of one other.

TABLE 8: Messaging Frameworks

FRAMEWORK	MESSAGE
Non-Jewish—Universal Responsibility	We all have a responsibility to each other. Whether it is helping the poor to make ends meet or ensuring the right of those facing discrimination, we must all pitch in and volunteer to help those who need it.
Jewish—Universal Responsibility	Jews have a responsibility to look out for those in need. As a minority that has faced discrimination and persecution throughout history, we understand the importance of helping people during difficult times.
Jewish—Repair the World	Repairing the world—also known as Tikkun Olam—is a guiding Jewish principle. Our religion and heritage requires that we do things that promote the welfare of society as a whole.
Jewish—Strengthening Jewish Community	A strong Jewish community is important for the prosperity of all American Jews. It is very important to contribute time to volunteer activities through or for Jewish organizations and synagogues, so we can strengthen the Jewish community.

A primary lesson from this exercise is that messages that emphasize a Jewish community-centered approach to service should be avoided. Less than one-quarter (24%) of survey respondents find the idea of strengthening the Jewish community to be a very convincing basis for volunteering (Table 9). With the exception of young adults who identify as Orthodox, this message is the least likely to be strongly endorsed among all sub-groups including those with higher than average levels of Jewish religious involvement (Table 10).

TABLE 9: Response to Messaging by Frequency of Volunteer Work

% Very Convincing	Overall	Non-Volunteer	Occasional Volunteer	Regular Volunteer
Non-Jewish—Universal Responsibility	47%	40%	47%	59%
Jewish—Universal Responsibility	41%	41%	36%	47%
Jewish—Repair the World	29%	24%	28%	34%
Jewish—Strengthening Jewish Community	24%	27%	20%	25%

TABLE 10: Responses to Messaging by Current Jewish Religious Involvement and Orthodox Identity

% Very Convincing	Low Jewish Religious Involvement	High Jewish Religious Involvement	Non-Orthodox	Orthodox
Non-Jewish—Universal Responsibility	47%	49%	47%	64%
Jewish—Universal Responsibility	34%	51%	40%	53%
Jewish—Repair the World	20%	43%	27%	59%
Jewish—Strengthening Jewish Community	15%	38%	22%	58%

Not surprisingly, the idea of wrapping service in a universal context, as a mission to help everyone, is very appealing to respondents across all levels of volunteer engagement and religious involvement and across the spectrum of Jewish identities. Overall, almost half (47%) of survey respondents find a not specifically Jewish message of the universal need to help others to be very convincing. However, it is critical to note that for all but two groups there are no significant differences between framing a universal obligation of helping within a non-Jewish or Jewish context. For example, those who do not volunteer as well as occasional volunteers find both the Jewish and non-Jewish messages of universal obligation to be appealing. These are two groups that are prime targets for efforts to increase commitment to regular volunteering. However, Jewish young adults with lower than average religious involvement as well as regular volunteers are significantly less likely to find the Jewish universal message to be very convincing, as compared with the similar non-Jewish universal message. Given the interest in getting these groups to think of their service as a Jewish act, it is important to note that framing even a universal obligation in a Jewish context may diminish the effectiveness of the message and even repel these groups.

The Jewish message of universal responsibility also scores significantly higher than either of the other Jewish messages in almost every sub-group with the exception of those who identify as Orthodox and occasional volunteers. Among the latter there is no difference between response to the Jewish universal message and the framework of repairing the world. In general, there are no major differences in the responses to Jewishly framed messages of repairing the world or serving the needs of the Jewish community.

The challenge facing the emerging field of Jewish service and the Repair the World organization is to integrate volunteering into the lives of Jewish young adults and to encourage them to see this service as a Jewish act. The current survey suggests opportunities to use framing messages toward these ends. The idea of a universal Jewish responsibility to help others is convincing to a broad cross section of Jewish young adults and for many is as effective as a similar message couched in non-Jewish terms. The utility of this framing of service comes from its appeal to Jewish young adults beyond those who are already likely to see their service through a Jewish lens. By contrast, tying service to the goal of helping the Jewish community specifically is not a strong entry point. The often used concept of "repair of the world" demonstrates some resonance, although it lacks the strength of the more universal message of helping individuals in need.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

The Repair the World Survey makes clear that the majority of Jewish young adults participate in some form of volunteer work but many do so only sporadically and most do not consider their service a Jewish act. Throughout the data, Jewish young adults clearly demonstrate that they are drawn to service through universal values rather than Jewish-based values or Jewish identity. These Jewish young adults want to engage in service that is personally meaningful but do not see this goal as necessarily related to service under Jewish auspices.

Repair the World faces complex terrain as it seeks to make volunteering an integral part of the lives of Jewish young adults. The harder challenge may be how to bridge the gap between service and Jewish identity among this cohort. Although there is certainly an important role for Jewish organizations to play, and it is critical for them to do a better job of contacting Jewish young adults and connecting them to service, it is also imperative to understand that participation through Jewish organizations is unlikely to form the conduit toward volunteering for most. Repair the World needs to think beyond the universe of Jewish organizations and consider how to link Jewish young adults and volunteering through other vehicles. The current survey data provide some important clues as to how to more effectively engage Jewish young adults in service and help them see their service through the prism of Jewish tradition, values, and identity.

- **Start early to build the habit of volunteering:** Volunteering is clearly a socially learned behavior and once established as a habit it is likely to continue throughout the lifespan. Programming that encourages Jews in their formative teen years to engage in volunteering and that introduces them to a Jewish perspective on service needs to be developed and expanded. Jewish service learning that combines hands on work with reflection and study needs to be woven into both formal and informal Jewish educational programming including supplementary and day schools as well as camps and youth groups. Immersive Jewish service learning programs for teens will also need to be expanded.
- **Expand volunteer options that relate to core concerns:** Jewish young adults are most motivated to serve when they think they can make a difference in the lives of others and when they can work on issues about which they care deeply. Although Jewish young adults have a diverse set of interests, clearly some issues and causes have greater potential to attract participation than others. The top issue for which young Jewish adults want to volunteer is assisting the poor in America, with a striking 36% citing this as one of their top three concerns. The next most commonly cited issues are the environment and sustainability, education, healthcare and medical research, and the eradication of poverty. Portions of the Jewish young adult population are also interested in assisting youth, peace and conflict resolution, protecting human rights, and humane treatment of animals. For those issue areas where volunteer options are limited or non-existent, new opportunities, under both Jewish and non-Jewish auspices, will need to be developed. Where suitable volunteer opportunities already exist, they need to be better advertised to Jewish young adults. This is particularly true of existing Jewish service and social justice efforts of which young adults appear to be unaware. The bottom line is that Jewish young adults need to be able to easily find volunteer work that speaks to their most deeply held concerns.

- **Create flexible, local options for volunteering:** Time is a valued and scarce resource for Jewish young adults and all strategies must include tactical provisions that make volunteering time-friendly. Different types of service clearly call for different levels of commitment from participants. However, where feasible, emphasis should be placed on expanding volunteer opportunities that offer a flexible schedule, have options for short-term commitments and are located in the proximity of where Jewish young adults reside.
- **Recruit through existing social networks and build new ones around volunteering:** Watters (2003) coined the phrase “urban tribes” to describe the family-like role played by small groups of peers during young adulthood and suggested that these friendship circles serve as a generationally relevant “forum for giving and community building.” Recognizing the role that the peer group has in promoting volunteer activity is central for informing strategies to increase service among Jewish young adults. Special emphasis should be placed on tapping existing social circles as a method of recruitment as well as highlighting the social or team aspect of volunteer work in order to make service opportunities more attractive to potential participants. “Posse” models of volunteering that bring together groups of Jewish young adults and enable them to volunteer together over time present an exciting option for expanding the reach of volunteering. Moreover, the centrality of social media in young people’s lives speaks to the opportunity and the necessity of recruiting Jewish young adults through social networking.
- **Partner with non-Jewish organizations:** Millennial American Jews are part of the largest and most diverse generation in United States history, and their lives are intertwined with people of different backgrounds. They are drawn to volunteer work that serves all people regardless of religion and addresses issues that extend beyond Jewish communal boundaries. Repair the World should invest in building partnerships with non-Jewish organizations that are leading volunteer efforts related to the universal concerns about which Jewish young adults care deeply. Partnering with non-Jewish volunteer organizations is a tangible way to demonstrate the paired commitment of the Jewish community to both universal causes and Jewish values. For this generation, it is critical to see the field of Jewish service represented in the larger arena of volunteering and social justice work. Equally important is that these collaborations allow young adults to address their issues of concern through a Jewish portal of service and can be used to increase their understanding of Jewish perspectives on service. Partnerships can also be a vehicle for encouraging Jewish young adults to claim all their volunteer work, regardless of who it serves, as a Jewish act.
- **Leverage “low-threshold activism” and Jewish young adults’ belief that they can make a difference:** Jewish young adults are, for the most part, politically aware and most do believe their actions can make a difference. Although most are less inclined to take more active steps, such as participating in a demonstration or writing a letter-to-the-editor, their interest to do something, coupled with their belief that it has an impact, serves as an entry point to engagement. Pathways need to be developed that lead Jewish young adults from interest in an issue, toward easy actions and then on to more graduated levels of commitment. For example, initial and low-threshold actions, such as donating money and goods, might be followed by invitations to attend meetings or engage in short-term volunteering. In much the same manner, entry level or brief volunteer experiences should be followed by opportunities to engage in more in-depth volunteer work and skill development.

- **Frame volunteering as a Jewish act:** With limited Jewish background and few current connections to religious life, most contemporary Jewish young adults are simply unaware of the deep roots of social justice and helping in Jewish tradition and text. Even when they know that these values exist, Jewish young adults who identify as non-Orthodox or are not religiously involved may be uncomfortable taking on the mantle of a Jewish perspective. Efforts are needed to educate Jewish young adults of the deep connection between Jewish thought and volunteering without implying that it is an exclusively Jewish perspective or only pertains to support of the Jewish community. Jewish young adults, regardless of denomination or level of religious involvement, should be encouraged to “own” a Jewish perspective on service. Widespread efforts are needed that draw attention to and link the universal and Jewish values that Jewish young adults already hold with the causes about which they care most deeply. Similar to the dissemination of any new trend or idea, spreading a Jewish perspective on volunteering may be facilitated by peer “connectors” (Gladwell, 2000). These are individuals with connections to a broad array of social networks, both through strong ties with friends and family as well as weak ties with more casual acquaintances (Granovetter, 1983). Connectors are critical to spreading new ideas beyond the few early adopters to the diverse members of their network.
- **Build the knowledge base regarding harder to reach groups:** The Repair the World Survey has provided detailed information about the volunteer commitments and motivations of Jewish young adults. However, important questions remain about how best to draw certain subgroups into volunteering and how to encourage them to see this activity through a Jewish lens. These groups include, but are not limited to men, those who grew up in intermarried homes, and Jewish young adults with the most limited Jewish involvement. Additional research to explore the unique concerns and needs of these groups is necessary if Repair is to spread a commitment to volunteering throughout this generation of Jewish young adults.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

In a speech honoring the 20th anniversary of the Points of Light Institute, President Obama equated volunteer service with American identity telling his Texas A & M University audience the following:

In the end, service binds us to each other—and to our communities and our country—in a way that nothing else can. ...That's what it means to be American. (The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, 2009)

In a similar vein, the mission of Repair the World is to make service a defining element of Jewish life, especially among young adults. Substituting the word "Jewish" for "American" in the preceding quote captures the potential of Jewish young adult volunteering to address pressing social issues domestically and abroad and bring Jewish identity and values into the forefront of efforts to serve the common good.

The Jewish imperative for caring for those in need and working toward social justice has been well articulated (Jacobs, 2009). Jewish young adults believe they can make the world a better place, and they want to. This is perhaps Repair the World's greatest asset. Yet many do not find their way into sustained volunteer commitments and for now, most do not view their volunteer work through a Jewish lens. They may recognize that Judaism sees volunteering as a social good, but they perceive service as a universal value rather than a particularistic value. They are virtually unaware that they are the inheritors of a centuries-old tradition of working to promote human dignity and the common good.

Young people are one of the most challenging demographics to reach, and Jewish young adults are hardly unique in this regard. Repair the World's mission, to increase young adult engagement in service and make volunteering a defining part of Jewish life, faces a unique set of challenges and will require navigating both generational as well as Jewish identity dynamics. The key is to link what Jewish young adults see as Jewish values and reasons to volunteer (such as helping those in need and promoting the welfare of all) with the causes and interests that motivate them. Volunteer service opportunities must also be convenient, rooted in social networks, and facilitate connections to Jewish identity without making young adults feel that they are being too narrow and particularistic. Repair the World's mission is bumping up against core beliefs and identity, especially when it comes to seeing service in Jewish terms. Reconciling the mission with this outlook will require a long-term effort and some new thinking about program development, education, and communication.

Some in the Jewish community have described this as a "strategic moment" for elevating Jewish social justice and service to the foreground of Jewish individual and communal life (Bronznick & Goldenhar, 2008). Toward that end, the Repair the World Survey provides a set of benchmarks for measuring the achievement of these goals.

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APPENDIX A: THE RESEARCH TEAM

Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University

The Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies (CMJS), is a multi-disciplinary research center dedicated to bringing the concepts, theories, and techniques of social science to bear on the study of contemporary Jewish life. CMJS research strives to be rigorous and transparent with the goal of contributing to scholarly understanding of American Jewry and Jewish institutions and providing policy-relevant analysis.

Fern Chertok is an Associate Research Scientist at CMJS. She received an M.A. in Clinical/Community Psychology from University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Fern has lead numerous research projects on Jewish service learning including studies of the impact of a volunteer visitor program that matches college students with Holocaust survivors, and of young adult interest in long-term Jewish service options as well as a two year evaluation of the Break New Ground Jewish Community Service Initiative of UJA-Federation of New York. Fern has also conducted extensive research exploring the individual identity and Jewish engagement of young adults.

Josh Tobias is a Research Specialist at CMJS. He received a BA in History from Brown University in 2008. He has worked on projects concerning school twinning, emerging adulthood, Jewish overnight camps, and Jewish service-learning.

Shirah Rosin is a Research associate at CMJS. She holds a MA in Jewish Professional Leadership and a MA in Public Policy from Brandeis University. Shirah's Master's thesis work focused on the importance of developing frameworks for Jewish alternative break follow-up programs. Currently, she is working on a variety of projects related to the field of Jewish service and Jewish young adults.

Matthew Boxer is a research associate at CMJS. He received an M.S. in Sociology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he is a PhD candidate in Sociology. His dissertation will examine the effects of Jewish community size on Jewish identity. At CMJS Matt has worked on studies of Jewish summer camps, Synagogue 2000, and is a member of the research team analyzing Birthright Israel.

Gerstein | Agne Strategic Communications

Gerstein | Agne Strategic Communications provides strategic planning, communications, project management, and research services to a wide range of non-profit organizations, Fortune 500 companies, and candidates for elected office.

Jim Gerstein is a founding partner of Gerstein | Agne Strategic Communications. His work includes in-depth research on national political trends, energy, health care, national security, and economic issues. Gerstein has also served as the Executive Director of three prominent non-profit organizations – Democracy Corps, Center for Middle East Peace and Economic Cooperation, and Institute for Peace and Security. During the 1999 Israeli Prime Ministerial campaign, Gerstein took a leave of absence from the Center

to join Ehud Barak's American consulting team. He served as the U.S. team's person on the ground and oversaw the polling, paid media, and message development for the Barak campaign. He has also worked on several American political campaigns, including his role as director of the 1996 Clinton-Gore field campaign on Chicago's north side and northern Illinois. Gerstein received an M.A. in Middle East History at Tel Aviv University and a B.A. in philosophy at Colgate University.

Alex Remington is an associate at Gerstein | Agne, where he performs data analysis and provides support for web surveys. Previously, he worked as an editorial assistant on the op-ed desk at the Washington Post, working as a writer, moderator, and aggregator for the newspaper and website. He earned a B.A. in Political Science and Russian at Yale University.

APPENDIX B: ABOUT REPAIR THE WORLD

Repair the World

Repair the World seeks to make service a defining element of American Jewish life, learning and leadership. We create effective opportunities to serve, bring more young people into service and connect service to Jewish learning and values. We envision an inspired Jewish community fully engaged in and committed to repairing the world.

Repair the World began operation in 2009 through the partnership of the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation, Einhorn Family Charitable Trust, Jim Joseph Foundation and Nathan Cummings Foundation.

Repair the World's work is made possible by the generous continued investment of the founding partners as well as the leadership support of the Jacob and Hilda Blaustein Foundation, Joyce and Irving Goldman Family Foundation, Laura and Gary Lauder Philanthropic Fund, Joseph and Harvey Meyerhoff Family Charitable Funds, Righteous Persons Foundation, UJA-Federation of New York, and by the members of the Repair the World Board of Directors and Leadership Council.

REPAIR
THE WORLD